PROPHETIC AND RENEWAL MOVEMENTS

The Prague Consultations

47

STUDIES FROM THE

WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

THE PRAGUE CONSULTATIONS - PROPHETIC AND RENEWAL MOVEMENTS

Proceedings of the Prague VI and Prague VII Multilateral Ecumenical Consultations (2000 & 2003)

Edited by Walter Sawatsky

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Contents

Dedicated to the vision of

Milan Opočenský (1931-2007)

General Secretary of the
World Alliance of Reformed Churches
(1989-2000)

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PREFACE - A SYMPHONY OF ECUMENICAL CONVERSATIONS

Since 1986 representatives of the Historic Peace Churches – Brethren, Friends, Mennonites, Hutterian Brethren – have maintained substantial dialogue with comparable churches in Europe, especially those coming from what has been called the "First Reformation". This term was coined in the 1950s to designate church bodies the beginnings of which were prior to the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century; this includes the Waldensians, the Moravians, and several Hussite movements (especially the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren), all dating from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. To date, seven international conferences have been held in Europe, the first three in Prague, the next two in Geneva, the sixth in Strasbourg, and the last, just concluded in late November-early December, again in Prague. In shorthand reference, following ecumenical practice, the series of discussions has been called the "Prague Consultations".

The initiative for the series came from a visit in 1984 of Mennonites to the Comenius Theological Faculty in Prague (sponsored by the Czech Brethren), as part of their effort to reach out to Christians in Central and Eastern Europe. Several Czech church leaders, severely limited in travel and conversation in Communist-dominated Czechoslovakia, were eager to reach out to Anabaptist churches to test whether they together had "been given a heritage worthy of renewal and ecumenical consideration". The result was the calling of the first consultation which met in Prague in January, 1986, with twenty-two participants from seven nations and eight different denominations.

Two presentations describing the history and character of the Hussite/Czech Brethren movement, on the one hand, and the Radical Reformation, on the other hand, sought to trace comparable convictions. In a final statement, participants agreed to move toward a "deeper and more committed fellowship", believing that they had "been called together by our Lord Jesus Christ".

Those meeting in Prague agreed to a second meeting which took place, again in Prague, in June, 1987. The focus of discussion was the relationship between eschatology (beliefs about the end-times) and social transformation. Rather than considering that the Kingdom of God could only be expected to appear in the next world, those at the consultation affirmed that "God is already at work in history." Eschatological hope impels Christians to join "God's action toward justice, freedom and peace, knowing that God challenges every status quo". Again, those attending agreed that the dialogue must continue.

The third meeting, including many of the previous participants, was held in Prague two years later, in June, 1989. Having as its theme "Christian Faith and Economics", this consultation wrestled with concerns for economic parity and fairness in a world with ever-increasing gaps between the rich and the poor, both between nations and within nations. The discussion became very direct and practical, as conference members committed themselves to urge their churches to accept a guideline of not more than a 1 to 3 differential in incomes after taxes. Members assented once more to keep the conferences going, although the fourth meeting was not held until November, 1994, and a different course was then taken.

The venue changed from Prague to Geneva, largely because one of the main promoters of the discussions, Prof. Milan Opočenský of the Comenius faculty, had in the meantime been called as general secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, with his office in Switzerland. Another change was a broadening of the range of participants to include highly-placed theologians from the Lutheran and Reformed faiths. Konrad Raiser, the general secretary of the World Council of Churches, was active in this consultation. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (Rome) sent an observer, and Baptists and Methodists also took part. This time the focus was on the Sermon on the Mount, to discuss how varied readings of this primary biblical document affected ethical decisions.

The next conference was called "Prague V", although the meeting was again held in Geneva, in February, 1998. It was sponsored by the Mennonite World Conference, the Lutheran World Federation,

and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Here the theme shifted to the theological doctrines of justification and sanctification. These issues were being currently debated between Lutherans and Reformed, on the one hand, and between Lutherans and Catholics on the other. Members of Historic Peace Churches and representatives from Africa and Asia felt that this theme shifted discussions away from the main focus of the series of Prague conferences.

It was not surprising then, that the next conference (Prague VI), held in Strasbourg in February, 2000, while continuing the justification/sanctification discussion, emphasized how dissenting church bodies approached these themes. The conference theme "New Life in Christ" signaled a return to some of the concerns expressed in earlier consultations.

Although some at the Strasbourg meeting asked whether the series of Prague conferences had run its course, members agreed that another conference should be held. This took place in late 2003, this time in Prague. Its theme was "The Significance of Reforming and Prophetic Movements for Church and Society". Although attendance was smaller than at Strasbourg, discussion was spirited. Participants agreed that discussions, if continued, should have a different format. Importantly, all participants concurred that the series of conferences held from 1986 to 2003 had significant consequences. As the final communiqué stated, "The Prague Consultations created for the first time a platform for voices from the First and Radical Reformation traditions to be heard within the symphony of ecumenical conversation." Its result was an enriched "vision of Christian unity, expressed in academic reflection, shared testimonies from separate histories, spiritual fellowship, and deepened friendship."

Donald F. Durnbaugh (1927-2005)

This brief news story written for the **Brethren Messenger** *in December 2003 provides a concise summary of the seven Prague Consultations, a quick overview before examining the papers from Prague VI and VII presented here. More extensive background papers and bibliographic references to the papers from Prague I-V are included in the Introductions. The sponsoring world communions wished that the emphasis emerging through the Prague Consultation process 'toward a more comprehensive appreciation of the reformations' might be fostered by publishing the papers, even if delayed several years, as part of the series of Reformation anniversaries already beginning. Still more it serves to honor the vision of Milan Opočenský, to whom this volume is dedicated.*

The editor

PART I

PRAGUE VI

NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

February 2000

INTRODUCTION - Milan Opočenský

I welcome you to the Prague VI Consultation in Strasbourg. It is a great pleasure to meet you again. I am grateful that you have travelled from far and near to come here and to participate in this meeting. Fourteen years ago we met for the first time in Prague. A certain tradition was established and this tradition should not be forgotten. Originally we have come from the churches related to the First and Radical Reformations. In 1994 we broadened our circle and have invited representatives from the Reformed, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Baptist churches. Today for the first time we are welcoming a representative of the Orthodox Church, Dr. Viorel Ionita (Orthodox Church in Romania), who works with the Conference of European Churches. I regret that our Hutterite friends decided not to come. I also welcome a representative of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Dr. Roland Meyer, and Dr Mickey Mattox.

A group of three (Larry Miller, Sven Oppegaard and I) met once or twice to discuss the programme and shape of this meeting. We opted for the theme "A New Life in Christ". First, we want to continue our discussion on justification and sanctification. Secondly, we wish to devote one day to the original starting point of these meetings: whether we can reach a consensus on a more inclusive and comprehensive concept of the Reformation, including various traditions and streams. How can this broader concept of the Reformation enrich the ongoing ecumenical discussion?

Let us recall how we stated the areas of agreement at the Prague V Consultation on Justification and Sanctification in February 1998:

1. Justification is received from God, not achieved by human effort. It establishes a new salvific relationship between God and human beings and a new communion among human beings.
2. Justification and sanctification are held together in the unity of the Christian life.
3. Justification takes place within community and has significance ecclesiologically and ethically.
4. Justification frees us to respond to the challenges of the world in faith, without arrogance and without despair.
5. Every generation needs to restate the message of salvation in a way that responds to the peoples of that day in their various cultures and contexts.

Today and in the following days we want to pursue discussion on the issues which need further clarification. The concept of justification is not a dogma but a living core of the biblical message. It is a dynamic insight that is not just related to the time of the Reformation but today has consequences for our Christian existence in society and for the whole of creation.

Justification is not just relevant to the Lutheran tradition and to the Roman Catholic Church. The Reformed tradition also highlights justification and considers it to be the cornerstone of a sound biblical teaching. Other traditions may not speak of justification and sanctification, but they adhere to the basic content of these terms. Regarding sanctification, some speak about perfection, holiness, etc. I hope that we can spend some time on these questions and help each other to understand various nuances or different perspectives.

Another area of exploration will be ecclesiology and ethics. The good news of justification is not just a matter between an individual and God, but it is proclaimed and lived in a Christian community.

Two years ago we discussed justification and sanctification in relation to election, calling and perseverance. We said then that we should have a discussion on eschatological perspective.

I hope that the theme "New life in Christ in the 21st century" will help us to relate our discussion to the main problems and to our predicament in the 21st century.

Except for the first lecture, we have tried to create a cluster of speakers (main lectures and responses) coming from different traditions of the Reformation. In this way all streams and movements will be recognized.

I am very sorry that because of circumstances beyond our control participation from the South has been reduced. We expected at least two Asians and one African to join us, but valid reasons have prevented them from coming. I rejoice in the fact that we have again a Roman Catholic presence in the person of Msgr John Radano, and the presence of an Orthodox theologian, Dr. Viorel Ionita.

Coming from the tradition of the Unity of Brethren (*Unitas Fratrum*) and being in Strasbourg, I cannot omit mentioning the contacts between the Brethren in Czech lands and Martin Bucer, Calvin and other ministers in Strasbourg. The Brethren were attracted to Bucer because he held similar views on the Eucharist and Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Bucer highlighted Christ as the king and therefore the church should introduce church order and discipline. Brother Červenka of Bohemia was sent to Strasbourg and was warmly received. Bucer approved of the way in which the Unity organized church life. Červenka's report on the meeting with Martin Bucer is an important source of information on the inner life of the Unity around 1540.

There has been a certain triumphalism in the past on the part of Lutherans and Reformed vis-à-vis other traditions. Only slowly were different emphases rediscovered and appreciated. Can we reach a consensus that each group has enriched the great breakthrough of the Reformation in a unique way and that various perspectives are complementary? What is the criterion for inclusion and exclusion? Can we on this occasion address and confirm the working hypothesis that the Reformation is a broader and more comprehensive phenomenon and process in which there is a place for those who in the past used to be silenced and ostracized?

I hope that this consultation will help us to come closer to each other and to manifest our unity which already exists in Jesus Christ.

THE IMPLICATION OF JUSTIFICATION FOR THE WHOLE CREATION -

Martin Robra

A Little Story to Begin With

The story I want to tell you, was still popular among German theologians when I was a student. It is about two famous theologians, one Reformed, the other Lutheran. When Karl Barth started his academic career at the University of Göttingen, his Lutheran counterpart in the theological faculty was the well known Emmanuel Hirsch. Karl Barth had just written his book on Paul's letter to the Romans that provoked a vital discussion in German speaking countries far beyond Switzerland, but Emmanuel Hirsch was a recognized theological teacher for a number of years already. Sitting at his desk and working on his lectures and articles, Karl Barth could look at the house of the Hirsch family right across the road. Every time he would stop working at night and go to sleep, Karl Barth would still see light in the study of his colleague. One Sunday morning after worship, he saw Mrs. Hirsch leaving the church. He waited to greet her, saying: "Mrs. Hirsch, I really admire your husband and I now understand why he could write his remarkably knowledgeable books. At night, when I am already tired and have to go to bed, I still see the light in the study of your husband." "Oh, don't worry about that", she replied, "he is always forgetting to switch off the light."

I refer to this story as a metaphor of the starting point for this lecture. This story reflects nicely the situation after worship when people leave the church. While the message of the sermon, songs and prayers still resonate in their hearts and minds, they look at the weather, at nature and the people around them, they recognize and greet each other. This is the first moment of the "liturgy after the liturgy", providing a link between worship and the daily life of the community. Please remember in a similar way the speeches and articles of the Prague V consultation on justification and sanctification. And at the same time, try not to forget what is happening to people you know in many places of this world, and to creation.

Of course, I also tell this story to remind myself how good it is to leave the isolation of the desk in the office. Come down to earth, join colleagues and friends and share with each other. Do not cultivate the image of the hardworking individual. Too easily the mystery is unveiled and what comes to the fore is very human, indeed: "He is always forgetting to switch off the light."

What then do I wish to share with you? Let me start with five introductory remarks. Second I want to see how these remarks relate to biblical texts and offer a reflection on a theology of creation from a Trinitarian basis. This leads, third, to some reflections on the task of ethical discernment for those who are bound together by faith as a new communion.

1. Five Introductory Remarks

At the Prague V consultation held in February 1998 in Geneva, some called for further consideration of "the implications of justification for the whole of creation." In an articulate letter to Milan Opočenský of August 1999, Eva Pinthus also pointed to burning issues she would like to see addressed under the umbrella of "justification for the whole creation" as part of the process of the Prague consultations. She also called for new language, since in her "ecumenical 'post Christian' environment most theological terminology is meaningless." This is a rather broad agenda. What I have to say will not adequately respond to her requests.

Let me begin with five introductory remarks:

1. "The implications of justification for the whole of creation" is the theme for this lecture. This choice is obviously based on the working paper from the Prague V consultation. There I also find the

following working definition of justification: "Justification is received from God, not achieved by human effort. It establishes a new salvific relationship between God and human beings and a new communion among human beings." Thus, our theme concentrates on the implications of this "new salvific relationship between God and human beings" for the whole of creation that includes both human beings and other beings. In other words: What difference does it make that we look at creation not just from the stories of the book of Genesis, but in the perspective of the "good news" of God's grace that reveals itself as transformative, healing and reconciling power in Jesus Christ?

2. The wholeness of creation is a theological concept. It is not possible to talk of creation just by looking at nature or what scientists call the universe. Wholeness of creation refers to all life *coram deo*, in and before God, the creator. Epistemologically, and both Luther and Calvin were very clear about that, knowledge of God is the presupposition of knowing ourselves as made in the image of God and this world as being created by God. Justification, therefore, the recognition of the "salvific relationship between God and human being" is essential to any theology of creation that centers on the relationship between this world and God, the creator.
3. Recognizing this important theological link between justification and creation, I do not promote an anthropocentric perspective, which usually supports a relationship of domination and exploitation between human beings and nature. I rather prefer a theocentric configuration of the relationship between human beings and creation that liberates us to a genuinely human perspective and relationship towards other life forms and to planet Earth as a whole.
4. It is significant that I switch at this point from the notion of creation to the image of the beautiful, but vulnerable planet that we call Earth, acknowledging the importance of the topsoil for human life (cf. Gen 2:4b ff.). Although we are linked to the universe as a form of cosmic dust, our place and home in creation, on which we depend and that we are called to preserve, is this planet of our small solar system. Liberated to a human perspective, we no longer obscure our limitations on the one hand. On the other, we no longer deny our growing capacity to interrupt and destroy life on Earth, which is already a day to day reality for the majority of the poor, marginalized and excluded who struggle for their mere survival. Thus, we recognize the reality of sin that leads to death. Ethical discernment, therefore, becomes an essential element of obedient discipleship or sanctification (ecclesiology and ethics).
5. "Justification is the door for God's Justice to enter the world." (Lukas Vischer, p 248). Perhaps it would be one of the most important implications of justification for the whole creation that we are ready to engage ourselves in the struggle for life in dignity in just and sustainable communities. In doing so we respond to God's initiative and take responsibility in and before the triune God for the presence and future that we shape and bring about for our fellow human beings and for planet Earth.

2. Biblical and Theological Background

Paul's letter to the Romans always plays a central role in theological reflection on the doctrine of justification. Paul's reflections on justification by God's grace in Jesus Christ were meant to clarify the relationship between Jews and Gentiles and the role of the law (cf. Rom 3). But as his reflections unfold, they offer important insights on the dialectical relationship between Jews and Gentiles and their role in God's story with humankind. Ultimately, God's compassionate love to all humankind and creation will realize itself, finally bringing together what belongs together from the very beginning: "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory for ever." (Rom 11:36).

In his contribution to the Prague V consultation on justification and sanctification, Thomas Finger offers an excellent account of Romans chapters 3 to 14. His exegesis leads him to the conclusion that "Justification is best conceptualized as the eschatological breakthrough of God's righteousness into the present, which involves the tendency towards and the hope for its complete transformation of the

cosmos" (Thomas Finger, p 63). Lukas Vischer states: "It is a power breaking into all realms of life, personal, communal, in society and in creation" (p 244).

God demonstrates the divine righteousness in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom 3:25-26, 4:25 and 6:5). For any reflection on the implications of justification for the whole creation, verses 18-25 in chapter 8 are central. Ernst Käsemann in his famous commentary on the letter to the Romans highlights that in these verses the justification of the godless appears as the cosmological salvation for the fallen and groaning world (Ernst Käsemann, p 226). The power of the Spirit transforms, through the suffering of the children of God with Jesus Christ, the old creature and paves the way for the future. The horizon of hope is opened up far beyond the individual Christian and includes the whole creation. The hope for the resurrection of the children of God through the indwelling Spirit (8:11 and 8:17) corresponds to the hope for the liberation of creation. The creation will obtain its own freedom that is identical with the freedom given to the children of God (8:21) through the revelation of the children of God (8:20).

In Paul's concept, the children of God embody the indwelling Spirit of Christ for the whole creation. He describes salvation for creation in an anthropological perspective. Different from the book of Revelation and also slightly different from the letter to the Hebrews and the Pauline letters to the Colossians (Col 1, 15-20) and Ephesians, Paul does not develop the concept of the cosmic Christ in all his power and glory in the letter to the Romans. In the book of Revelation, the crucified Lord and the heavenly man are one and the same. The cosmic Christ has begun the struggle with the representatives of sin and destruction. For Paul, however, these ideas are linked to the second coming of Christ (*parousia*).

Paul's strong anthropological focus reflects the Jewish concept of Adam's role in the creation story (4. Esra 7, 11 f.; Rom 8:20 etc); Paul also refers to the role of Adam as the prototype of humankind in chapter 5 (5:12) "...just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned..." so grace in Christ overcomes death in Adam (5:17 and 21; cf. also 1 Cor. 15:45, 2 Cor. 5:14-21).

This gives the community of the children of God a tremendous responsibility. Those whom God justified, God will also glorify (8:30). But the creation will share in this future glory as much as the justified, the children of God, represent the indwelling Spirit within creation. In this way God's story with the whole creation will be completed. The church as the community of the justified godless from the Gentiles will have fulfilled the blessing that was given to the descendants of Abraham so that finally Jews and Gentiles will share in the glory (11:1-36). If the church does not live up to this calling, there is no reason for her to exist.

Paul clearly links the fate of humankind and the fate of creation. He develops a Trinitarian concept of salvation, in which those justified in Christ become representatives of the indwelling Spirit in creation. He does not let humankind off the hook, and hide itself behind the mythological struggle of the cosmic Christ, which is the danger of a strong concept of the cosmic Christ. The images of the battle of the cosmic Christ were part of a comforting and motivating message for the persecuted church and those suffering in the struggle against the totalitarianism and injustice of the empire. But de-linked from this context, those images were also misused to justify the powers that be, through the identification of the emperor with the cosmic Christ.

Because of his interest in the Adam-Christ typology, Paul does not develop an approach that would be closer to the real interdependence between nature and humankind as it is seen and described by various cultures with different, but closely related symbols, stories and philosophical concepts. Nevertheless, there are important passages in other Pauline letters, pointing to a sacramental understanding of reality that links justification and the new life in Christ with new-creation in the Spirit (cf. Gal 3:26-28, and esp. 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15, Col. 3:10, Eph. 2:15).

Especially Jürgen Moltmann has shown how the notion of the indwelling Spirit and sacramental understanding of reality together with the Sabbath tradition can be brought into dialogue with the

scientific creation story. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches has started to work with a very similar concept that was adopted at the General Council in 1997 in Debrecen as part of the theological basis for the *processus confessionis* on social injustice and environmental destruction.

Saying this, it is however clear to me that I move far beyond the framework of the Magisterial Reformation. For them, the understanding of nature as God's creation was not a question, at least not in the same way as for those living in a secularized understanding of life. With few exceptions, their interpretation of the Trinitarian framework focuses on the individual existential dimensions of the church.

3. Ethical Discernment

The discussion on justification and sanctification or the Lutheran notion of the justified human person as *simul iustus et peccator* are relevant indeed for ethical considerations. Lukas Vischer has demonstrated that in his excellent article on "Justification and Sanctification by Grace in a Time of Survival" in the report of the Prague V consultation. He starts from the analysis that humankind has reached a stage where it is confronted with the real danger of self-destruction through undermining or destroying the very basis of its existence on planet Earth. This self-destruction will become reality, if the rich minority continues to follow the prevailing development path that is built on economic growth and the free market paradigm. Lukas Vischer is convinced that an adequate answer to this challenge "can only be given on the basis of the biblical message on justification and sanctification by Jesus Christ" (p 242).

In order to substantiate his statement, he starts from epistemological and anthropological considerations followed by some paragraphs on the reality of sin that leads to death. The message of justification corrects the human understanding of justice and peace as cheap options that can be reached without the need for a basic and costly re-orientation. This becomes clearer when the continuing power of sin is taken seriously. But at the same time God's initiative for justice and reconciliation in Jesus Christ also becomes visible. On this basis, Lukas Vischer unfolds the witness to God's justice that is the immediate consequence of justification by grace as a challenge to the goal of economic growth and increasing wealth, to self-interest and competition as main motives of economic life, and to the respect for creation. Re-stating again that hope for the future is not at all self-evident and secure, he calls for greater realism, freedom of self-deceit and self-justification, but also freedom from despair. He ends with a note on the church and its witness, that will be relevant if it anticipates the future kingdom and is a counter-sign in a world dominated by self-assertion.

I want to add just a few aspects, sharing with you some of the lessons learned in recent years on those front-lines that Lukas Vischer identified. Social-ethical work in the WCC has devoted a lot of energy to explore and clarify the inter-relatedness between the major global threats to life in the areas of justice, peace and creation. Those three dimensions of contemporary ecumenical ethics will benefit from each other if they deliberately develop a dialectical relationship of mutual challenge and support. While closely inter-linked, the relationship between those three dimensions is not without tensions. Nevertheless, it is not by accident that we learned in recent years how often ecological destruction, social injustice and violence re-enforce each other and have in fact the same root causes.

Social ecology and the ecology of life belong to each other. If we look for theological concepts to learn more about those links, we are well advised to think about the Spirit that dwells in the justified sinner, is the media of the new communion, and helps to identify the hidden presence of God in creation. We find ourselves in a constant spiritual struggle for ethical orientation in the world and the right decisions for the life of the church. Both of them are inter-linked.

The WCC started to explore this link in the Ecclesiology and Ethics study. The presence of God's energy in creation is the only reason why it makes sense to speak of the *oikoumene*, of God's household of life, as central theme for the ecumenical movement and not just of the unity of churches. It gives meaning and direction to the ecumenical endeavor in the world. It also requires the distinction

between those actions, institutional arrangements, cultural and religious stories and symbols that build up the body of Christ and God's household of life or that destroy relationships and set at risk communities of the poor and marginalized and future generations. The Ecclesiology and Ethics study discussed the themes of moral formation and mal-formation in and by the churches in their individual and common ecumenical life and witness.

The link between the three dimensions of justice, peace and creation has been on the agenda of ecumenical social thought and action for more than 25 years now. It started with the social idea of the just, participatory and sustainable society. In 1983, the conciliar process of Mutual Commitment for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation started. JPIC has contributed a lot to a better understanding of some very basic criteria and ecumenical methods for context sensitive processes of ethical discernment and moral formation within this frame of reference.

The three basic options for the poor and excluded, for non-violent conflict resolution, and for the earth as the common home of humankind and other life forms were identified in this process. The three options are in opposition to values that support domination and oppression. They clearly call to struggle against the remnants of colonial history, against racism, sexism and a culture that for short term benefits simply plunders natural resources, exploits fellow human beings and denies them access to what is needed just to meet the very basic requirements for their very survival.

Methods of building community from the bottom-up and working together on processes in a participatory way proved to be necessary, viable and successful especially in the context of globalization. GlobaIization is characterized by an increasing concentration of power and wealth on the one hand, and by impoverishment and loss of control about important factors that affect the life of the people in the local context on the other. Who protects and supports the poor? Who works in favour of increasing concentration of wealth and power at the expense of the already poor and their livelihoods? To whom is this institution or organization accountable? Do new social and institutional arrangements increase inequality and injustice or do they promote more equality, justice, accountability, participation and sufficiency? Does this rule or law enable or disable local solutions by the people themselves? Does it promote or hinder their economic, social and cultural rights? These are some of the very simple questions that we learned to ask in our search for life in dignity in just and sustainable communities.

This goal of life in dignity reflects the message of justification in Christ that restores the dignity of the human being that was meant to be the image of God. It also translates what Lukas Vischer described as the relevance of the message of God's grace and up-building justice over against the context of an economic system that is based on individual self-interest, competition and profits at almost any price. The process of globalization supports integration of processes at the highest possible level in favour of the very few corporate global players. The focus on just and sustainable communities calls instead for a downward distribution of power, greater participation and subsidiarity in the political and economic realm. It becomes a criterion for the selection and evaluation of institutional and social arrangements at national and regional levels that provide space for local solutions by the people themselves and recognize diversity.

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JUSTIFICATION, ECCLESIOLOGY, ETHICS -

André Birmelé

Introduction

The Christian faith has the source of its life in the death and resurrection of Christ. As Christians we proclaim this event, which is not simply a moment in history but a moment of our – of my – history. The cross is our reconciliation with God. Easter is life breaking in. We are invited to live with God, in a new relation with him and with others and with ourselves. We are invited to live in the faith. The cross and the resurrection put an end to the familiar situation in which death, putting a term to life, annihilates all hope. Now death is limited by life, all life is sustained by faith in this Lord who is the surety for the future and who comes to meet us. We no longer live for ourselves but for the one who died and was raised again for us (2 Cor 5.5).

This new reality is not only the reality for a future still to come. Those who are in Christ are a new *ktisis* ("creature" or "creation"). The old world has passed away. A new reality is here (2 Cor 5.16).

This reality is a break with the logic of our society which is centred in individualism, self-fulfilment, the power to have power. We are not condemned to make a name for ourselves. We have been named: God calls us by our name. He gives us our identity and makes us witnesses to that other logic, the logic of grace which makes us exist even before we have been able to merit it. We are not what we make of ourselves; we are called to be what we are – children of God. We are signs of a reality that is prior to us and undergirds and fulfils us.

We may choose other words than those, to repeat the central affirmation of the Christian faith; but its content remains the same. Scripture, the Reformation and many other motifs in the church's life have proclaimed this gospel, by insisting on justification by faith alone which breaks with the illusion of salvation by works.

The purpose of this contribution is to reflect on the consequences of this conviction, which is fundamental for the church's life and the ethical life of believers. The link between soteriology on the one hand and ecclesiology and ethics on the other is at stake.

To prevent any misunderstanding, we must add one thing: in Reformation theology soteriology is applied Christology. Soteriology and Christology are the two sides to the same reality. To speak of Christ means speaking of *Christus pro nobis*. The event of the Cross and of the Resurrection was for us – for the salvation of humanity, beloved by God. The meaning of the event is contained in itself; our faith is not what gives it meaning. But if we do not draw the existential conclusions from this event, and if we do not receive it in faith, it remains only an event in history. The Reformation saw this *pro nobis* dimension clearly; hence the close connection between the work of Christ completed in the Cross and Resurrection, and the sinner's justification in God's sight - *sola gratia* and *sola fide*. The Reformation focus on justification does not imply a limitation to the Pauline message of the *dikaiosuné tou theou* alone. The Reformation is aware that Scripture also uses other terminology to express this central element the gospel represents. It can speak of new birth, liberation, reconciliation, new creation – ideas placing the emphasis differently, but together agreeing with the concern we find in the Pauline vocabulary. The Reformation speaks of "justification" in this broad sense.

1. The Special Locus of the Message of Justification

The Reformation does not see the message of salvation – the event of the Cross and Resurrection *pro nobis* – only as one essential conviction alongside others, but as the *articulus stantis et cadentis*

ecclesiae (the article by which the church stands or falls): "There is to be no concession or compromise in this article [(Jesus Christ); even if heaven and earth and everything perishable had to disintegrate]".[1]

1.1 Luther drew up this passage in the Smalcald Articles in 1537. In the same year he stated that "the article on justification" is "the guide and judge of all the other fields of Christian doctrine". Luther explains why he says this and goes on: "it establishes our moral consciousness before God. Without this article the world is only death and darkness".[2] There are two important points here: (a) Luther does not speak of a doctrine worked out by the church or in theology, but of the "article on justification". This article is an "article of faith", a conviction of the believers, and not primarily a doctrine that is the product of human reason explaining the faith. (b) The issue at stake in this "article" is the human moral consciousness which must distinguish between falsehood and truth in the shadow of death. Faith directs the believers' glance towards Christ and enables them to discover the merciful, saving judgement of their Lord.

This article, which enables us to live in the presence of God, becomes the quintessence of all Christian life and all the church's teaching. We can and must consider it as "fundamental", because God has so acted in Christ. His merciful judgement alone makes both our life and what we say possible. By teaching us that the church, its words and deeds are sustained by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God alone, the doctrine of justification becomes the "fundamental doctrine" of the entire range of theological statements.

1.2 This nevertheless does not exclude the idea of doctrine; doctrine is necessary for talking about faith. However, Luther's purpose was not so much doctrinal as pastoral. He does not want to put forward a specific doctrinal formula that would govern all the others. The issue is the actual message of the gospel – a message that overturns every theological approach and condemns its error since that approach does not submit to God's work alone, to the divine will expressed in Christ, to the message of salvation that lets the believer exist *coram deo*. Thus this is not a matter of establishing a specific doctrine as the arbiter and yardstick for all the other doctrines – a frequent misconception even in recent theological discussions.

1.3 The Reformation sees this major conviction as the "principle" and "standard" determining not only all theological knowledge but also all life pertaining to the church. This principle is intrinsic to every statement of the faith and every theological development. Thus the Reformation will not work out any theology of the church or the ministry, or an ethic or even a view about the world's creation that does not depend directly on this "central point of Scripture".[3] The article on justification forbids any view of the church, ethics and theology that does not refer to what God has done first of all. But it does not tell the church everything the church has to say; there are in fact fields in which it will be led to speak up without referring explicitly to justification. Luther's work itself illustrates this. However, the article does tell the church that everything it has to say must be a witness made to the prevenient, merciful work of God.

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[1] Smalcald Articles, II, 1 cf. Tappert, *The Book of Concord*, p 293, with additional wording as in *La foi des Eglises luthériennes (FEL)*, Paris 1991, para. 372.

[2] M. Luther in 1537, in the *Disputatio* for the promotion of Palladius and Tilleman, *WA* (Weimar Edition) 39, I, 205: Articulus justificationis "qui conservat et gubernat omnem doctrinam ecclesiasticam et erigit conscientiam nostram coram Deo. Sine hoc articulo mundus est plane mors et tenebrae. Quia nullus est error tam parvus, tam ineptus et insulsus, qui non summe placeat rationi humanae et nos seducat, si cognitione et meditatione huius articulus sumus".

[3] In the Smalcald Articles Luther explains the "fundamental article" in detail. He is content with four biblical references to expound redemption (John 1, Isaiah 53, Romans 3 and 4) and then three others to explain justification (Romans 3, Isaiah 53 and Acts 4), as redemption and justification are quite clearly the two sides of one and the same reality. As regards justification, the reference in Romans 3 raises no problems. The quotations in Acts 4 and Isaiah 53 are more interesting. They only confirm what we had already noted: the doctrine of justification is present not only in the biblical texts that speak of it *expressis verbis*. The doctrine of justification is the message of God's mercy, the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins: Christ, having taken upon himself the burden of our faults (whence comes the reference to Isaiah 53 and John 1) and thus becoming the only name "by which we must be saved" (Acts 4). This last reference is of priceless value to the Reformer, for stressing this passage on the exclusive nature of Christ's name for salvation enables him to add "and he alone" before the quotation from John 1 ("He alone is 'the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of world'" (Tappert, *op. cit.* 292) just as he adds an "alone" in his translation of Romans 3:28.

1.4 In a recent study G. Sauter draws attention to the fact that Luther, in his translation of Roman 3.25, writes, "FORGIVES SINS" in capital letters. In the margin Luther adds a brief comment: "Note … that here you have the chief article and central point of this letter and of the whole of Scripture. Everything, in fact, which is not saved by the blood of Christ and justified by faith is sin. Understand this text fully. In it all merit from works and all glory comes to nothing … only the grace and glory of God remain".[4] Thus the message of justification goes beyond any specific teaching (even of justification itself!) and is understood as expressing the biblical message in its entirety. But this amounts to not detecting in each biblical passage a more or less concealed soteriology, but finding in it the work of God for the benefit of human beings. To those humans who seek to count on their knowledge, their works and merits and thus entrench themselves in their transgression, the need is to proclaim God's initiative, which, as the accounts in the Old and New Testaments testify, is many-sided and culminates in the work of Christ.

This message of the divine initiative takes precedence over every ecclesial reality, over everything the church and the theologians say. It is not at the church's disposal, and it remains dependent on – and subject to – that "fundamental article" about which the Reformer says "there is to be no concession or compromise; [even if heaven and earth and everything perishable had to disintegrate]". G. Sauter adds, "The doctrine of justification indicates the theological locus where one can find the true church. Thus 'the fundamental article' shines on everything the church has to say and do. The issue here is not about a hierarchical order of 'doctrinal formulations' the first of which would be the doctrine of justification".[5] The article on justification amounts in a way to a *metadogma*. It does of course exhibit salvation in Christ, and on that count too it is an article of faith that finds its equivalent in dogmatics under the heading of soteriology. However, it is not an article to govern the others in a hierarchical order, but is the principle that irradiates the others and gives them their meaning. By making it possible to reveal the true church it enables and legitimises what the church says and authenticates all theological discourse. Thus this article is not important only for soteriology – it also appears as the fundamental structure of faith for each and every one of the church's doctrines. It also teaches us how we can speak of God, and of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the two natures of Christ - the convictions of faith set out in the first part of the Smalcald articles and preceding in the text any mention of justification.

1.5 In the passages just quoted, special emphasis is laid on the forgiveness of sins. As an encounter with Christ's words ("your sins are forgiven") and with the individual's faith, this is for Luther a favoured moment in the transforming of the human being. The believer is now *iustus* in God's sight, for the Word fulfils what it says.[6] The emphasis is placed on God's promise in the strong sense of the term *promissio*. This does not mean throwing an uncertain light on something that will be granted one day. The reality the Word proclaims is a reality that is valid for sinners now. They are given the advantage of a new reality that takes hold of them as of now. They can respond only with trust, with faith in that Word. The example of absolution, with its emphasis on the encounter of God and the human being, might be easily filled out by other references describing God's justifying action. The message of justification leads us to understand everything in terms of that encounter. This message directs everything in the Christian life towards this encounter. Thus the article on justification defines the very point of all theology and all ecclesial life: the encounter of the sinner and the God who saves and justifies.[7]

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[4] G. Sauter: "Die Rechtfertigungslehre als theologische Dialogregel. Lehrentwicklung als Problemgeschichte?" in ÖR 48/1999, pp 273-295, p 279, where he quotes and comments on *WA.DB*.7. 38, lines 23-28.
[5] G. Sauter, *op. cit.*, p 282.
[6] On this cf. M. Lienhard, *Martin Luther, la passion de Dieu.* Paris 1999. Regarding this, Lienhard quotes a passage from the "Sermon on the Sacrament of Penance" of 1519 and then shows that this fundamental structure applies to the whole of Luther's sacramental theology, pp 275ff.
[7] Cf. The famous definition of theology suggested by Luther in his *Enarratio psalmi LI* (1532, printed in 1538), *WA* 40, II, 328: *"Nam theologiam proprium subjectum est homo reus ac perditus et deus justificans ac salvator hominis peccatoris. Quicquid extra hoc subjectum in Theologia quaeritur aut disputatur est error et venenum"*.

As this encounter was for Luther the reason for the church's and theology's existence, this message of justification has a crucial part to play in relation to everything said and experienced in the church; it is the norm that guides the moral commitment of Christians in this world.

The question of the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae* would require many other explanations and comments. However, as regards our subject, we may content ourselves with this summing up of Luther's approach, the substance of which contemporary theology has generally taken up again.

2. The Fellowship or Communion of God and Believers

To understand the unity between justification, ecclesiology and ethics and to define what they have to say, it is crucial to begin with a relational approach to faith, grace and salvation. The choice of the Reformation seeks only to highlight that biblical conviction that was frequently recalled in the teaching of the ancient church.

Among the many biblical approaches one might mention, I shall adduce only that to which contemporary ecclesiological research gives precedence: the idea of *communio/koinonia* – "communion" or fellowship.[8] In the New Testament the idea of *koinonia* is used to express the spiritual bond uniting the believer to Christ (1 Cor 10.16-21). This bond mirrors the communion that exists in the Triune God (1 John 1.3,6,7). It enters into eschatological communion (1 Peter 4.13; 5.1). The same idea of *koinonia* is crucial for understanding the church. It is fundamental for understanding the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist (1 Cor 10.16-21 and 1 Cor 11.20-24), and serves to describe the community of the baptised in which social divisions no longer have any *raison d'être* (1 Cor 12.13, Gal 3.26-28, Eph 4.3f.) This same idea is central to ethics and Christian life. Moral acts are not secondary things; they are themselves *koinonia*. Christians give each other "the right hand of fellowship" (Gal 2.9). The "other" becomes one who shares in me – shares in my wealth or poverty. The collection for Jerusalem (Rom 15.26) is in itself *koinonia*. It is not simply an act of generosity but an act of faith. It is a real expression of who the Lord is.

These brief biblical references enable us not to contrast the communion or fellowship of believers with God and the fellowship that comes into existence among believers. One and the same reality is involved.

We might also focus on the understanding of worship which is, at once, individual participation in God who offers his grace and spiritual worship, the offering up of each person's life in the everyday life of this world (Rom 12.1). These two dimensions of worship are the special quantum in believers' communion with the triune God. The communion or fellowship that exists actually in God 'himself' provides the foundation for the fellowship or communion that believers have with God and with each other.

In this context the dual meaning of the creedal expression, *communio sanctorum* has frequently been recalled.[9] *Sanctorum* is a masculine and neuter genitive plural. If masculine, this expression refers to the communion of "saints" – the "holy" – i.e. the communion of believers. If neuter, it refers to "holy things". Generally this has been seen as a reference to the means of salvation, the Word and the Sacraments. The existence of this ambivalence is good, for it is not ambivalent theologically: fellowship or communion with God is synonymous with communion in the Word and Sacraments and with the communion or fellowship of believers with each other.

2.2 In the history of the ancient church, the Latin idea of *confessio* demonstrates the unity in the understanding of salvation, ecclesial communion and the moral life. The term nowadays has a number of meanings often wrongly contrasted with each other. In the ancient church's first confessions of faith one and the same reality is involved.

[8] Cf. For instance, the work of the WCC's Commission on Faith and Order.
[9] Cf. For example W. Elert, *Abendmahl und Kirchengemeinschaft in der alten Kirche hauptsächlich des Ostens*. Berlin 1954 (pp

a) *Confessio* is the confession of sins. Among believers it is the first element in the dialogue with God. The first prayer opening the liturgy after the Introit is the *kyrie eleison*. It seeks the renunciation of a life without God and asks God to transform that existence, to shift its centre away from ourselves and place us *en Christo*. '[Lord,] I believe, help my unbelief' (Mark 9.24)".
b) *Confessio* is the confession [or *pro*fession] of faith. Believers, having received the gospel in listening to the Word and celebrating the sacraments, give thanks to their Lord and tell of his great works. They praise God and proclaim their will to be encompassed in the liberty of the faith and its dangerous consequences. Confessing the faith is a declaration that one cleaves to God - a true word. The truth of this confession calls for precise words, for faith lives on a precise conviction freed from ambiguity and therefore requiring a certain theological rigour.
c) Finally, *confessio* is proclamation – bearing witness in front of everyone. Believers are witnesses to God. Together they seek the means to translate the gospel into the practical situations of this world and make every effort to live out their faith through their witness in this world. Through this they bear witness to the fact that they, the church and the world derive life from God.

The Reformation was concerned about the Word. This Word is a creative word. At one and the same time it is the Word between God and believers and the Word among [and between] believers. It is *dia-logos*. This dimension of dialogue corresponds to the message of justification. So that we do not reduce this dialogue to a simple event of communication, to speak of "correspondence" is preferable. Corresponding in fact goes further and includes the idea of "responding" ["answering to" or "matching"] and "being in conformity with [something/someone]". The church's life and the moral life are the privileged opportunity for believers in their otherness to be "in correspondence with" God. They correspond with the being of the triune God, who as such is axiomatically *dialogue*, fellowship or communion in otherness. By justifying believers, God creates for himself in this world that which "corresponds" with or to his own being. This is an earthly parable of the riches that are in God, of the kingdom which is and which is to come. The community of believers that is in "correspondence" with God is no longer of this world though it is for this world and in this world.

3. Justification and the Church - the Divine Prayer

The Reformation's definition of the church is well-known. Ecclesiologically the church is "the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel".[10] The emphasis is placed on the community of believers but it does not allow the church to be reduced to a mere gathering together of believers. It is the community of believers to whom God gives something essential: salvation. God gives this to each individual in the Word and the Sacraments and thus enables him or her to profit from the cross and resurrection of Christ. In this way he incorporates that individual into the fellowship of believers, the church which is the body of Christ. Here we have the work of the Holy Spirit, who removes our selfcentredness – makes us "ex-centric" [cf. "eccentric"!] to ourselves – and makes us aware of the presence of Christ and of what Christ makes available to us here and now. In this sense the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of *ex*-centricity.

Without going into a debate on the understanding of the sacraments, on which different families emerging from the Reformation place different emphases, we have to note an important fact: the means of grace by which each individual is called a child of God are the elements sustaining and constituting the church. Logically these are the elements that are, moreover, necessary and sufficient for its unity. The church, the fellowship of believers, comes to be present where God calls a human being by his or her name and offers his grace. In this sense the church is part of the event of justification.

170ff.) and H. Holze (ed.): *The Church as Communion*. LWF Doc. 42. Geneva 1998.
[10] Augsburg Confession, VII in Tappert, *The Book of Concord*, 1859 [1987], 32. Cf. J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.1.9 (ed. Beveridge): "Wherever we see the word of God sincerely preached and heard, wherever we see the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there we cannot have any doubt that the Church of God has some existence…"

3.2 As the Reformation was concerned to include the church in the event of justification, it opposed any ecclesiology that did not stress the absolute priority of the grace of God. Examples of this abound and I confine myself only to one – how worship or the Mass is understood. This question was where the Reformers vigorously opposed the church of their day, which they censured for transforming worship into good works, a sacrifice offered in order to conciliate God. For the Reformation, worship is the reconciliation God offers us; God offers himself to us. For Luther, worship insists in "letting ourselves be benefited by God".[11] "In worship the only thing that happens is that our Lord speaks to us through his Holy Word and we answer him by our prayers and praise".[12] "No-one serves God but the person who lets him be God and lets God's works operate in him".[13] On the Reformed side, John Calvin was to insist both on "everything good our Lord does for his church" in the fellowship of believers, the salvation bestowed on us by the Word of God and the educative dimension of worship in which the true gospel is set before us.[14]

We may sum up this approach by speaking of God's prayer. The initiator of prayer is God. God beseeches us and does so unceasingly! "God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5.20f. NRSV). The power of prayer expresses infinite wealth, the wealth of love which beseeches the other to be really willing to accept what one has oneself. Within itself this prayer contains the seed of reconciliation. God beseeches us. That is God's authority, God's way of exercising power. This attitude has nothing to do with any authoritarianism, nor with a power game such as we know of even in our churches themselves. It is the one form of worthwhile authority, for unlike order or the moral imperative it gives those to whom the prayer is addressed time to respond: God gives us time to respond. It is the power of love. This is why Protestantism insists, for example, on these words linked to the celebrations of the Eucharist since the beginnings of the church. "Taste how good the Lord is." "Take, eat, take and drink that this may comfort and preserve you unto eternal life!" In a fine way they express God's attitude. God beseeches and supplicates us to participate in his banquet and accept his offer of reconciliation. God himself makes his appeal to us (2 Cor 5.20). He wants to benefit us, to give us the benefits of his grace.

3.3. This stress on *God's* prayer may be surprising. Clearly it would be necessary to develop many other facets to do full justice to what the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is. However, my intention is not to put forward here a complete ecclesiology but to let us focus on the link between "justification" and "church". To do so there is an advantage in choosing this approach of divine prayer for it does not allow us to make the church the author of the believer's justification. Rather, the church, mirroring the believers who compose it, must itself be justified. Of course it is a sign and instrument of God and of his rule, it proclaims the Word and celebrates the sacraments, but God and God alone evokes faith and bestows grace. There is no point of time when the church can become the source or initiator of the salvation of human beings. The church listens, preaches, confesses, dispenses [and receives] the sacraments, witnesses, sings and celebrates. It is the "steward of God's mysteries" (cf. 1 Corinthians 4.1). But when it does these things, God and God alone is the one who effects salvation in and through the church. Fundamentally the distinctive action of the church is receptive, marked by the creative passivity of faith. The church's life and action are always a window for God's work alone.

Insisting on God's prayer makes it possible to provide the true meaning for different expressions we surrender too swiftly – and wrongly – to other ecclesial families. Against the background of God's prayer, Reformation traditions too are able to say that the church is an instrument of salvation, that it is where grace happens and is mediated – that the church is in the world a privileged place that signals and

[11] Sermon on the New Testament, i.e., the Holy Mass 1520, *WA* 6, p 364.
[12] Sermon for the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity 1544, *WA* 49, p 588.
[13] *Magnificat* 1521, *WA* 7, p 595.
[14] Genevan Catechism 1542, questions 98 and 300ff.

proclaims God's new creation. This it is, because God lets his prayer be heard there. However the church is not this on its own, or in its own strength. It could not give itself absolute status either in relation to God or towards the world and seek a self-deceptive autonomy by claiming to be self-fulfilling.

Insisting on God's prayer reminds the church of the priority of grace. In the life of the believing community it signals that justification really is that *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*.

3.4 Today this point represents the major subject of dispute between the families that emerged from the Reformation and the Roman or Eastern traditions. For Reformation theology any views of the church as the extension [or continuation] of Christ, any idea of the church's sacramental mediation on which the presence of Christ would depend, any sacrificial view of the eucharistic sacrament, and any theology of the ministry that conceives of the minister as an *alter Christus*, are understood as attacks on the unique sovereignty of God.

This is the set of themes on which the current dialogues of the Reformation traditions with the Roman Catholic Church are focusing. The issue is not so much understanding the word or the sacrament, or indeed salvation, but the exact place for the church in the divine mystery as a whole. In a document published in 1987, *Consensus oecuménique et différence fondamentale*,[15] French Lutherans, Reformed and Roman Catholics summarise the problem, noting that "the divergence… concerns not the church as an instrument in imparting salvation, but the nature of that instrumental role. Is the church sanctified in such a way as to become itself a source or initiator of sanctification [*sujet sanctifiant*]? Roman Catholics say of the church that "it is in the service of Christ's mediation, which it makes present effectively".[16] The unresolved question is the meaning the parties give to the term "effectively" (*efficacement*). Roman Catholics will criticise a Protestant view of the church that is too functional; Protestants will criticise a Roman Catholic tendency to confuse the work of Christ and that of the church. The dialogue has made possible considerable progress that invalidates many traditional contrasting positions. But a consensus on this question has still not been produced. The recent declaration of Roman Catholics and Lutherans on justification shows that where the Lutherans insist on the unique normative role of justification, "Catholics see themselves as bound by several criteria" [*sic*].[17] Just because this is so, consensus in all the great ecclesiological themes has still not been achieved.[18]

4. Justification and Ethics: the Prayer of Believers who are Consistent in their Discipleship

For the link between justification and ethics we may refer to the same passage in 2 Corinthians. Moral commitment is the prayer addressed to the world in God's name by believers. "So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5.20).

4.1 For one thing, this approach recalls the close link between justification, ecclesiology and ethics. Moreover, it tells us that the purpose of ethics is not so much our sanctification as the evangelising of the world, the mission God entrusts to us. The community of believers neither has its purpose nor its *raison d'être* in itself. Its mission is the proclamation of the gospel in season and out of season, in word and deed. As the salt of the earth, the community of believers seeks to communicate to the world that taste or savour which lends piquancy and fullness of meaning to the life of human beings, so that they may all be a source of joy to each other – and so to God. The savour of the message is the certainty that Christ is

[15] (= "Ecumenical Consensus and Fundamental Difference"). Le Centurion, Paris 1987, para. 11.
[16] *Op. cit.*, para, 12.
[17] *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, LWF & Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, 1997, p 5, para. 18.
[18] *Op. cit*., para. 43, which mentions "the relationship between the Word of God and church doctrine, as well as ecclesiology, authority in the church, ministry, the sacraments and the relation between justification and social ethics".

Lord. He is the source. In every river it is easier to swim with the current than to swim upstream towards the source. In the river of this world we are swimming "against the stream", not from a spirit of contrariness, but out of conviction: a tiring but essential exercise. We need renewed courage to go upstream to the source, to rediscover and make a fresh effort to proclaim the gospel. A mission that can convince calls for witnesses who are convinced!

The Christian life is the life of a responsible disciple. Bonhoeffer, the German theologian, spoke of *Nachfolge* (which can mean "discipleship", "following" and "imitation" etc.). He rightly castigated "cheap grace" – giving precedence to a so-called grace that remained ineffectual in everyday life. Translating *Nachfolge* is difficult. We need to go back to the Latin and Greek terms. In Latin, to follow someone, "to come after and join someone" is *consequor*. The term is clear: "to follow something or someone (through) consistently". Hence the "consequence" – the "consequent" or sequential nature of justification: Christians have a consistent attitude of "following things through". To be a disciple means to be a consistent follower. This idea does not imply laziness or indecision or laxity or lack of character. Christians, as "consistent followers" with their faith in Christ, are responsible in every situation; they are God's partners marking out the signs of the kingdom. This kind of "following" (*conséquence*) is tolerant, but like every kind of self-respecting tolerance, it can be intolerant. We serve a new humanity not because of being better than others but because we know that God loves this world and this humanity.

Following someone, "going after and along with" someone, is [basically] *sun-odos* in Greek: [it implies] "being with the other on the way". Our decisions are of course individual choices but they are the fruit of our common life, our life in the church, our synodal life. Together we decide on our commitment as a church and as individuals. We are not alone but are sustained by the community. We establish signs of the new reality we confess, individually and in the church.

4.2 While the different families that emerged from the Reformation agree on this general definition of ethics, they place their various emphases differently. A first indication is the way sanctification is understood. All are agreed in saying that faith is necessarily expressed by a genuine Christian life. A good tree can only bear good fruit. The lack of fruit indicates a lack of faith (Luke 6.43). The debate does not concern sanctification as such but involves the linking of justification, sanctification and ethics.

To the Lutheran Reformation justification is not a stage on the way to salvation prior to sanctification and final salvation. Justification is synonymous with salvation. It describes the new relation that unites believers to their Lord. Nothing could add to it. The view held is that it transforms the believer who has found grace in God's sight, and that this believer's life bears the fruits of grace. Lutheran theology, being careful not to given an opening to any possible resurgence of salvation through works, even hesitates to speak of a growth in grace through good works.[19] The underlying anthropology is fundamentally relational. Believers are justified when they turn towards God in faith. When they turn away from God the justified are sinners (*simul iustus et peccator*). Hence Luther would hardly allow a place for a *tertius usus legis*. This does not mean that the Law is meaningless for the justified. Its primary meaning will still be the *usus elenchticus*. The Christian life is not so much the acceptance of a new standard of action as an ability to be open to Christ.

Part of the Reformed tradition, as well as some of the quietist mystical, the Anabaptists, and later Methodist and Baptist traditions have always paid more attention to individual sanctification, growth in faith and the deepening of faith through and in a life that really is consistent in its *Nachfolge* [see 4.1]. Alongside the use of the law that leads to repentance (*usus elenchticus*), this tendency emphasises the law which guides the believer's life (*usus legis in renatis*). On the basis of a more literal reading of the

[19] This point was specially discussed when the recent Lutheran-Roman *Catholic Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* was being compiled. Being careful to reject growth in grace through works, the Lutherans are willing to pay only lip service to growth in grace: they stress that "sharing in the righteousness of Christ is always complete" (*ibid*. para. 39). What the Lutheran signatories have accepted here has been vigorously criticized by many German theologians who have seen in it a break with

hortartory [paraenetic] passages in the New Testament, this tendency lists the good ("holy") works that the converted sinner can do, with Christ now living in him or her. Sin is understood more frankly as an objective breach of the commandment that is the new norm guiding the life of the believer. Given this commandment, a Christian moral code exists – a set of rules and duties, the implementation of which gives a value to the life which now also pleases God. This law of God is not unconnected with natural law (i.e., according to an age-old tradition of the church, the capacity that creation has given to humans to distinguish good from evil). The anthropology underlying this approach can boast a long tradition in the church.

Undeniably these two approaches give expression to different views of justification. A Lutheran choice that is more relational is matched by a more linear approach that distinguishes sanctification from justification more clearly and places more stress than the Lutherans do on the ethical norm now defining the life of those who are justified.

We need not exaggerate the scope of this difference, the more so as today it is not so much a mark distinguishing the families that emerged from the Reformation from each other, as it is a difference appearing even within each family. While some, who are more reserved towards a world affected by moral decline, tend to identify moral commitment and sanctification in the believer, others on the contrary stress that this world is and remains God's good creation, and highlight first and foremost the signs of the reality of Christ's Lordship that one can appropriately place in the present; while individual sanctification frequently moves on to the second level.

4.3 This difference in the linking of justification, sanctification and ethics does however lead to significant consequences when we have to define the moral action that corresponds to the message of justification in a specific situation. Even if all the families that emerged from the Reformation claim that the Christian ethic seeks to indicate and express in actual life that believers and the world really do obtain their new identity in the encounter with Christ, some may present this ethic through a set of moral rules and duties, but others will avoid defining the act itself too precisely at all, and will stress that the new relation to Christ calls for redefining the appropriate moral act in each new situation.

Confronted with those who think that moral attitudes can be defined once and for all and that it is then sufficient just to apply them, Lutheran and Reformed traditions generally stress the ambivalence of every moral choice. Depending on the moment, the same moral attitude may be a choice for life that bears witness to Christ, or a choice for death. Of course there are situations where there is no occasion to speak of ambivalence and the moral attitude automatically asserts itself, for instance when a racist stance must be rejected or the death penalty must be opposed. However, the most frequent situation is that described in Romans 14. The example Paul sets out there may serve for many other moral situations. Has one the right to eat meat sacrificed to idols? Paul sees no difficulty in this, seeing that these idols do not exist. Those who are strong in their faith will eat these things. Those who are weak and who are not too sure as to the non-existence of pagan divinities will not eat of them. But let those who are strong abstain from eating, if by eating they cause the weak to stumble [Rom 14.21 etc.]. Thus the fact of eating this meat is not to be condemned in itself, but is so when it compromises the faith of the weak. In the name of Christ's has done, ethics will take care not to define an absolute moral choice and will be aware of the ambivalence of most of its choices.

How are we to tackle questions of modern bio-ethics, and contemporary environmental and economic challenges? Is Paul's approach in Romans 14 the most appropriate response or do we have more recent certainties?

The dialogue on understanding the approach that leads to a moral action is one of the major challenges made to contemporary ecumenical research, not only among families originating from the

Reformation teaching.

Reformation but also in these families' encounters with Rome and Constantinople. In this field dialogue between Christian families is still in its early stages.

5. Conclusion: Gratuitousness

By definition the grace of God is "gratuitous". The confession of believers in responding to that grace is also gratuitous. The community of believers does not seek – or rather can no longer obtain – anything more, for it has obtained everything, as everything "is finished" (John 19.30). The response to gratuitousness is first of all praise (doxology). True praise, in fact, is disinterested; it is the expression of the joy of living the Today God gives. This Today is possible, for tomorrow has already been gained.

Thus the Christian life relates to that other logic that is God's logic. In human logic we affirm that what is possible tomorrow depends on the reality of today. Otherwise no undertaking could function. Contrariwise, Christians know that what is possible today depends on tomorrow's reality and that this reality has already been finally gained. Contrary to all human logic our affirmation is that life has since Easter morning broken into death. Life now sets a limit on death. All our witness, all our church life, all our *Nachfolge* – our consistency [in following Christ] – in fact signals this wholly other reality that now defines our life.

Converted to God's plan, the believing community is not by itself and for itself. It is a penultimate datum, motivated solely by human beings and God's love for them. It proclaims the gospel gratuitously and is not consumed only by concern for safeguarding its own permanence. On the contrary, it has the courage to be lost, for its Lord has already found it.

RESPONSE TO "JUSTIFICATION, ECCLESIOLOGY, ETHICS" -

Josef Smolík

Introduction

In his lecture Professor A. Birmelé presented the perspective of the Magisterial Reformation. My task is to respond from the perspective of the First Reformation. I am a member of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren which integrates in itself different streams of the Reformation. Its historical continuity goes back to the Hussite movement and to the Unity of Brethren in the sixteenth century. After the Counter-Reformation when the historical continuity was interrupted, the remnants of the Czech Reformation had been allowed to build up Reformed and Lutheran congregations. So it happened that we have four confessions: Hussite, Brethren, Lutheran and Reformed. For me this richness of traditions is a positive phenomenon. It reflects the richness of the New Testament message. There is in the New Testament, as E. Käsemann has demonstrated, a unity in diversity. I am sure we have not yet discovered the fullness and richness of the Apostolic Church in the New Testament.

The lecture of Professor A. Birmelé presents the theme "Justification, Ecclesiology, Ethics" within the framework of the tradition of the Second Reformation on the basis of the recent ecumenical dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church. I fully agree with the main lines of this presentation in which justification is the "central point of scripture" and ecclesiology and ethics are integrated into the sphere of God's initiative. The theological concentration of the presentation which I welcome reminds me, as a member of the Faith and Order Commission for many years, of the repeated criticism of the work of that Commission. This criticism was expressed by the term "ecclesiocentrisms" which signified the concentration of the Commission on theological issues in general. Under the pressure of this criticism, creation, world and humankind entered more and more into deliberations of the Commission. Nevertheless, polarization remained; the tendency to concentrate on theological, dogmatic issues was strengthened by the growing participation of Catholic and Orthodox members. My comments may be motivated by this ecumenical experience of polarization between dogmatic issues and their relevance to the reality in which we live.

Let me add a hermeneutical and missionary comment: There is no doubt that the content of justification and sanctification has to be derived from Scriptures and that the dogmatic tradition should be respected. But we cannot simply repeat what is in the Bible or in confessions. The doctrine and the practice of sanctification is confronted with and exposed to many misunderstandings and temptations. We have to accept that as a challenge and interpret the article of justification in terms which take seriously questions of modernity and post-modernity. This approach can help us to understand this article better and deeper (for instance, against the background of society based on human achievement).

So my comments do not originate only in my ecumenical experience in the Commission on Faith and Order. They have their roots in my belonging to the tradition of the First Reformation. In this tradition church and world, justification by faith and the kingdom of Christ have been two points of polarization, sometimes of tensions and divisions. The theology of John Hus and of the Czech Brethren, of Lucas from Prague and of J. A. Comenius represent an effort to find theological balance between two poles, between Christ in the Eucharist and Christ sitting at the right hand of God, between present experience of justification and sanctification on the one side and the coming kingdom on the other side, between "already" and "not yet" in eschatological terms.

There are in the lecture of Professor Birmelé some passages which give me the starting point in the direction I have just mentioned. The new reality of justification "is a break with the logic of our

society which is centred in individualism, self-fulfilment, the power to have power."[1] I will concentrate on this "break with the logic of our society". This logic centred in individualism, self-fulfilment and the power to have power characterizes in different degrees European and American society in the last centuries since the Renaissance and the Reformation. Theology and churches have been exposed to this logic which represented very often a temptation with which they had to struggle in liturgical and pastoral life. The *Sitz im Leben* of the article of justification and sanctification was originally in liturgy and in pastoral care.

The Temptation of Individualism

The lecture presents very clearly the position of the Second Reformation: "It is the believers to whom God gives something essential: salvation. God gives this to each individual in the Word and the Sacraments and thus enables him or her to profit from the cross and resurrection of Christ. In this way he incorporates that individual into the fellowship of believers, the church which is the body of Christ. Here we have the work of the Holy Spirit, who removes our self-centredness,"[2] our false individualism. Means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments, elements sustaining and constituting the church are means "by which each individual is called a child of God. In this sense church is part of the event of justification."[3] A justified individual is not only set into a new relation to God, but at the same time into a new relation to his neighbour, is incorporated into fellowship of the church. "Biblical references enable us not to contrast the communion or fellowship of believers with God and the fellowship that comes into existence among believers. One and the same reality is involved. Fellowship or communion with God is synonymous with communion with the Word and Sacraments and with the communion and fellowship of believers with each other."[4] For those statements which stress the communion with God as synonymous with communion of the Word and Sacraments and with the communion of believers we can find good confirmation in the early writings of Luther (for instance *"Sermon von dem hochwürdigen Sakrament des heiligen wahren Leichnams Christi und von den Bruderschaften"* 1519[5]) in which some Scandinavian and Anglican theologians find a strong connection between the communion of believers and the communion in Christ. It is quite clear that for Luther it is Christ himself who sustains and safeguards existence of the church, not the individual believer. Nevertheless, this communion is not reciprocal. Christ is the church (Acts 9.4), but the church is not Christ, the church does not bear salvation in itself. Luther makes this very clear:

> Wir sind es doch nicht, die da kunden die Kirche erhalten, unsere Vorfaren sind es auch nicht gewesen, unser Nachkomen werdens auch nicht sein, sondern der ists gewest, ist noch, wird es sein, der da spricht, Ich bin bey Euch bis an der Welt ende. Wie Ebre 13 geschrieben stehet, Jesus Christus, *Heri, et hodie, et in saecula*.

One of the ecclesiological problems of Protestantism is the difference between those who identify the acceptance of grace with the incorporation into the body of Christ and those who understand these two separate events concerning their timing and theological quality. This touches the different understanding of the Spirit and of the church.[6]

In the Unity, sanctification was closely linked with the fellowship of believers. Baptized members of the Unity entered at confirmation into a covenant. The content of this covenant concerned belonging to Christ and to the fellowship of believers and growing in this fellowship by accepting discipline as a way of life. The Unity maintained at the beginning the Sacrament of penitence. Personal confession took place before the Holy Supper. The situation of those who accepted this way of life was

[1] A. Birmelé, "Justification, Ecclesiology, Ethics".
[2] *Ibid*., p 8.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] *Ibid*., p 6.
[5] WA 2, pp 738-758.
[6] WA 54, p 470.

designated as the situation after the "reception of grace". It was considered as a different situation from those who did not join the covenant. It was more this ecclesial situation than qualities of individuals which mattered. (Compare 1 Cor 7.14 or Luther's *Formula missae.*) These "qualities" have the function of an example, of a witness and served to deepen the fellowship and to be of help for members in their temptations and sins. Church discipline was understood in pastoral terms.

The tradition of the Czech Brethren is hesitant concerning such formulations which may provoke the impression that Christ and his body, the church are identical. The body of Christ given to us on the cross and received in the Holy Supper and the body of Christ which is the church are not identical. This was the point of tension between Luther and Lucas of Prague who made a difference between Christ present in the Eucharist and Christ sitting at the right hand of God. This difference has to be maintained. The eschatological emphasis on Christ sitting at the right hand of God is very important for the First Reformation starting with J. Hus up to the theology of J.A. Comenius. Comenius discerns three stages of justification. The last stage is exaltation.[7] Consequences of justification and sanctification are not limited to individuals, to the church. Alasdair Heron asks whether justification in the Westminster Confession should not be enlarged by "the third element of Barth's doctrine of reconciliation, by the theology of Christian vocation understood in the sense of the outworking of the purposes of God in the world under way to kingdom?"[8]

In the Catholic tradition there exists a hidden tendency to overestimate the body of Christ, the universal Church, in its role in the history of salvation. In Protestant churches after the Reformation, we can observe another tendency: to over-emphasize individual justification and conversion in such a way that it becomes the basis of the church. In the theology of Comenius we can observe the tendency to emancipate human individuals under the coming influence of the Enlightenment. In the following centuries the church is more or less in danger of being disqualified into a sociological entity and organizational structure. There are certainly different levels on which the predominance of the individualistic approach appears. The discussion about adult baptism opens deeper aspects of this problem.

Individualism conceived as a direct relation of the believer to God without mediation of the priest or of the church is very often considered to be one of the principles of Protestantism. Luther's teaching on justification is often falsely interpreted in individualistic terms. We do not find this kind of liberated individual in the ecclesiological concept of Luther or Calvin. It appeared later with the Puritans. Orthodox theology elaborates the inter-relatedness between individual and collective salvation, the individual experience in the Holy Spirit does not overshadow the collective integration into the body of Christ, on the contrary, it makes it deeper. The mystery of overcoming the tension between individualism and collectivism is in the active presence of the Spirit.[9] The dimension of fellowship in the context of sanctification, the communal aspect of it is very actual because the temptation of individualism is strengthened by neoliberalism and post-modern pluralism.

The Temptation of Power

The reform of the Mass by Luther can be considered as the practical application of the article on justification. For Luther, the Mass was understood as the good work par excellence which provides salvation, and became the source of the power and luxury of the church. Therefore, the article on justification by grace represents the principal instrument to deprive the church of its trust in economic and

[7] Similar ideas can be found in the Reformed Tradition as represented by K. Barth: God exalts man "to perfect fellowship with himself" (CDIV, 2, 130). In Christ, "the reconciliation of the world with God has taken place, the kingdom has already come to earth, the new day already dawned." (CD IV, 2, p 117).
[8] A. Heron, "Justification and Sanctification in the Reformed Tradition" in: *Justification and Sanctification in the Traditions of the Reformation*, ed. P.Réamonn, (Geneva: WARC, 1999), p 116.
[9] D. Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio,* (Munich 1954), p 134 elaborates this topic (*sobornost* in the Russian orthodoxy in the work of Chomjakov).

political power, to build the church upon the only true foundation, the gospel and the authority of Scripture. Thus the article on justification liberates the church from any bondage and makes her free for the Word. This freedom is the basis for the prophetic mission of the church and for its struggle against the forces of evil. The struggle of the Hussite movement against the Antichrist was led in the name of the sovereignty of Christ. Trust in the sovereignty of God in Christ is based on confidence in his grace, his powerless power. This theme is very often to be found in the Psalms. The article on justification is a challenge to the church whenever it is in danger of trusting in economic or political power. "It enables us to face the threats (of the modern condition) without succumbing to the temptation to suppress or minimize them. It frees us from the need to seek the assurance by self-justification. It makes us open for one another in love."[10] The doctrine of justification and sanctification has theological and practical consequences. E. Jüngel brought this into discussion by pointing out that his doctrine is not just one among others. According to Jüngel, "one can only speak of a consensus on justification when all ecclesial consequences have been drawn, i.e., when a consensus on ministry on sacraments, on the understanding of the church, etc., has been realized."[11] Birmelé's lecture reflects this problem:

> "Luther's purpose was not so much doctrinal as pastoral. He does not want to put forward a specific doctrinal formula that would govern all others. The issue is the actual message of the gospel – a message that overturns every theological approach and condemns its error since that approach does not submit to God's work alone, to the divine will expressed in Christ, to the message of salvation that lets the believer exist *coram deo*. Thus this is not a matter of establishing a specific doctrine as the arbiter and yardstick for all other doctrines; a frequent misconception even in recent theological discussions. The Reformation sees this major conviction as the 'principle' and 'standard' determining not only all theological knowledge but also all life pertaining to the church."[12]

There are also practical consequences of the article on justification for the life and place of the church in society which are very often hidden to the eyes of the established institutions of churches. Their "Babylonian" captivity in the structures of economic and political life had repercussions for the article on justification. This article was limited only to the personal, individualistic sphere, oriented towards personal eternal life so that grace became a cheap grace as D. Bonhoeffer has pointed out. Churches of the Radical Reformation had during their history far more sensitivity to this problem and can contribute to the ecumenical discussion on this subject.

As we are gathered in Strasbourg I would like to mention one illustration from the history of the relations of M. Bucer in Strasbourg and the Unity of Czech Brethren. M. Opočenský mentioned already the contacts of brother M. Červinka with Bucer. There have also been very warm contacts between Bucer and the bishop of the Unity, J. Augusta, who spent 14 years in prison. The Unity translated one of the books of Bucer, *Von der wahren Seelsorge* (On true pastoral care) into Czech.[13] In letters from Augusta the Unity expressed objections to passages in Bucer's book in which the function of the political magistrate in questions of church discipline appeared.

For the Unity of Brethren it was extremely important to separate political and spiritual power and not to allow political power to be exercised in matters of faith. Faith is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Therefore nobody can be compelled by force to accept faith. The freedom of belief and of conscience for Hussites and Catholics based upon this conviction was guaranteed in the Kingdom of Bohemia by law from 1485. In the time of the Counter Reformation this law was abandoned, the whole population was compelled to become Catholic. This had very negative consequences for the spiritual life of the country which is now the most secularized country in Europe. Cardinal J. Beran drew the attention of the Second

[10] L. Vischer, "The Reformation Heritage and the Ecumenical Movement" in *Towards a Renewed Dialogue: The First and Second Reformations*, ed. Milan Opočenský, (Geneva: Studies from the WARC 30, 1996), p 165.
[11] A. Birmelé, "Justification and Sanctification in the Traditions of the Reformation" in *Justification and Sanctification*, (Geneva: WARC, 1999), p 149.
[12] A. Birmelé, "Justification, Ecclesiology, Ethics", in this volume.
[13] R. Říčan, *A. Molnár, Dějiny Jednoty bratrské*, Praha 1957, p 436.

Vatican Council to this fact and endorsed freedom of conscience in matters of faith. The proclamation of Pope John Paul II concerning the death of John Hus in this year can be also understood in these terms.

The American Pilgrim Fathers confronted the problem of justification and conversion in the context of political structure of the society in the practice of the sacraments: Baptism and Holy Supper. Whereas the Second Reformation was rather positive concerning the use of political power (even though Luther specified a difference between the two realms), the Puritans underestimated in the beginning the function of power and identified in their vision of the kingdom of God the community of believers and the political society of citizens. The practice of Baptism and of the Holy Supper encountered serious problems. Justification and sanctification cannot be expected from all citizens. Jonathan Edwards struggled with this problem without finding a satisfactory solution. The suggestions represented as a Half-Way Covenant for baptism or Stoddardism in connection with the Holy Supper did not really help. The struggle within American Protestantism gives witness to the centrality of the article of justification and sanctification in the life of the church. It plays a substantial role concerning the place of the church in society and in ethical issues. The consequence that the American Protestantism did not find a common solution led on one hand to the social gospel which tried to build up the Kingdom of God within the secular democratic society by applying "Christian" ethical principles. The article of justification was transformed into a message of God's love in which human sin got lost (Richard Niebuhr). On the other hand, fundamentalists preserved this article and separated the community of believers from society. Their relation to society concentrated on mission with the aim of conversion.

The Temptation: Swimming with the Stream

In the lecture of Professor Birmelé we read: "In the river of this world we are *swimming against* the stream, not from a spirit of contrariness, but out of conviction: a tiring but essential exercise. We need renewed courage to go up stream to the source, to rediscover and make a fresh effort to proclaim the Gospel."[14] Churches find themselves in the "river of this world". To follow up this metaphor: ethical decisions and contents of churches cannot be determined by the stream of this world. "All families that emerged from the Reformation claim that Christian ethics seek to indicate and express in actual life that believers and the world really obtain their new identity in the encounter with Christ."[15] This "new identity" is understood among families of churches of the Reformation in two ways: "While some, who are more reserved toward a world affected by moral decline, tend to identify moral commitments and sanctification in the believer, others on the contrary stress that this world is and remains God's good creation and highlight first and foremost the signs of the reality of Christ's Lordship that one can appropriately place in the present, while individual sanctification frequently moves on to the second level."[16] Whereas those who are more reserved are running the temptation of becoming self-righteous, the others can easily be swept by the stream. The issue at stake is the deep inner motivation which transcends the temptation of self-righteousness and the danger of losing the character of salt. This motivation is rooted in the new existence in Christ and provides us with criteria for ethical actions which are individual and ambivalent. (Rom 14.21 is a helpful example.) In the era of globalization and consumption we have to recover a new lifestyle, "an asceticism for the sake of economic and spiritual ecology."[17]

In this context it is necessary to add that the First and the Radical Reformations discerned very early that fellowship of the church and the community of citizens cannot be identified. In Czech society in the 15th century, cities were multi-confessional (Hussites, Brethren, Catholics had the same rights). The Radical Reformation came to this knowledge later, after the experience of Jonathan Edwards which I

[14] A. Birmelé, *op. cit.*, p 11.
[15] *Ibid.* p 13.
[16] *Ibid.*

have mentioned above. An important presupposition of our ethical decisions is that we accept society outside the church, we are not trying to apply upon that society authoritatively our ethical norms, are open for dialogue. Any clerical step with the aim to impose Christian values and norms on society outside the church is counterproductive. The society is extremely resentful in this respect. National churches are very often not aware of their authoritative approach in ethical matters.

The most difficult tasks in ecumenical dialogue and in dialogue with science are problems of bio-ethics, of environmental and ecological challenges. In this context, the question of creation enters into our discussions. In the lecture we find the sentence that the article of justification governs "even a view about the world's creation."[18] Creation, and natural law have been considered as a bridge between secular and Christian ethics. "View about the world's creation" upon the background of the article on justification has to be elaborated. According to some scientists, (von Weizsäcker), the birth of modern science in the Renaissance was based on the understanding of the world in the context of created order and of incarnation. Does sanctification involve a new relation to creation?

Luther makes us aware of the temptation which becomes real in our time: Human beings do not want God to be God, they want to be gods themselves (H.J. Iwand). Their aspirations are to take history and the mystery of life into their own hands. These aspirations which govern many scientific approaches have to be challenged. The article of justification by grace puts us into a position from which reality of the world as God's creation and our position as creatures becomes manifest. It is from this position of justified creatures and justified creation, the position which we receive in the Holy Supper (elements of bread and wine represented in patristic theology creation) that our ecological and biological discussions respecting the mystery of creation and salvation should start.

Conclusion

The lecture of Professor Birmelé with its biblical argumentation and clear theology of the Reformation provides a very good basis for our discussion. The article on justification in the biblical interpretation of the Reformation helps us to avoid two extremes: to overestimate the soteriological function of the church, to identify christology and soteriology with ecclesiology, and it helps us to fully respect the sovereignty of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand this article in its biblical interpretation does not allow us to put the main emphasis on the justified and sanctified believer and to seek the basis of the church in faith of the believing community only. The stress on the Word and the Sacraments in theology of the Reformation maintains ecclesial continuity and prevents the community of believers to lose contact with the universal church or to become self-centred. In this context the issue of denominationalism would need further exploration.

A dogmatic approach to the article of justification and to other issues that became dogmas leads us to the question of methodology. Since especially the article on justification was originally not a doctrine, but rather a matter of pastoral care and liturgy, how much not only doctrinal but also other levels of consideration have to be introduced into ecumenical dialogue. This question gets a special urgency in the context of power and clericalism. Churches of the Radical Reformation help us to be sensitive to this non-theological factor which in Christian history very often distorted the article on justification in the practice of the church, weakened it or pushed this article from the centre of the living faith. The church sought its safety in powers of this world, the article on justification was reduced to a doctrine and lost its existential character. Nevertheless,

[17] W. Sawatsky, "Eschatology and Social Ethics for a New Ethical Initiative?: Reflections on the Prague Consultations" in *Apocalypticism and Millennialism: Shaping a Believer's Church Eschatology for the Twenty-first Century*, ed. Loren L. Johns, p 322.

the power of the Holy Spirit proved itself to be stronger than all temptations. This power rediscovered and preserved this "dogma". There are signs that it achieves a new ecumenical importance in our days.

[18] Birmelé, p 3.

RESPONSE TO "JUSTIFICATION, ECCLESIOLOGY, ETHICS" -
Donald. F. Durnbaugh

This essay is a fine contribution to ongoing ecumenical discussion from a solidly Lutheran perspective. André Birmelé presents his interpretation of classical Lutheran perspectives on justification, with its implications for ecclesiology and ethics in a clear, straightforward, and persuasive manner. In the first major section, stating and restating his thesis in several different ways, he emphasizes that justification by faith alone is not to be understood as the first among several important doctrines in Christian theology; rather it is be held as the foundational principle and central affirmation upon which everything else is built and rests.

He discards the opinion, found in some recent theological discussion, that justification by faith alone is "a matter of establishing a specific doctrine as the arbiter and yardstick for all the other doctrines…" Instead, it "enables us to live in the presence of God, becomes the quintessence of all Christian life and all the church's teaching." Only when this is accepted, can one move to consideration of how this forms the church (ecclesiology) or provides the basis for ethical decision.[1]

Attractive in this discussion is the repeated emphasis upon the communal character of faith understanding, of the nature of the church, and the basis of ethics. It is my impression that at times the direction of Lutheran theology in the past has been toward the individual, his or her acceptance of faith, and consequent participation in the church. This might well have resulted from the grounding of much Lutheran church life in national or established church regimes, in which attendance in worship was compulsory, and relationship to the church has been understood in sacramental participation (beginning with infant baptism), and adherence to creedal statements.

Given the relatively brief nature of this response, it may be more productive for our group's discussion to omit further delineation of the many merits of the essay and, instead, to focus on the areas which seem problematic from my faith orientation. This can be quickly begun by the observation that André Birmelé's paper so completely equates justification with salvation that sanctification is relegated to a very secondary and limited role. He draws a distinction between those traditions which see justification, sanctification, and salvation "in some linear sense" and the Reformation understanding which sees them as relational, or even identical. In his words: "To the Lutheran Reformation justification is not a stage on the way to salvation prior to sanctification and final salvation. Justification is synonymous with salvation. It describes the new relation that unites believers to their Lord. Nothing could add to it." [2]

He continues, perceptively, to remark: "Lutheran theology, being careful not to give an opening to any possible resurgence of salvation through works, even hesitates to speak of a growth in grace through good works."[3] He could, in fact, have continued by reporting that during the period often called Protestant scholasticism, in the late 16th and the 17th centuries, the fear of works-righteousness led some Lutheran theologians to hold that good works might actually be harmful to Christians. F. Ernest Stoeffler summarized: "Luther would have agreed with Melanchthon's teachings that good works should be expected of the Christian. Nicholas [von] Amsdorf, on the other hand, began to insist that they are hurtful… Especially great was the temptation of the later scholastics to exaggerate the forensic element in Luther's doctrine of justification. When their rigidly objective interpretation of justification was joined to an equally objective doctrine of baptismal regeneration the centrality of the saving relationship was rather effectively eliminated from 17th century Lutheran orthodoxy. The Christian was now thought to be a

[1] André Birmelé, "Justification, Ecclesiology, Ethics", paper prepared for the Prague VI Consultation, Strasbourg, February 11-15, 2000.
[2] Birmelé (2000), p 12.
[3] Birmelé (2000), p 12.

person who interprets the Bible in terms of the Lutheran symbols as the truth of these symbols is expressed in an orthodox system of theology."[4]

Another scholar, K. James Stein, corroborates that "Orthodoxy was charged with insensitivity to ethical issues. Fostering this deficiency were the fear held by some Lutherans that good works could become the enemy of one's salvation, [and] the stress on correct belief as the sine qua non of Christian discipleship to the negligence of an emphasis upon Christian obedience …"[5]

In this view, it was an excessive fear of good works that helped to bring forth the corrective of Pietism, that movement important in the development of several of the denominational families mentioned in the paper as always paying "more attention to individual sanctification" such as the Methodists and Baptists. In addition, Birmelé speaks of some Reformed and Anabaptists who emphasized sanctification. He could have added some of the other participants in the series of Prague consultations, such as the Church of the Brethren and Moravian Brethren, all with basic Pietist alignment.[6]

This emphasis on sanctification, so Birmelé, leads inevitably to the erection of moral codes and various degrees of legalism.[7] Candid appraisal of the histories of those named churches urging the sanctification of believers reveals evidence of these problems, often leading to division. In fairness, however, comparable candid appraisal of the history of Lutheranism reveals evidence of problems on the other side, most sharply described in the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer as "cheap grace" (mentioned by Birmelé), and passivism in the face of obvious worldliness and secularism.[8]

How best to proceed to a position that moves beyond traditional polarities? Here we suggest two approaches that might be helpful. One is to analyze the degree of adherence of what might be called the "sanctification school" of churches, as identified above, with the basic Lutheran position of justification by faith. For our purpose here, we largely avoid the otherwise necessary attention to the Reformed tradition, choosing rather to identify this school of faith with an Anabaptist/Pietist orientation, at times lumping the two historically discrete movements into one. As the Mennonite historian John Roth has recently argued, despite previous efforts to place Anabaptism and Pietism on opposite poles, they represent in important ways a comparable and compatible position.[9] Another is to approach the discussion through an analysis of the marks of the church, appropriately referred to by André Birmelé in his paper.

Justification and Sanctification in Anabaptism and Pietism

On the first point, we recall the careful study by Thomas Finger on Anabaptist leaders developed at the last consultation (1998).[10] His carefully considered conclusion was that with limited exceptions, Anabaptist theologians fully accepted justification by faith as foundational. In Finger's words, most Anabaptists "generally maintained, with today's Catholic-Lutheran *Declaration* [*Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 1997], that 'all persons depend completely on the saving grace of God for their salvation' and are 'incapable of turning by themselves to God… or of attaining salvation by their own abilities." Where, however, Anabaptist teachings were closer to that of Catholicism was in the way in which "the human will interacts with the divine will in the salvation process." Also, Anabaptists seemed

[4] F. Ernest Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden 1965), pp 193-84. See also the discussion in Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity: The Reformation to the Present Day* (New York 1984), pp 172-78).
[5] K. James Stein, *Philipp Jakob Spener: Pietist Patriarch* (Chicago 1986), p 22.
[6] Birmelé (2000), p 12.
[7] Birmelé (2000) pp 12-13.
[8] Birmelé (2000), p 11. In his paper for the Prague consultation, Carter Lindberg protested against the accusation of cheap grace ("the old chestnut") which reaches back to Luther's time, although certainly then with different phraseology – "Do Lutherans Shout Justification But Whisper Sanctification?: Justification and Sanctification in the Lutheran Tradition", in *Justification and Sanctification in the Traditions of the Reformation*, eds. Milan Opočenský and Páraic Réamonn (Geneva 1999), p 98.
[9] John Roth, "Pietism and the Anabaptist Soul", *Pietismus und Neuzeit* 25 (1999), pp 182-202. He discredits the long-standing disparagement of Pietism's effect upon Anabaptists made popular by Robert Friedmann, *Mennonite Piety Through the Centuries* (Goshen, Ind., 1949).
[10] Thomas Finger, "An Anabaptist Perspective on Justification", in *Justification and Sanctification*, (1999), pp 44-86.

closer to Catholic doctrine where the terms of righteousness and justification were applied to "the salvation process and its conclusion,… [rather] than to its beginnings, as Protestants most often did."[11]

In all cases, Anabaptism welcomed the focus of the Protestant message on the relationship of the individual with God, unlike the medieval practice of institutionalized religion. However, Anabaptism differed from magisterial Protestantism in its steady attention to the community: "Christian life intrinsically involved the practice of love, kindness, and care", only possible "in community with others."[12]

Moving to Pietism, we see that both Spener and Francke (who can serve as the leading proponents of Lutheran Pietism) made clear their solid affirmation of classical Lutheran doctrine on justification. Johannes Wallmann, perhaps the current leading scholar of Spener in particular and Pietism in general, concludes that "Spener placed himself unquestionably on the foundation of the Lutheran Church and the doctrine of the forensic justification [by faith] of the Book of Concord."[13] The American expert on Spener, K. James Stein, concluded: "Spener's penchant for glorifying God and for denigrating human ability in the salvation process left him no other course than to affirm stoutly this key doctrine of the Protestant reformation."[14]

However, it is significant to grant that for Pietists, forensic justification was insufficient by itself, however important as the foundation of the salvific process. All investigators of Pietism point to its stress on the new birth of the justified believer. W. R. Ward maintained that "the crux, however, was the inner spring of spiritual vitality, the New Birth, a doctrine which became a Pietist party badge not because it was peculiar to them but because of the prominence they gave it. The essence of the matter was how best to realize the priesthood of all believers." For Spener, so Ward, "justification was not just a forensic transaction based on faith; it was a real transformation of the regenerate. The world too might be improved through the real improvement worked by faith." The optimistic eschatology of the Pietist leader "afforded another motive to strive for the kingdom of God on earth", because his "hope of better times", Spener's eschatological motto, "offered another stimulus to the active conscience."[15]

Likewise according to Ward, the Franckean system, "heavily informed by his own dramatic conversion experience," put forward a set of stages of the Christian life, "beginning with a conviction of sin under the law, working through fear of the wrath to come to a total breach with the old Adam, a faith and a real sanctification continuously tested by rigorous self-examination." Later Methodist leaders followed very much this model as they examined the "religious experience of their class."[16]

Quoting Spener, K. James Stein explained the basis of Christianity, "it is certainly one of the new birth, in which our conversion (*Bekehrung),* justification (*Rechtfertigung*), and the beginning of our sanctification (*Heiligung)* likewise come to us. It is also the cause of all remaining sanctification or the fountain out of which everything that in our entire lives is good or which happens concerning us or to us must necessarily flow." As reported by an earlier scholar's estimate of Spener: "In justification we receive the merits of Christ as our own, in the new birth (regeneration) we are born out of Christ's seed into a new nature, and in renewal we perceive and practice his life in ours."[17]

Another leading historian of Pietism, Martin Brecht, concludes: "The center of Spener's theology, as in Orthodoxy, is built, to speak generally, on the order of salvation of humankind ordained by God. The first part of the divine order of salvation is made up of rebirth. To this belongs the initiation of faith, justification (understood as reckoning of the righteousness of Christ), along with the acceptance

[11] Finger (1999), p 50.
[12] Finger (1999), p 49.
[13] "Unmissverstandlich stellt sich Spener auf den Boden der lutherischen Kirche und der forensischen Rechtfertigungslehre des Konkordienbuchs" – Johannes Wallmann, *Der Pietismus: Band 4, Lieferung O 1, Die Kirche in ihrer Ge*schichte, eds. K.D. Schmidt and Ernst Wolf (Göttingen 1990), p 45.
[14] Stein (1986), p 192.
[15] W.R. Ward, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening* (Cambridge 1992), pp 57, 61.
[16] Ward (1992), p 61.
[17] Stein (1986), p 184.

of oneself as a child of God and the creation of the new human being."[18] For Pietists, the grace attained by faith acts to permit good works. Grace makes use of the law for its own purposes. Yet, justification remains central. As expressed in Spener's *Pia Desideria*: "We gladly acknowledge that we must be saved only and alone through faith and that our works or godly life contribute neither much nor little to our salvation, for as a fruit of our faith our works are connected with the gratitude which we owe to God, who has already given us who believe the gift of righteousness and salvation. Far be it from us to depart even a finger's breath from this teaching, for we would rather give up our life and the whole world than yield the smallest part of it."[19]

Spener and other Pietists loved to quote from Martin Luther's Preface to Romans: "Faith, however, is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1.13). It kills the old Adam and makes altogether different men of us in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Spirit. O, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith, and so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question rises it has already done them and is always at the doing of them."[20] Hence pure doctrine and holy living must necessarily be united for the believer to be saved. As a fire cannot exist that does not give both light and warmth, neither can faith exist which does not result in good. The 20th article of the Augsburg Confession directed: "Moreover, ours teach that it is necessary to do good works, not that we may trust that we deserve grace by them, but because it is the will of God that we should do them."[21] Put concisely, both Anabaptism and Pietism understood that grace not only justifies but provides ability to respond with good actions.

In sum, both Anabaptism and classical Pietism accepted the foundation of justification by faith, maintaining that subsequent good works, empowered by grace, were not requisite for salvation. Nevertheless, they further held that true justification would issue in constructive caring life. The distinction needs, then, to be drawn on the ways in which these movements held that sanctification (in whatever language used) needed to accompany justification if salvation were to be assured.

Marks of the Church

This point may be understood better if approached by the second point, namely the understanding of the marks of the church. As mentioned in the paper by Birmelé, the classical definition of the true church as the assembly of believers where the Word is rightly (purely, properly) preached and the sacraments rightly (purely, properly) administered.[22] From the Anabaptist/Pietist perspective, it is important to note that this definition fails to determine how the rightness is to be defined. It was left to an unnamed authority to determine correctness. It could be established historically, that rightness was finally determined by the prince bishop (using Luther's concept of the *Notbischof*), by delegation from him to the consistory (made up of clergy and officials), and throughout by the theological faculties of the universities. By the end of the 16th century, the symbolic books (i.e., Augsburg Confession, Book of Concord) provided the guidelines for the identification of true preaching and true administration of the sacraments.

Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder discussed this understanding: "The shortcoming of this [definition] is not simply its petitionary character. Obviously the entire meaning of these two criteria is utterly dependent upon what 'properly' is taken to mean. … But a more fundamental flaw in this

[18] "Das Zentrum von Speners Theologie bildet wie in der Orthodoxie, umfassend ausgedrückt, die von Gott festgelegte Heilsordnung für den Menschen. Den ersten Teil der göttlichen Heilsordnung bildet die Wiedergeburt. Zu ihr gehören die Entzündung des Glaubens, die Rechtfertigung, verstanden als Zurechnung der Gerechtigkeit Christi, samt der Annahme zur Gotteskindschaft und die Schaffung des neuen Menschen." – Martin Brecht, "Philipp Jakob Spener, sein Programm und dessen Auswirkungen", *in Der Pietismus vom siebzehnten bis zum frühen achtzehnten Jahrhundert*, ed. Martin Brecht (Göttingen 1993), p 374.
[19] Quoted in Dale W. Brown, *Understanding Pietism*, rev. ed., (Nappanee, Ind. 1996), p 62.
[20] Quoted in Brown (1996), p 63.
[21] Quoted in Stoeffler (1995), p 11.
[22] Birmelé (2000), pp 7-8.

statement of criteria is that the point of relevance in their application is not the church but its superstructure. The place you go to ascertain whether the word of God is properly preached in a given church is the preacher, or conceivably the doctrinal statement by which that ecclesiastical body is governed. The place you go to see whether the sacraments are being properly administered is again the officiant." Of course, Yoder concedes that the presence of the congregation is a given in this definition, as "the assembly of believers." For, he continues, "As a matter of fact since all of the Reformation statements were produced by state churches, we can be sure that the total community is assumed to be present under pain of punishment by the state." Apart from the givenness of the assembly of believers, the nature of the congregation is left open. "How many persons are present, in what attitude they are listening, what they understand, how they respond to what they have heard, to what they commit themselves, how they relate to one another, and with what orientation they return to the week's activities is not part of the definition of the church. We thus have criteria which apply to recognizing the legitimacy of a magisterial superstructure but not to identifying a Christian community."[23]

In some way cognizant of an earlier form of this kind of Anabaptist criticism, and finding the two marks somewhat lacking, because of the perceived failure to address the conduct of the believer, the Reformed tradition added the mark of correct discipline, ordinarily overseen by some form of presbytery and eldership. (It is commonly held by scholars that Reformed concern for Christian lifestyle developed in part because of Calvin's encounters with Anabaptists in Strasbourg.)[24]

This Anabaptist critique of the insufficiency of these classical marks is provided by the list developed by Menno Simons. In addition to the three named above, Menno added the marks of holy living, brotherly and sisterly love, suffering, and testimony or witness.[25] As has often been noted (perhaps objectionably so) by those in the Anabaptist/Pietist camps, Luther's early projection of a third form of the mass, never put into practice, reflected many of these qualities. Earnest Christians, wrote Luther, "should sign their names and meet alone in a house somewhere to pray, to read, to baptize, to receive the sacrament, and do other Christian works. According to this order, those who do not lead Christian lives could be known, reproved, corrected, cast out or excommunicated, according to the rule of Christ, Matthew 18. [15-17]."[26]

Many in the "sanctification school" have responded warmly to the marks of the church put forward a generation ago by ecumenical leader W. A. Visser 't Hooft in his book *The Pressure of Our Common Calling* (1959). He called these witness (*martyria*), service (*diakonia*), and fellowship (*koinonia*). In contrast to Luther's two marks, these are notably directed to the entire community of believers, to congregations. As John Howard Yoder pointed out, it would not be possible "to measure whether these requirements have been met only by looking at the functioning of the preacher or at the doctrinal stance of the church hierarchy."[27] André Birmelé well describes the significance of one of Visser 't Hooft's marks, *koinonia*, in current ecclesiological research as expressing the "spiritual bond uniting the believers [in] Christ (1 Corinthians 10.16-21)."[28]

An important consideration when viewing marks of the church is the world setting, as the locus of Christianity now shifts rapidly from North to South, from developed nations to developing nations. We suggest that the more dynamic portrayal of the marks as delineated by Visser 't Hooft, as compared with

[23] Jon Howard Yoder, "A People in the World", in *The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical*, ed. Michael G. Cartwright (Grand Rapids, Michigan 1994), pp 75-76; originally published in James Leo Garrett, Jr., ed., *The Concept of the Believers' Church: Addresses from the 1967 Louisville Conference* (Scottdale, PA. 1969), pp 250-83; 260-61.
[24] See the references in Franklin H. Littell, *The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism* (New York 1964), p 173.
[25] Discussed in Yoder (1994), pp 79-89.
[26] Ulrich S. Leopold, ed., *Liturgy and Hymns*, Vol. 53 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Helmut T. Lehman (Philadelphia 1965), pp 53ff. Note the discussion of the use of this proposal by dissenting groups in George H. Williams, "'Congregationalist' Luther and the Free Churches", *Lutheran Quarterly*, 19 (August 1967), pp 283-95.
[27] Yoder (1994), p 77.
[28] Birmelé (2000), p 6.

the more static, classical marks of magisterial Protestantism, are better suited to the outreach of Christianity in the 21st century.

Conclusion

In the Prague IV Consultation held in Geneva in 1994, Lukas Vischer presented a clear challenge to participants in his presentation on "The Reformation Heritage and the Ecumenical Movement." Among other salient points, he reminded his listeners that excessive attention to the heritage of those communions present in ecumenical encounters can be sectarian. This is not limited to those considered fundamentalists. Rather those belonging to Reformation churches are "clearly sectarian" in clinging to their tradition, "immobile and immovable." He depicted Lutherans as unduly holding to the "insights of the 16th century" as "providing the key to understanding the gospel." In comparable fashion, those in his own Reformed tradition unduly seize on what are understood as essential Reformed traits of a Reformed ethos, enduring over time.

The danger of such sectarianism, so Vischer, is that they are "self-congratulatory and tend to minimize the darker sides" of the Reformation heritage. In addition, they "enclose the churches in preconceived perspectives and force them to be what they are supposed to be." Such concentration is "spiritually impoverishing" and tends to continue "existing divisions.[29]

Lukas Vischer graciously omitted those churches derived from the First and Radical Reformations from this critique, but it would not be difficult to extend the criticism to those bodies with slight alteration of language. Here too one finds the tendency to focus on the early founders and the supposedly unified church vision of the first generation. He warned the churches not to perpetuate traditional antagonisms on the world scene in the ecumenical movement. The series of Prague consultations provides sufficient evidence of this temptation among all participants.

Nevertheless, Vischer maintained that certain learnings from the Reformation events could be useful in forming the world church. He identified three: 1) that a range of diversity can be fruitful. "It shows that there is no uniform way of transmitting God's truth from generation to generation." 2) that the church must be open to new developments that come as surprises; aligned with this was the understanding that the Reformation was an indigenous movement, reminding us that cultural factors are at play in world Christianity. 3) that communication across barriers must be a continuing process.[30]

Walter Sawatsky summed up Vischer's intent by observing that he "invited us to find a newer integration of emphases, such as a greater faith and ethics integration by speaking and living justice", by looking "beyond our rejections of the ascetical tradition, to recover an asceticism for the sake of economic and spiritual ecology."[31] In like fashion, Vischer saw vital possibilities of a recovery of the doctrine of justification by faith in the ecumenical context. For him, the teaching is one of freedom, of meaning: "It enables us to face the threats [of the modern condition] without succumbing to the temptation to suppress or minimize them. It frees us from the need to seek the assurance by self-justification. It makes us open for one another in love. Times of impasse and uncertainty tend to harden hearts. Jesus speaks of the loss of love as a sign of the last days. 'In those days love will grow cold in many' (Mt. 24.2). The main difference justification makes is that this prediction will not be fulfilled."[32]

Here is a concept of justification by faith that should unite all of us, however we understand the relation of justification, sanctification, and salvation. It frees us from defensiveness about our received theological tradition, from speculation about the mystery of the sequence of conversion and growth in

[29] Lukas Vischer, "The Reformation Heritage and the Ecumenical Church", in *Towards a Renewed Dialogue: The First and Second Reformations*, ed. Milan Opočenský (Geneva: WARC, 1996), p 163.
[30] Vischer (1994), p 169.
[31] Walter Sawatsky, "Eschatalogy and Social Ethics for a New Ecumenical Initiative?: Reflections on the Prague Consultations", in *Apocalypticism and Millennialism*: *Shaping a Believer's Church Eschatology for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Loren L. Johns (Kitchener: Ontario, 2000), p 322.
[32] Vischer (1996), p 165.

faith. Given the impact of modern technologies, the acids of modernity and post-modernity, the terrors of virulent nationalism and renewed tribalism, the promise of freedom here held forth should be attractive to all.

NEW LIFE IN CHRIST IN THE 21st CENTURY - FROM A EUROPEAN QUAKER'S STANDPOINT -

Eva I. Pinthus

I. Introduction

The overall title of this consultation is "New Life in Christ". I want to discuss what New Life in Christ meant to European members of the Religious Society of Friends in the 21st century, and how this relates to some of the points made in the working paper "Justification and Sanctification" under some of the headings needing further discussion.

The sources of Christian theology are the Bible, the writings of the Early Church and those of later theologians, spiritual writings based on experience of western and other cultures as well as tradition, literature and rational thinking. Influences over the centuries have been personal and group religious experiences, mysticism and accounts of spiritual journeys. These are also influenced by culture, political and social events, and today, by the insights of science, psychology, social sciences and anthropology.

Quaker theology is experiential and influenced by the experience of ongoing revelation which is already demonstrated in the Bible. The Bible therefore is an ongoing Word of God, but neither final nor the only one. The Holy Spirit reveals ever more insights into the Mysterious *Tremendum*. This insight is variously described, for instance, as the Inner Light of Christ which illuminates our understanding and to which we are to respond. It is not the human conscience, but the human conscience responds to the Light which is more akin to the Holy Spirit in traditional theology. The founding fathers but also mothers of Quakerism stressed the need to listen to the Inner Light, and hence their worship was in Silence, else one would be unable to hear what God, the Holy Spirit, the Light of Christ had to say to people.

Already by the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries we find scholars such as Schaff commenting that the Quaker teaching of the universal Inner Light which is, "Christ himself dwelling in man as the fountain of life, Light and Salvation – breaks through the confines of historical Christianity…"[1]

Similarly, W.A. Curtis sees Quakerism "as a protest against ecclesiasticism, sacramentarianism, biblicism, sacerdotalism, traditionalism and rationalism alike."[2]

He draws the conclusion that Quakers

> "more than is generally appreciated by their conceptions of scripture, the sacraments, Spiritual liberty, the Inward Light, The Indwelling Christ, the Essence of Worship and Ministry and the Meaning of Justification have led the way to views more widely entertained by the most thoughtful Christians in all the Churches and outside them."

As this paper is concerned with New Life in Christ, I will commence with some of the Christology of Early Friends. Though this may have been startling in the 17th century, it is no longer so in much of British theology today, though its practical application might be.

II. Early Quaker Christology

The tendency in Quaker Christology to this day is not to ask the question "is Christ divine?" but to ask "what is God like?" Thus Christ is valued rather more for what he reveals concerning the nature of God and his relation to human kind. They committed themselves in the words of John Baillie: "to the declaration that the things which Jesus stood for are the most real things… that matter most in all the world… to the declaration that love and not justice, love and not force, forgiveness and not requital,

[1] P. Schaff, *History of the Creeds of Christendom*, 1878, pp 869-870.
[2] W.A. Curtis, *History of Creeds and Confessions of Faith*, 1911, p 344.

giving and not getting, compassion and not aloofness, self-spending and not self-saving are the pillars on which the universe is built."[3]

There was an "insight into the truth that the relation between God and men is to be construed, not simply in metaphysical terms of essences and attributes, but in personal terms, and supremely in terms of love and response; and an insight into the moral structure of human personality as the field within which this divine – human encounter takes place and the divine – human relationship grows and develops."[4]

This is the wealth of meaning which is expressed in the Quaker doctrine of the Inward Light of Christ, for they insisted that "the Light is the Light of Christ."[5] and not simply an undefined and unspecified divine illumination; that this divine Light is not simply a part of the nature of humankind and not merely another name for reason and conscience. Thus in H.H. Farmer's words, "whether he knows it or not, whether he likes it or not, he stands right down to the innermost core and essence of this being, in the profoundest relationship to God all the time in an order of persons."[6]

Such a relationship is universal in scope and saving in intention, Friends believed; and therefore they felt it possible to express their sense of it by such a phrase as "the universal Divine Light of Christ."

Friends knew and know that this relationship requires the response of obedience and trust. However, they also knew that seemingly not much less universal is the refusal of that claim:

> "The Light of Christ shines, indeed, in every heart; but it is sadly possible to 'hate' the Light; and men are saved not simply through the possession of the Light but through obedience to it. Refusal of the claim which constitutes man's very being cannot but disrupt the whole course of nature and set a man against himself as truly as it sets him against God and his fellow men… Hence it follows, as the early Quakers invariably argued, that the reality of a man's knowledge of God is to be not merely to the range and fullness of his beliefs or the orthodoxy of his views, but to the moral quality of his relationships."[7]

The early Quaker dynamic quality of faith and witness was a re-apprehension of the significance of Christ which exhibits features closely similar to Schweitzer's "Christ Mysticism."[8] The Christ whom Friends taught,

> "was a Christ through whom, and unto whom were all things; a Christ whose light shone in every human heart, whose voice spoke in every demand of conscience and prompting towards love and truth. The service of Christ so conceived demanded the patient acceptance of obloquy and suffering, and under no circumstances permitted their infliction upon others. He was to be served in all the ways of common life, in simplicity and gentleness, integrity and love. All customs and practices, however deeply rooted in tradition and sanctioned by usage, were to be brought under the judgement of Christ and, at no matter what cost, were to be broken with if loyalty to Him seemed so to require. Those who so knew Christ knew themselves to have been delivered not only from the penalty of sin but also from its power. They found themselves gathered into a community in which were to be known, in reality and in daily life, both the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and the power of Christ's resurrection."[9]

This early Quaker teaching concerning Christ has been labelled as "extensive" and "intensive" aspects, or in Schweitzer's terms "Kingdom of God" and "Redemption through Christ", emphases in Christ-Mysticism. The extensive aspect

> "looks out on the whole drama of creation and of history, and sees shining though it all that Light which, once and for all, is defined and focused in Jesus Christ… it interprets the whole drama, and looks and works for the day when the kingdom of this world shall become the kingdom of God and of his Christ."

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[3] John Baillie, *The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity*, 1929, p 147.
[4] Maurice Creasey, *Early Quaker Christology*, 1956, pp 347-8.
[5] *Op. cit*., p 348.
[6] H.H. Farmer, *God and Men*, 1948, p 67.
[7] Creasey, *op. cit*., pp 349-50.
[8] A. Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, 1931, pp 378-9.
[9] Creasey, *op. cit*., pp 357-8.

The intensive aspect

> "looks within, and seeks to know the reality of Christ's presence and redemptive power in the deepest recesses of personal life and relationships. [It fears that] to claim simply on the grounds of an outward historic transaction upon the Cross a redemption that does not, in reality and in truth, impart even there cleansing, renewal and power as a daily experience."

Thus from the beginning Friends knew

> "that the coming of the Kingdom in the outward cannot be hastened save by the community of those in whose hearts its power is already owned and obeyed. To sustain both these emphases simultaneously and in a living relationship has never been easy, and… has scarcely ever been achieved since the earliest days of Christianity. From the time of the Reformation onwards, there has always been the fatal tendency for the two to become divorced, with the result that the 'Kingdom of God' or 'extensive' emphasis has tended to approximate more and more towards what Schweitzer called '*Kulturprotestantismus'* or a shallow preaching of the 'social gospel', while the 'Redemption through Christ' or 'intensive' emphasis has never for long been able to prevent itself from sliding over into pietism or a more or less crudely conceived evangelicalism. But the early Friends, if their teaching is correctly estimated…did in fact succeed in holding both emphases within a single living and powerful experience; and they were able to do this by reason of their at any rate partial apprehension or recovery of a vital insight into the significance of Jesus Christ. In this fact lies much of the theological importance of early Quakerism."[10]

However, early Friends were no skilled theologians. The language of the "Inner Light" is unable by itself to express the full truth of the Christian Gospel. This in our own days is complicated by the fact that European Friends are not, with exceptions, schooled in theological language, do therefore not use it nor understand it. Theologians on the other hand are not schooled, with exceptions, to hear and/or observe the reality of Friends' experiences expressed so unacademically.

The early understanding of Christ is to be observed in the Quaker conception of the Church. Both extensive and intensive aspects have important implications.

The extensive aspect leads to today's emphasis on the Universalism which some Quakers would emphasise.

> "If Christ has always had a people, and if the saving activity of Christ ranges more widely than the confines of the Christian Church in any of its historical manifestations, then it would seem to follow that the idea of a 'latent Church', in Tillich's phrase, must be taken seriously, and Canon Raven's warning must be heeded when he says that we cannot 'confine the spirit's operations to the baptised or the converted, to the Church or the Churches, without being guilty of the unforgiveable sin which presumes to ascribe works of love and joy and peace to Beelzebub.[11] [12]

Membership of the Church therefore hinges on hearing and obeying as the real church. It is akin to the concept of the "gathered Church". Creedal professions are alien to it.

Bishop L. Newbigin[13] in discussing the nature and function of the Church reminds us that in the main the discussion has focused on the "catholic" and the "protestant" positions. The tendency is to ignore "a third stream of Christian tradition which, though mingling at many points with the other two, has yet a distinctive character of its own."[14]

He names this tradition "Pentecostal". I fear today this has connotations far removed from the European Friends' faith and practice, since in England at any rate, the Pentecostal churches are mainly Afro-Caribbean and joyfully exuberant in their worship, almost the complete opposite to the Quaker quiet Meeting for Worship. But Newbigin's description is applicable to the Quaker position.

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[10] Creasey, *op. cit.*, p 359.
[11] Creasey, *op. cit*, p 363.
[12] C. Raven, *Natural Religion and Christian Theology*, 1952 (Gifford Lectures, 2nd Series), p 151.
[13] L. Newbigin, *The Household of God*, 1953, pp 94-5.
[14] *Op. cit.*, p 87.

> "The Church lives neither by her faithfulness to her message nor by her abiding in one fellowship with the apostles; she lives by the living power of the Spirit of God."[15]

The ecumenical debate therefore needs to be "criticised and supplemented from this third position… [it] has to become three-cornered."

Early Friends' conception of the relation between the Word, the historic Christ and the Holy Spirit was in their view in harmony with biblical revelation, and indeed constituted its very essence. They thus belong to this third stream of Christian tradition. Their view is for instance based on the farewell discourses in the Fourth Gospel, the latter part of Romans 8, both taken in the context of the Johannine Prologue. C.H. Dodd, both from a Hebrew and a Greek perspective in interpreting the Prologue, shows it as presenting the whole creation as the progressive embodiment of a divine and revelatory purpose. [16]

Friends in the 17th century were feeling after an interpretation of Christ which was then very far from being shared. Their insights are still valid today though find much more general acceptance among Christians today. Their expression in doctrinal form might appear defective, but were validated "even more truly in lives of a quality which compelled the admiration of many who were not [necessarily] able to recognise the deep springs from which they were nourished."[17]

Here indeed was new life in Christ.

I now want to turn to the implications of this New Life in Christ for Quakers today. Consciously or unconsciously they see themselves living in the Kingdom of God, though the phrase "realised eschatology" may be little known. A life of obedience within the worshipping community giving expression globally is their experience of New Life in Christ.

III. Conceptual Shifts in Quaker Formulations in the 20th Century

1. Preamble

10 percent of the British population in the 17th century were members of the Religious Society of Friends. Today, we are a small minority, many of whom are refugees from the mainstream churches or have no practising Christian background. They tend to be well educated, working in the professions, and, mainly for ethical reasons, no longer in the manufacturing sphere. Their scientific and/or technical knowledge is often better developed than that of great European literature. Thus some have difficulty with religious language which is inevitably a language of analogy, metaphor and symbolism. This handicap, of course, they share with the majority of people in the developed world. To this must be added the prevalent European individualism as well as psychological explorations.

Quaker theology is rational rather than speculative, though some "play" with New Age ideas. The influence of other faiths can also be sometimes detected as we live in a multi-faith, multi-ethnic society and actively participate in multi-faith dialogues. This schools us to communicate in language non-Christians can understand. A Church which insists on the ongoing inspiration of the Holy Spirit accessible to everyone might therefore be vulnerable and in need of some kind of authority.

2. Authority and Tradition

2.1 Authority

Authority is vested in the worshipping community. The stress on "…that of God in every one" does not deny the Evil that is in the world. It is "to be trampled underfoot". There is both darkness and light. But the stress on the sinfulness of human beings and the related original sin from which there is no escape except through the sin offering of Christ and justification by faith, is marginal in modern British Quaker theology. We are to listen to God, now, and act accordingly, rather than rely on the death on the

[15] *Op. cit.*, p 96.
[16] C.H. Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 1953, pp 272 & 282.

cross centuries ago. This lays a greater stress on the worshipping community which helps the individual to distinguish between inspiration of the Holy Spirit and one's own inner sometimes evil thoughts. One cannot stress too much the differences between the Quakers and the Ranters, and even more so today when individualism is rampant.

The equality of all human beings has always been stressed, for all are enlightened by the Light of Christ, whether they are aware of it or not. This has led to a stress on the equality of men and women, the disuse of titles and the rejection of outward forms of hierarchy.

The rejection of power based hierarchies on the one hand and the need to verify the inspiration of the individual by the Holy Spirit by the listening of the worshipping community on the other, resulted in Friends' peculiar way of doing church business. Business too is an activity of worship. Friends reject the notion of division between sacred and secular. Thus a business meeting is called "Meeting for Worship for Church Affairs." The presiding clerk, a servant not leader of the meeting, nominated only for a given period, is to become aware of "the sense of the Meeting", but is not to steer it. Anyone may speak. To preserve order the clerk will call an individual who wishes to speak, and see to it that due silence is kept between contributions so that the Holy Spirit may be heard. Greater periods of silence are called for if there is too much speaking or arguing. The Holy Spirit does not lead to chaos but into unity. This requires self-discipline. Thus the discipline of the clerk is accepted, but not if it is perceived as exercising human power.

2.2 Tradition

Quakers' attitude to tradition and its possible authority is ambivalent. The traditions of the mainline churches are on the whole ignored. They are seen and felt to be patriarchal, anti-feminist, homophobic and authoritarian. They seem to ignore ongoing revelation and the cultural influences of former time and place. Their close connection after 313 AD with the power of the state is judged to have been disastrous. Mystical traditions on the other hand are rarely questioned and reference to the teaching of the Early Friends is acceptable. This however, is not accorded the authority that the teaching of the Early Church has in the mainline churches.

The authority of the teaching of individual Friends is derived from the matching of a life lived with the teaching given, responded to by corporate experience and acceptance. If it is true it will endure. If not, it will be forgotten or ignored in time to come.

2.3 Discipline

Friends do not insist on uniform creedal formulations. They have, however, a book of *Discipline, Christian Faith and Practice*, which encompasses widely divergent views and experiences. Seriously is taken this extract from the postscript to an epistle to "the Brethren in the North" issued by a meeting of elders at Balby in 1656:

> "Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided; and so in the light walking and abiding, these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

3. Christology

Much of Quaker theology is biblically based, illuminated by ongoing revelation. It is, however, noticeable that the teaching of Jesus and therefore the Gospels are far more used than the Epistles. The tendency is towards an incarnational Christology. The difficulty therefore, of holding together extensive

[17] Creasey, *op. cit.*, p 376.

and intensive aspects is apparent. However, Friends will stress again and again that faith and works, worship and service are totally intertwined, the two sides of the ONE coin, however defective this may appear to mainline churches. Yet in the ecumenical scene in Britain, Quaker worship is much appreciated and their peculiar service much sought. I have to confess that it is the mainline churches which plead with Friends to participate ecumenically rather than Friends wanting formal association.

To reiterate, the tendency today is that European Quakers are comfortable with an incarnational Christology. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. But many Friends would express the divinity of Christ in very unconventional ways. From the beginning Friends have stressed the Oneness of God. So for instance Penn, regarding the trinity:

"These three are truly and properly One: ONE NATURE as well as will."[18]

and Penington, "Three there are, and yet One."[19]

Today the concepts of Light, Light of Christ, the Inward Christ, Holy Spirit, the Otherness of God, are much more commonly in use. As the biblical titles for God are all male ones, we tend to avoid them. Gerald Priestland talks about a certain "weakness" in God.[20] I would not thus describe God's voluntary abdication of exercising visible power, but since the Holocaust many of us are very conscious of this abdication. The symbolism of the cross is therefore very potent. Gerald Priestland expresses it thus: "(when the love of God as shown on the cross is responded to) it then becomes the mightiest power in the universe: comforting, healing, pacifying and resurrecting… we, mankind (human kind) stand between God and his power to be active through us. It is not our power but His; yet we have the free will to frustrate it."

The stress on realised eschatology remains, even when it is not referred to in accustomed theological language. Christ reigns now. However, his reign is also a process, and his work of restoration is also a future consummation.

> "That Restitution of all things, spoken by the Mouth of all God's Prophets is not wholly fulfilled. But both the times thereof are begun, and Jesus Christ is about and carrying on the work of restitution foretold. The Deliverer is come out of Zion, and the Restorer of Paths to dwell in is come; he is on his way: and he will yet more fully and gloriously appear to fulfil the Promises spoken of him."[21]

In today's so-called democratic societies "Kingdom" is not always a helpful symbol though early Friends stressed constantly that

> "Christ was come and had set up his Kingdom above sixteen hundred years since, according to Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's prophecy… And when Christ was come he said his kingdom was not of this world; if it was, his servants should fight, but it was not and therefore his servants did not fight. Christ saith, 'All power in heaven and in earth is given to me', so then his kingdom was set up and he reigns. And we see Jesus' reign, said the Apostle; and he shall reign till all things be put under his feet, though all things are not yet put under his feet, nor subdued."[22]
>
> This is part of the reason for Friends Peace Testimony to which I will refer below.

IV. Implications of New Life in Christ for Friends

1. Consequences

The New Life in Christ means belonging to the worshipping community, accepting its discipline and being prepared to serve. The two words occurring again and again about membership in the Religious Society of Friends are commitment and belonging. Francis Howgill in 1663 wrote: "The kingdom of

[18] W. Penn, *A key opening the way to every common understanding*, London, 1694, p 14; M. Davie, *British Quaker Theology since 1895*, Edwin Mellin Press, 1997, p 23.
[19] I. Penington, *An Examination of the Grounds and Causes*, etc., London 1660, pp 9-10; Davie, *op cit*., p 23.
[20] G. Priestland, *Reasonable Uncertainty: A Quaker Approach to Doctrine*, QHS, 1982, p 44.
[21] G. Fox, Postscript to *"The Malice of the Independent Agent Again Rebuked"*, 1676, pp- 26-27.
[22] G. Fox, *Journal*, ed. J. Nickalls, CUP, 1952, pp 19-20.

Heaven did gather us and catch us all, as in a net… we came to know a place to stand in and what to wait in."[23]

Young Friends in 1986 put it this way:

> "When we consider the criteria for membership, the two greatest factors are community and commitment. Not just a practical commitment, but a spiritual willingness to grow and learn, out of which our practical commitment will evolve."[24]

> "The spiritual understanding of membership is, in essentials, the same as that which guided the 'Children of Light'… [It] is still seen as a discipleship, a discipline within a broadly Christian perspective and our Quaker tradition, where the way we live is as important as the beliefs we affirm."[25]

From the above modern extracts it will be seen that no creedal statements are required but a desire to worship in this particular community and to serve within its confines locally, nationally and/or internationally.

> "It is often hard to accept that other people have their own valid relationship with God, their own specialness and insights. We are not just disciples – we are disciples together. Our vision of the truth has to be big enough to include other people's truth as well as our own."[26]

Our Advices and Queries tell not only what worship is for but also to attend regularly.

> "Come regularly to meeting for worship even when you are angry, depressed, tired or spiritually cold. In the silence ask for and accept the prayerful support of others joined with you in worship… Let meeting for worship nourish your whole life."[27]

In our book of Christian discipline are included accounts of the lives of some individual Friends through the centuries, whose commitment is an example to us. New Life in Christ is a life long journey. Friends are seekers, but "also the holders of a precious heritage of discoverers. We, like every generation must find the Light and Life again for ourselves. Only what we have valued and truly made our own, not by assertion but by lives of faithful commitment, can we hand on to the future… In the Religious Society of Friends we commit ourselves not to words but to a way."[28]

2. Commitment, a Way of life (Ethics)

All Christians would assert that their faith influences their way of life. Non-conformity in Britain in the past has stressed this more than the mainline churches. However, because Friends lean rather more towards an embodiment of Christ in their lives, commitment is seen "primarily in terms of discipleship" rather than "clear cut tests of doctrine".

> "These find expression in our testimonies, which reflect the Society's corporate insights, and a loyal recognition of this is to be expected, even though precise agreement on every point is not required. We are aware of our continual failures in our discipleship."[29]

This echoes Phil 3.12-14 RV but used by Friends in the plural.

[23] Francis Howgill's "Testimony concerning Edward Burrough", 1663 in E. Burrough, *The Memorable Works of a Son of Thunder*, 1672, prelim. leaf, e,3.
[24] "The Young Quaker", Vol. 32, 1986, No. 4.
[25] *Quaker Faith and Practice*, (Q.F. & P.) The Book of Christian Discipline of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, 1994, 11.01.
[26] Beth Allen, "The Cost of Discipleship", *Friends Quarterly*, Vol. 23, 1984, p 306.
[27] "Advices and Queries", Q.F.& P., 1.02-1.10, 1994.
[28] Q.F. & P, p 17.
[29] Q.F. & P. 11.48.

2.1 Underlying Theology of our Testimonies

John 1.9: "The real Light which enlightens every man born into the world." Friends refer to this as "that God in them all"[30] or, "God is everyone" as Advice 17 uses it.[31]

As already commented upon above, the stress on the worshipping community is essential to right discernment in decision making. This is essential both for the individual as well as for the Religious Society as a whole when new work is undertaken.

> "True concern [emerges as] a gift from God, a leading of his spirit which may not be denied. Its sanction is not that on investigation it proves to be the intelligent thing to do… it is… a matter of inward experience, that there is something that the Lord would have done."[32]

The importance of the local worshipping group in fostering active concerns cannot be overemphasised, but it may also be though the proposal for action has every appearance of good sense, as the meeting waits before God it becomes clear that the proposition falls short of "concern". Amongst many others these two advices will serve: "While corporate guidance is of great value in controlling individual extravagance, it is a source of great danger to the church if it is opposed to a genuine individual concern"[33] and on the other hand: "Think it possible that you may be mistaken."

2.2 Peace Testimony

Best known of our testimonies and perhaps today the most difficult one is our Peace Testimony. Its origin is to be found in G. Fox's statement before the Commonwealth Commissioners in 1651:

> "I told them I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars, and I knew from whence all wars did rise, from the lust according to James' doctrine." (St James' Epistle 4.1)[34]
>
> So also the declaration to Charles II in 1660, part of which reads:
>
> "All bloody principles and practices we do utterly deny, with all outward wars, and strife and fighting with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever, and this is our testimony to the whole world. That spirit of Christ by which we are guided is not changeable, so as to command us from a thing as evil, and again to move unto it… The spirit of Christ which leads us into all Truth will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the Kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of this world… 'Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.' (Is 2.14; Micah 4.3)"[35]

There are many more early statements of the Society's corporate witness setting out the basic principles of the peace testimony. They served to distinguish Quakers from those suspected of plotting to overthrow the established authorities, so for instance Robert Barclay,[36] William Penn[37] and many others.[38]

However, Friends are well aware that opposition to all wars, all preparation for war, the use of weapons, coercion, by force and military alliances alone would be a poor peace testimony, more akin to keeping a personal conscience clean than to enabling peace and justice to reign on earth. As Britain, since the fifties, has a professional army and therefore no more need for a national service, the witness of conscientious objection to military service is no longer an issue in Britain, but elsewhere Friends' opposition to all forms of violence imposes upon them the responsibility to seek alternative responses to conflict and injustice.

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[30] G. Fox, *Journal, op cit.,* p 263.
[31] Q. F.& P. 1.02,17.
[32] Roger Wilson, "Authority, Leadership and Concern", 1949, Swarthmore Lecture, p 12 (13.07).
[33] W.C. Braithwaite, "Spiritual Guidance in the Experience of the Society of Friends", 1909, Swarthmore Lecture, p 101 (13.10).
[34] G. Fox, *Journal, op. cit.,* p 65 (24.01).
[35] "A declaration from the harmless and innocent people of God, called Quakers, against all plotters and fighters in the world", 1660, pp 1-3 (extracts thereof 24.4).
[36] Robert Barclay, "Apology for the true Christian divinity", prop. 15, sec. 13, 1678, London edn., pp 382-3 (24.02).
[37] William Penn, "Some fruits of solitude", 1693, maxims, pp 537, 540, pp 543-46 (24.03).
[38] Q. F. & P. 19.45-47.

From the beginning Friends have tried to prevent violence and wars breaking out by speaking "Truth to Power" and to relieve the suffering on both sides of a conflict. Over the centuries it has become known that Friends do not take sides and that they are to be trusted. So called Quaker embassies and diplomats, conferences make this their aim. However,

> "Friends are not naïve enough to believe that such an appeal to 'that of God' in a dictator or in a nation which for psychological or other reasons is in an aggressive mood – will necessarily be successful in converting the tyrant or preventing aggression. Christ was crucified; Gandhi was assassinated. Yet they did not fail. Nor did they leave behind them the hatred, devastation and bitterness that war, successful or unsuccessful, does leave."[39]

Sydney Bailey comments:

> "I do not know whether Quakers have special aptitudes or skills as mediators, but they tend to sympathise with both sides in an international dispute, as both are usually victims of past mistakes. Because Quakers believe that there is that of God in all people to which others may respond, they not only hope for the best but they expect the best, believing that bad situations are likely to get better with the input of a little honest goodwill. And because they consider that force nearly always creates more problems than it solves, Quakers feel impelled to do what is possible by reason and persuasion to resolve conflicts involving or threatening armed force."[40]

Some years later, stressing that peace is a process, he had this to say:

> "The follower of Jesus is to discover and then promote the Kingdom of God. That Kingdom has two tenses: it is already here, in each one of us; and it is still to come, when God's goodness becomes a universal norm. We are to live now 'as if' the Kingdom of God were already fulfilled. Peace begins within ourselves. It is to be implemented within the family, in our meetings, in our work and leisure, in our own localities, and internationally. The task will never be done. Peace is a process to engage in, not a goal to be reached."[41]

It is clear to European Friends that prevention is better than cure. Thus a large part of discipleship in the field of the Peace Testimony today is concerned with attempts at prevention. Locally, nationally and internationally they are active in peace education, mediation, conflict resolution, peace tax campaigns etc.; in training trainers and in academic research. Often the initiative arises as a concern by one individual. The concern being tested, which can be a long process, may then be carried out.

Here are two examples: "Mothers for Peace was the brainchild of two 85 year old Quakers, Lucy Behenna and Marion Mansergh. Taking to heart the message on a Quaker poster, 'World peace will come through the will of ordinary people like yourself', they put their life savings into a scheme to send groups of peacemakers to visit two superpowers – the USA and the Soviet Union. Mothers were chosen because they have a special affinity with one another and a common desire to secure a safe and peaceful world for their children."[42]

From this beginning in 1981 the work has continued and extended, involving women from many countries and cultures.

One individual Friend, George Murphy, having had the concern to set up an academic School of Peace Studies charts the six years it took to set it up.[43] It has since become the largest and most respected University Department of Peace Studies in the world, at Bradford.

Much of the diplomatic work of Friends cannot be publicised for obvious reasons. Much work under the heading of "Peace" started by Friends, have become independent organizations such as OXFAM for instance. Building the institutions of peace requires social justice and the right sharing of the

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[39] Kathleen Lonsdale, "Removing the causes of war", 1953, Swarthmore Lecture, pp 68-9 (24.26).
[40] Sydney Bailey, "Non-official mediation in disputes: Reflections on Quaker experience" in *Royal Institute of International Affairs*, International Affairs, Vol. 61, 1985, p 208 (24.36).
[41] Sydney Bailey, "Peace is a Process", 1953, SwarthmoreLecture, p 173 (24.57).
[42] "Mothers for Peace, Bridge Builders for Peace", 1983, p 2.
[43] George Murphy, quoted in appendix 3(a) of Meeting for Sufferings, The Nature and Variety of Concern: the report of a working party, 1986, p 22 (13.04).

world's resources, and a care for the universe. This in turn demands education and training both at grassroots level and at governmental level.

> "The first Friends had an apocalyptic vision of the world transformed by Christ and they set about to make it come true. The present generation of Quakers shares this conviction of the power of the spirit, but it is doubtful whether it will transform the world in our lifetime, or in that of our children or children's children. For us it is not so important when the perfect world will be achieved or what it will be like. What matters, is living our lives in the power of love and not worrying too much about the results… We… lose the craving for success, always focusing on the goal to the exclusion of the way of getting there. We must literally not take too much thought for the morrow but throw ourselves wholeheartedly into the present. That is the beauty of the way of love; it cannot be planned and its end cannot be foretold."[44]

2.3 Other Testimonies

Our Advices and Queries which embody Quaker testimonies remind us to respect that of God in everyone and thus to consider not only the themes just mentioned, but also to use our gifts in the service of God and the community, letting our lives speak. We are asked to bring into God's Light our emotions, attitudes and prejudices; to discern new growing points in the social and economic life; to remember our responsibilities as citizens which may lead us to breaking the law of the land; to practise strict integrity in business; to use money and information entrusted to us responsibly and with discretion. Thus we do not take an oath as this implies a double standard of truth. We are to resist the desire to acquire possessions or income through unethical investments, speculation or games of chance. We are encouraged to live simply, not to buy what we don't need or cannot afford.

We are to keep ourselves informed about the effects our style of living has on the global environment and economy. In view of the harm done by the use of alcohol, tobacco and other habit-forming drugs, we are to consider limiting and/or refraining from their use. George Fox in 1656 encouraged us to "be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone."[45]

Thus New Life in Christ requires a different and new lifestyle from that which surrounds us in order to grapple with the problem of justice without which there can be no peace.

2.4 Forgiveness and Reconciliation

However, that alone does not cope with the problem of what the churches call sin, psychologists call it the dark side of our conscious self. Knowing our own need for forgiveness and grace enables us to be involved in the difficult task of reconciliation. An ability to forgive and to accept forgiveness might be a doorway that leads to new beginnings.

In 1693 W. Penn wrote:

> "we are too ready to retaliate rather than forgive or gain by love. Let us then try what love will do. Force may subdue, but love gains: and he that forgives first, wins the laurel."[46]

This will still do today in personal relationships. Nationally and internationally the South African model "The Truth and Reconciliation Commission", is a first try that can be called moderately successful. New Life in Christ cannot be said to aim at worldly success, yet "be ye reconciled" echoes

[44] Wolf Mendl, "Prophets and Reconcilers", 1974, Swarthmore Lecture, pp 101-102 (24.60).
[45] G. Fox, *Journal, op. cit.*, p 263.
[46] W. Penn, "Some Fruits of Solitude", 1693, in a collection of the works 1726, Vol. 1, p 843.

throughout the Bible. Friends Queries asks us "in what ways are you involved in the work of reconciliation between individuals, groups and nations?"[47]

> "Reconciliation, in the biblical sense, is not about ideologies or beliefs but about people, their relationship and response to God, and their relationship and response to each other. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, and he calls each of us to a ministry or vocation of reconciliation."[48]

Margarethe Lachmund, a German Friend, with wide experience first of Nazi Germany, and after the war, with the problems of East and West Germany, Christianity and Communism, stresses that by investigating how Christ himself met the tensions of his time, solutions can be found.

> "Jesus knows no fear, nothing holds him apart from other people. His fearlessness, however, flows from his communion with God… The courage for clarity and the strength to stand up for truth are repeatedly demanded of us. However, the secret lies in the way in which truth is spoken. If it is spoken with contempt, bitterness or hatred, it results in bitterness; if however, truth is spoken in love, the door to the other's heart can slowly open so that the truth can perhaps have some effect. We can help to ease the tension… if we fulfil simultaneously Christ's two commandments – the command to love and the command to speak truth. A synthesis of these two must be found. Out of fear, we may betray truth; … a desire for peace without truthfulness is worthless and does not bring about peace; without love truth has no effect because it is not heard."[49]

In training oneself and others in the skills of reconciliation and mediation Mary Lou Leavitt stresses the need for "naming" to bring the conflict out in the open, the skill of listening and letting go. If we are to do the naming, listening and letting go well, "we need to have learnt to trust that of God in ourselves and that of God in those trapped on all sides of the conflict with us. And to do that well, I find I need to be centred, rooted, practised in waiting on God. That rootedness is both a gift and a discipline, something we can cultivate and build on by acknowledging it every day."[50]

All Christians will have numerous examples of how their faith has effected reconciliation, but few churches or their leaders make the demand that New Life in Christ obliges us to get involved in reconciliation, mediation and conflict resolution which then results in agencies which work with individuals, groups and nations.

Peace and justice which in our day stresses human rights is very difficult to achieve. Justice, as we are seeing, cannot be achieved through violence. If it creates justice for the one, it is unjust to the other. The suffering of those involved is immense. New Life in Christ which causes our discipleship to be non-violent requires us today more than ever to be farsighted and prophetic, to remove the causes of injustice before violence breaks out. Discipleship does not ask "does it work?" from a worldly viewpoint, but "am I obedient?" We are to be signs of the Kingdom. If we accept the Johannine saying, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life", then, for the individual, New Life in Christ may involve suffering, and for the Christian community setting signs is effective even in a sinful world.

3. Interfaith Dialogues

The implications of our Quaker Christology in a multi-ethnic, multi-faith society are a vigorous interfaith dialogue. However, this is not a 20th century insight. William Penn wrote this in 1693: "The humble, meek, merciful, just, pious and devout souls are everywhere of one religion; and when death has taken off the mask they will know one another, though the diverse liveries they wear here makes them strangers."[51]

[47] Advices and Queries, Q. F. & P., 1.02, 32.
[48] Sydney Bailey, "Our Vocation of Reconciliation", *Friends Quarterly*, Vol. 22, (1980-82), p 244.
[49] Margarethe Lachmund, "The attitude of Christians in the tension between east and west", *Friends Quarterly*, Vol. 12, 1958, pp 154-59.
[50] M.L. Leavitt, from an address to the Ireland Yearly Meeting, 1986 (20.71).
[51] W. Penn, "Some fruits of solitude", maxim 519, in a collection of the works, 1726, Vol. 1, p 842 (27.01).

From the beginning the Quaker Christian faith has had a universal dimension. G. Fox saw the Light "shine through all" and he identified it with the divine Light of Christ that "enlightens every man that comes into the world" (John 1.9). He and other early and later Friends pointed out

> "that individuals who lived before the Christian era or outside Christendom and had no knowledge of the Bible story had responded to a divine principle within them… obedience to the Light within, however that may be described, is the real test of faithful living."[52]

"What think ye of Christ?" is central both in our relationship with other religions and in our relationship with one another… We are truly loyal to Jesus Christ when we judge the religious systems of the world by the standard which he himself used – "not every one that says unto me Lord, Lord… but he that doeth the will of my father."

> "Every tree is to be known by its fruits, not by its dead wood or thorns or parasites, but by the fruit of is own inner life and nature. We all know the fruits of the Spirit and recognise the beauty of holiness… rich fruits of the Spirit may be tasted from other people's trees. They spring from the same Holy Spirit of Truth, the same Seed of God, whose power moves us through Christ."[53]

4. The Need to Listen

4.1. Listening in Worship

The "New" in New Life in Christ means a continuing journey. Friends are forever seekers who find, and then continue in their journey. From its beginning Friends have stressed continuing revelation. The Holy Spirit speaks to us in worship, hence the insistence that the basis of worship must be Silence. Out of the silence words or "ministry" as the Quakers call it may come.

> "…wait patiently to know that the leading and the time are right, but do not let a sense of your own unworthiness hold you back. Pray that your ministry may arise from a deep experience, and trust that words will be given you."[54]

> "The basic response of the soul to the Light is internal adoration and joy, thanksgiving and worship, self-surrender and listening."[55]

> "Prayer we learn gradually has far more to do with listening than with talking… As we learn more about worship we learn to listen more deeply."[56]

> "In our meetings for worship we seek through the stillness to know God's will for ourselves and for the gathered group."[57]

4.2 Pastoral Care

This insistence on listening affects every sphere of Quaker life. It schools us for sensitive pastoral care.

> "Loving care is not something that those sound in mind and body 'do' for others, but a process… Careful listening is fundamental to helping each other."[58]

> This does not prevent us from also acquiring professional skills.

> "Understanding of human personality and motivation gained from a variety of disciplines will be of help in effective pastoral care."[59]

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[52] Alastair Heron, Ralph Hetherington, Joseph Pickvance, submitted to Yearly Meeting 1994 (7.04).
[53] Marjorie Sykes, "Friends and World Religions" (written 1957) in E.B. Bronner, ed. *Sharing our Quaker Faith*, 1959, pp 104-05 (27.11).
[54] Advices & Queries, Q.F. & P., 1.02, 13.
[55] Thomas R. Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion*, 1941, pp 29-30.
[56] Diana Lampen, *Facing Death*, 1979, pp 34-35 (2.26).
[57] Q. F. & P., 3.02.
[58] *Op. cit*. 12.01.
[59] *Op. cit*. 12.10.

Not having an ordained clergy or paid servants makes perhaps more of the membership acquiring such training. Thus in an ecumenical setting, Quakers often find themselves taking a listening role and exercising pastoral care of our ordained colleagues.

Out of this has evolved what Quakers call "creative listening", a group setting where all who take part are involved in the process of learning about themselves as well as about others. Here, silence, too can heal and restore. For Quakers this approach fits in naturally with our experience of worship. It is therefore not surprising that a disproportionate number of Friends are engaged in family mediation, marriage guidance and similar national institutions.

V. Emerging Convergences and Divergences within our Christian Faith Communities, from a European Quaker Viewpoint

1. Preamble

I work, unpaid, in the Christian ecumenical chaplaincy at Leeds University, which has over 23,000 students and over 6000 staff. We care for every one, from the cleaners to the Vice-Chancellor. Some desperate people come to us off the street as well. We belong to eight different denominations (Anglican, Methodist, United Reformed, Baptist, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Quaker, Salvation Army). This is the nicest and most harmonious team I have ever worked in and with. The church leaders of these churches have signed our covenant. We are loosely and benevolently overseen by the West Yorkshire Ecumenical Council (WYEC). For my Monthly Meeting I sit on WYEC though Friends don't have "Church Leaders", and I am also their ecumenical officer. We celebrate an open campus communion for every one who wishes to participate. Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Quakers also hold their own distinctive worship. We have good relationships with the Jewish chaplain, Moslem clergy and members of the Hindu and Buddhist faiths.

2. Convergences

It is clear in Britain as perhaps in Europe as a whole that church allegiances and participation in worship is declining quite sharply. It is equally clear where churches together see their discipleship in pastoral care, feeding the hungry, looking after the sick in body and mind, caring for the strangers and those in dire distress, whether in or out of prison (cf. Matthew 25.31ff) whether the prison is physical, mental or emotional or intellectual, then, there, convergence is almost complete. Where there are no hierarchies, no power struggles, no gender conflicts, but great trust among people, there convergence is present. The academic doctrinal arguments cease to matter. When, in a seminar on pastoral theology, believing and belonging came under the discussion, I asked the Dean of Westminster what "believing" entailed, the historic creeds, the 39 Articles? I was answered "no one today believes those". Why is it that church leaders and academics still argue in terms incomprehensible to the majority of the laity and the millions who no longer darken the doors of churches?

Today, in Europe, we live in what used to be referred to as "the mission field". New Life in Christ for those of us who labour in that desert, or vineyard if you prefer a biblical phrase, means a visible discipleship. There is no division in the exercise of pastoral care. Jesus is thought to have said "follow me" and that includes the cross. What is the Good News we proclaim in perfect harmony? That the individual in all her/his sorrow and sinfulness matters; that God loves each one of us. Woe unto us who causes one of these little ones to stumble. It is in mitigating the stumbling that we show forth that we are one in Christ. Our faithfulness to the value of each, whatever side she/he is on, even if it leads to persecution, is both old and new life in Christ. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. This has

been the church's experience through the ages. But when the church allies itself with secular power or bickers amongst itself, the strength and joy of new life in Christ diminishes or even vanishes.

The spirituality of the mystics has nourished the Church throughout the ages and has spanned both denominations and religious faiths. Buddhist spirituality is used by Roman Catholics and Protestants alike, not to mention the Quakers. The retreat movement which nourishes us spiritually uses diverse symbolism and practices. At least in Britain we attend those retreats we find helpful, irrespective of the denominational leader.

The Church hierarchies may still ordain restrictions on who may take Holy Communion at the Lord's Table, but at the grassroots these restrictions are ignored. New Life in Christ spells unity in diversity, but not division. Discipleship, the mark of New Life in Christ, requires spiritual nourishment taken together in the one family. Is it not sad that this is only possible when the human leadership is absent?

As we all know, there are some very successful convergences, although even they still labour under difficulties. The divergent Methodist churches have come together again. The United Reformed Church is a united church derived from Congregationalists, Presbyterians and the Churches of Christ. There have been successful conversations between Anglicans and Lutherans, and Lutherans and Roman Catholics on the question of justification. England has many Local Ecumenical Projects (LEPs), though they also often show notable strains. Their coming together has often occurred because of shrinking membership, lack of finance and clergy. Sharing buildings is sometimes easier than becoming one congregation, even though different types of worship are practised. To which denomination does a person belong when she/he leaves an ecumenical church because work calls the individual elsewhere where no LEP exists?

3. Divergences

Despite this having been a century of Ecumenism we seem to have lost some of the hope and euphoria of 1948. The divergencies today may be different but there still lies a long road ahead.

3.1 Christian Religious People and Church Leadership

There are an increasing number of so-called house churches in Britain. They often lack an insight into tradition, have cut themselves loose from any church discipline and tend to be concerned with the individual and the small house church group. Academically speaking, they lack any ecclesiology. They think of themselves as biblically based. The tendency is either towards fundamentalism or New-Ageism. There is usually a charismatic person as a leader who can be very authoritarian. Main line churches often try to exercise some oversight but don't always succeed.

3.2 European Quaker Yearly Meetings and the Ecumenical Movement, Ecclesiology

The disintegration of political Marxism-Leninism has made Eastern Orthodox churches less interested in the ecumenical movement and much more nationalistic. Some have even withdrawn from ecumenical councils.

As some mainline churches are still "established" national churches, non-conformity is often frustrated by their timid or non-existent responses to national, social and economic evils and human rights. If these churches are to demonstrate New Life in Christ, they need to become far more prophetic both globally and nationally. Financial dependence, even when only slight, strangles their prophetic voices and often inhibits true discipleship. The often national insistence on "good investments" prevents many from ethical investments. They are often just plain capitalists. Though recognising that military

personnel need pastoral care the same as every one else, by no stretch of the imagination can I envisage Jesus ever being paid by the armed forces. There are other ways of taking care of the cure of souls.

Hierachies

Many churches have become as power seeking as the secular society.

> "You know that in the world, rulers lord it over their subjects, and their great men make them feel the weight of authority; but it shall not be so with you. Among you, whoever wants to be great must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be the willing slave of all. Like the Son of Man, he did not come to be served, but tot serve, and to give up his life as a ransom for many."[60]

"The prophets and Jesus can be described as "Leaders", but they had no power and "led from behind". New Life in Christ needs radically to rethink Church Government.

> "Friends are not to meet as people upon town or parish business but are to wait upon the Lord… In these solemn assemblies for the church's service, there is no one presides among them after the manner of the assemblies of other people; Christ only being their president, as he is pleased to appear in life and wisdom in any one or more of them; to whom whatever be their capacity or degree, the rest adhere with a firm unity, not of authority, but conviction, which is the divine authority and way of Christ's power and spirit in his people…"[61]

> "At the centre of Friends, religious experience is the repeatedly and consistently expressed belief in the fundamental equality of all members of the human race… we try to free ourselves from assumptions of superiority."[62]

In the twin insistence that Christ only is our "president" and that "the light of Christ in everyone" makes us all equal lies the Quaker rejection in all paid religious authority. Individuals and groups must be careful not to claim to speak for Friends without explicit authority. This is given by the appropriate Meetings for Worship for Church Affairs.

> "In all our meetings for Church Affairs we need to listen together to the Holy Spirit. We are not seeking a consensus; we are seeking the will of God. The unity of the meeting lies more in the unity of the search than in the decision which is reached."[63]

Britain Yearly Meeting in session is the body with ultimate authority for Church Affairs for Friends in Britain. All members of the Yearly Meeting have the right to attend and to take part in its deliberations. The Religious Society of Friends from its beginnings insisted that they had been given New Life in Christ, and that thus primitive Christianity had been revived. However, this makes any institutional coming together of the Religious Society with hierarchical organized churches an unlikely proposition.

Language and Dogmatics

Due to Friends' insistence that contained in the New Life in Christ is continuous revelation, any creedal statements prove impossible. (It might be argued that Friends' creedal statement is that we have none!)

> "The Quaker objection to creedal statements is not to beliefs as such but to the use of an officially sanctioned selection of them to impose a uniformity in things where the gospel proclaims freedom. 'Credo' is the Latin for 'I believe'. The meaning of the word is debased if you confine it to an act of the will giving intellectual assent to articles of faith. It is much better translated as 'I commit myself to…' in the sense that one is prepared to take the full consequences of the beliefs one has adopted. One adopts not so much a set of propositions as a discipline of working out in one's life and experience

[60] Matthew 20, 25-28.
[61] W. Penn, "Preface to George Fox", *Journal*, 1694, prelim leaves L3-L4; bicentennial edition 1891, vol. pp lvi-lviii (19.58).
[62] "Statement of intent on racism", made by Meeting for Sufferings on behalf of London Yearly Meeting 1988. (23-36).
[63] Epistle of London Yearly Meeting, 1984, in *Proceedings*, p 267 (2.89).

> the consequences of the truth one has espoused. The value of the beliefs lies solely in their outworking."[64]

Isaac Penington wrote "All Truth is a shadow except the last, except the utmost; yet every Truth is true in its kind. It is substance in its own place, though it be but a shadow in another place…"[65]

J.W. Rowntree in 1904 could write: "Creeds are milestones, doctrines are interpretations: Truth as G. Fox was continually asserting, a seed with the power of growth, not a fixed crystal, be its facets never so beautiful."[66]

We must add to this that the way theological concepts are expressed today is mostly meaningless to non-church goers – and to most churchgoers as well! Language too develops. So here too I see no convergence.

Gender Issues

Friends' stress on the Light/Spirit of God in everyone leads them to an abhorrence of sex discrimination. G. Fox associated sexual equality with new life in Christ.

> "For man and woman were helpsmeet in the image of God… in the dominion before they fell; but after the Fall… Man was to rule over his wife; but in the restoration by Christ, into the image of God… in that they are helpsmeet, man and woman, as they were in before the Fall."[67]

So also Elizabeth Bathurst in 1685:

> "As male and female are made one in Jesus Christ, so women receive an office in the Truth as well as men, and they have a stewardship and must give an account of their stewardship as well as the men…"[68]

The emphasis on non-sexist language today is likewise a challenge to hierarchy.

> "Our tradition enables us to recognise that our choice of language and our reaction to the choice that others make, reveals values which may otherwise stay hidden… Remember that the Spirit of God includes and transcends our ideas of male and female, and that we should reflect this insight in our lives and through our ministry."[69]

> "Human sexuality is a divine gift forming part of the complex union of body, mind and spirit which is our humanity."[70]

> "Homosexual affection can be as selfless as heterosexual affection, and therefore we cannot see that it is in some way morally worse… Neither are we happy with the thought that all homosexual behaviour is sinful: motive and circumstances degrade or ennoble any act."[71]

> "We affirm the love of God for all people, whatever their sexual orientation… to reject people on the grounds of their sexual orientation is a denial of God's creation."[72]

Thus the Religious Society of Friends in Europe often finds itself to be the refuge for deeply religious homosexual people who have been discriminated against or have been excluded from other churches. Yet another divergence.

Worship

Most European Friends find liturgical worship difficult. They appreciate deeply the profoundly spiritual music which accompanies both pre- and post Reformation liturgies and the great oratoriums, but have difficulty in distinguishing the aesthetic from the worship aspect. For many Friends spoken words

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[64] John Punshon, "Uncertain Trumpets", *The Friend*, Vol. 136, p 278 (17.25).
[65] Isaac Penington, *The Life of a Christian*, 1653, 1st page. (27.22).
[66] J.W. Rowntree, *Essays and Addresses*, 1905, p 349.
[67] G. Fox, *A collection of … epistles*, 1698, ep. 291, p 323 (19.50).
[68] Elizabeth Bathurst, The sayings of women… in several places of the Scriptures, 1683, p 23 (23.A3).
[69] Quaker Women's Group, "Bringing the invisible into the light", 1986 Swarthmore Lecture, p 4 (23.44).
[70] Drafted by 1994 Revision Committee, Q.F. & P. 22.11.
[71] *Towards a Quaker View of Sex*, by a group of Friends, 1963, p 36 (22.15).
[72] Minute 9 of Wandsworth Preparative Meeting, 12 March 1989 (22.16).

do not express their worship experience. Music often disguises the words. However, many churches increasingly include periods of silence in their worship. This, maybe, is a gift of the Religious Society of Friends to the other churches. Forms of worship seem to me to depend on the individual's emotional make-up. It is not that one form is true and another false or defective. New Life in Christ rejoices in diversity and not in uniformity.

Tradition

Friends treasure their tradition as all denominations do, but it is guidance rather than authority for them. Thus the development of Church Tradition over the centuries is for them merely of historic interest. As in previous centuries the Church has been involved in power struggles, wars and persecutions; it is perhaps not surprising that convergence because of traditions is most unlikely.

3.3 Divergences in all Religions

I see the ever increasing divergencies between fundamentalism and those who have the experience of continuous revelation, appreciating the use of reason, being awed and excited by the revelations of science and being responsible about new discoveries and technologies. Speedy communication has made us increasingly aware of the diversity of cultures which influence all religions. Much of that which one religious group finds disturbing or even unacceptable in another religious group are the ways in which the distortions which culture and the resulting traditions have influenced their original religious insights. These can then lead to violence and wars which in origin do not belong to the original teaching. Convergence, amongst other things, would require each faith/denomination to enable the others to be true to their original insights and teaching rather than belittling and attempting to convert the others.

VI. New Life in Christ

1. A Diverse Journey

New Life in Christ is an exhilarating, enabling journey. It can only be detected by others in the way of life the individual and/or the group displays it. It is not open to academic, dogmatic discussion. However, we might argue about it, unless "the fruits of the Spirit" are visible, the New Life in Christ remains a theory.

New Life in Christ lets us apprehend the universal Christ who leads us into diverse ways. Galatians 5.22-25 describes it succinctly. It has nothing to do with creeds or dogma or laws, but a great deal with discipleship. It has been "the blood of the martyrs which is the seed of the church." The European churches are at present too comfortable, seeking power rather than the cross, which admittedly is daunting.

2. Believing and Belonging

New Life in Christ means for many believing and belonging. I have described the Quaker believing and have already written much about belonging. The Quaker stress in on belonging to the worshipping community, participating in its life, accepting joyfully its discipline, embodying Christ in their lives, for unless Christ is born in us our professions are vain. However, this also means convergence. For in all churches are to be found those who embody Christ, and we belong together in the One Body of Christ.[73]

[73] 1 Corinthians 12, 12ff.; Romans 12.4-5.

3. New Life in Christ Takes Away Fear

Many of our divisions have to do with power and the fear of losing power. Those of us who have experienced the cross of Christ in God's powerlessness know that power has no place in the new life Christ. Our life's experience has taught us that God does not intervene, neither in saving Jesus from the cross, nor the Jews and others from the Holocaust, the Tutsis from the Hutus, etc. God in Christ is alongside us, suffering with us.

New Life in Christ takes away the fear of death. It is surprising how many people fear death, be it because of possible judgement, the unknown, or? We might well fear what precedes death, but death itself is merciful. Eternity embraces life and death, it is timeless and never beyond God's loving care. It is not in the future humanly conceived.

4. Jesus, the Jew

Jesus himself was a Jew. He never abjured the faith of his fathers nor the writings of the Hebrew Bible. New Life in Christ lets us return to Jewish insights of social and ecological responsibilities. The prophets, echoed for instance in St James' Epistle, spell out what social responsibilities are required of us, including abjuring violence and war. Already in Genesis we are charged with looking after the earth, for "ruling" in the Hebrew sense, is always "caring for". The insights of modern science have only increased our awe and wonder that the creation evokes in us. Psalm 8 for instance reminds us of that as do the majestic chapters of Job 38ff.

5. New Life in Christ Requires Us to Relearn

We must relearn the meaning of religious analogy, metaphor and symbolism. It requires us to find language meaningful to our contemporaries without taking away the grandeur of the universe which inspired awe and wonder. The Hebrew Bible reminds us that God has no name, no gender. The attributes we give Him are human made. We would not wish the abused to have to think of God as father or king, or as being omnipotent, etc. No wonder we are accused of making God in our own image. New Life in Christ is new and old. It lets us recapture the awe-inspiring Otherness of God, his suffering with us with the promise that obedience will enable us to embody Christ. It is new, ever new, in the ways in which we embody Him.

Embodying Christ is "to act justly, to love loyalty and to walk humbly (wisely) before God."[74]

New Life in Christ means to be willing to suffer on behalf of others, to eschew power, to take away the occasions of war and violence, of poverty and abuse. It means foregoing individualism and becoming one with the Body of Christ in all its diversity.

"Justice is mine, I will repay says the Lord."[75] It is not for us to judge.

6. The Religious Society of Friends

The Religious Society of Friends may be judged today to be weak in traditional theology, but this is because it is passionate about living the new life in Christ, embodying Christ in its corporate life. It finds itself at one with all those who too are thus embodying Christ, whose obedience is to Christ their Lord and not to worldly authorities.

"There is no easy optimism in the Quaker view of life in Christ. Fox had no illusions about sin, but he asks us to deal with it in a new way… To contemplate evil is a poor way of becoming good… Isaac Penington in the darkness of Reading goal [said] 'We were directed to search for the least of all seeds and to mind the lowest appearance thereof, which was turning against sin and darkness; we came by

[74] Micah 6.8.
[75] Romans 12.16-21.

degrees to find we had met with the pure, living, eternal Spirit' or as G. Fox's repeated instruction, 'Mind that which is pure in you to guide you to God'."[76]

> Of course we fail, but "our sins are stepping stones to God."[77]
> "If we follow the leadings of [the] Spirit faithfully we are led out of sin into unity with the divine will… this unity leads us into love of and care for all humankind, who are our kin; …What the Spirit shows us is living truth which cannot be fettered by words."[78]
> We affirm that "the world with all its sin and splendour belongs to God. The Gospel imperative for the church is to serve the hungry, the homeless, the sick and the prisoners… the world cries out for justice and peace."[79]

[76]Whilst church leaders are allied to worldly powers and materialistic economic processes, and find themselves unable prophetically to condemn violence and wars and the resulting evils, to eschew hierarchical power and gender and sexual orientations, I can see no convergencies. However, wherever women and men have embraced the New Life in Christ in true discipleship, in listening to what the Holy Spirit has to say to them, there they demonstrate in their lives and actions convergence, the Oneness of New Life in Christ. E.B. Castle, *Approach to Quakerism*, 1961, pp 48-49 (26.69).
[77] K.C. Barnes, "What is wholeness?" *The Friend*, 1985, vol. 143, p 1454.
[78] Janet Scott, "What canst thou say?" 1980 Swarthmore Lecture, pp 4-5 (27.26).
[79] London Yearly Meeting Proceedings, 1989, pp 102-103 (29.14). (All the figures in brackets are references to *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 1995).

SANCTIFICATION, EVANGELICAL OBEDIENCE, HOLINESS, PERFECTION - SOME EXAMPLES IN EARLY MODERN REFORMED THEOLOGY -

Alasdair I. Heron

The first half of this admittedly rather cumbersome title reflects the topics suggested for this session of our conference when we met in Geneva in 1998. It directs our attention to a cluster of themes which have figured prominently (and sometimes controversially) in and on the edges of the Protestant traditions since the Reformation, and which have arisen in a considerable variety of forms.

It was accordingly suggested that we might have a major paper on this subject and that I should offer a brief, fifteen-minute response. Things have not, however, turned out quite like that. The main paper presented to us in this session is an account of European, specifically English Quakerism. This is not a subject I feel particularly qualified to address, informative though Eva Pinthus' presentation is.

I would therefore like to attempt something different as a *complement* to her contribution rather than a reaction to it. What role have our topics played in the history of the Reformed tradition? Even at that I must be very selective and have therefore opted to concentrate largely on two publications which, incidentally, appeared exactly a century apart: *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (1646) and *A Treatise concerning Religious Affections* (1746). First, however, let us look back a little further into the past.

When I consider the terms listed in our title I am first of all reminded of the medieval movements of reform in the western church, two of which – the Waldensian and the Hussite – are still today represented in WARC by direct or indirect descendants. Dangerous though it is to attempt to reduce such movements to a formula, one can perhaps justify tracing one common line, tendency or goal as "radical Christian obedience to the law of Christ", pursued at a distance from, sometimes in direct opposition to the existing ecclesiastical institution. With that we have a *leitmotif* which has surfaced ever and again in the last near thousand years, frequently combined with the most diverse social, political, cultural, ethnic or national programmes. "Simple Christian obedience" generally turned out to be anything other than simple – and often more than a little ambiguous in its consequences and outworkings once it took on political, social or indeed (as it not infrequently did) military shape. While the Waldensians, for example, generally eschewed political and military ambitions, seeking for the most part nothing more than to be left in peace in their communities, the history of the Hussites, particularly of the Taborites, took a very different course. That dramatic tale is doubtless well known to the members of our consultation.[1]

In the century of what have commonly come to be distinguished as the Magisterial[2] and Radical Reformations, we find debates relating to our topics developing a new density and intensity, not least because theological issues which had up till then been largely marginal moved to the centre of the European stage, both intellectually, socially and politically. The central paradigm shift was Luther's rediscovery and reinterpretation of the Pauline theme of justification by faith, not by works. That represented a radical break not only with the official theology and piety of the medieval western church but also with the tendency of earlier reform movements to understand the Gospel as the *nova lex Christi*.

[1] I cannot pretend to the same familiarity with the story as our Czech partners, but have benefitted, *inter alia*, from: M. Spinka, *John Hus. A Biography*, Princeton 1968; H. Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1967; F.G. Heymann, *George of Bohemia, King of Heretics*, Princeton 1965. For a more recent survey see F. Machilek, "Hus, Hussiten", *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 15 (1986), pp 710-735.

[2] Speaking as a representative of one of the so-called "magisterial" traditions, I may say that I have never felt particularly happy with the term, attempting as it does to characterize the Lutheran, Reformed and Anglican Reformations simply by classifying them in terms of what they have in common with each other and not with the "radicals". But I have no better alternative to suggest! – Some of the questions arising here were discussed in the fourth round of these conversations in Geneva in late 1994. See in particular D.F. Durnbaugh, "The First and Radical Reformations and their Relations with the Magisterial Reformation" in M. Opočenský (ed.), *Towards a Renewed Dialogue. The First and Second Reformations* (Geneva: Studies from the WARC 30, 1996), pp 8-29.

Law and Gospel now came to be seen as antithetical, the liberating power of the Gospel as only comprehensible in contrast to the demands of the Law. Along with this new, radicalized perception went a correspondingly radical appreciation of the pervasive power of sin – and the hopelessness of every form of attempt to obtain justification by works, by the acquisition of merit, by achievement. Justification *coram deo* was and could only be the justification of the ungodly – justification declared by God as Judge, yet not in the capacity of a dispenser of retributive justice, but in that of the gracious forgiver and justifier.

This new paradigm did not imply or suggest that there was now no place for "good works", for "sanctification" or for "Christian obedience". Far from it! It sought rather to uncover their real basis, their true ground and their genuine possibility as lying solely in the fathomless mercy of God, the redemptive merits of Christ and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. It saw human life and history theologically as the stage on which God was working out salvation, realising redemption, changing the children of this world into heirs of the kingdom.

The 16th century did, however, bring a series of debates and controversies concerning the practical bearing and relevance of these insights. Within Lutheranism a fine (if perhaps somewhat esoteric and largely marginal) argument got going about "good works". Lutherans and Calvinists explored the "third use" of the law (*usus in renatis*) alongside the two (*usus theologicus/elenchticus* and *usus politicus/civilis*) identified by Luther.[3] Lutheranism developed the *Zwei-Regimentenlehre* while the Calvinists – or some of them – asserted "the Crown Rights of the Redeemer" (as did the Scottish Covenanters) or developed theologically based theories of political resistance (as happened, for example, in France). The individual, social and political application of Christian obedience proved as difficult and untidy – one might also say: as colourfully diverse – as in earlier centuries.

To make matters more complicated still, the older tradition with its understanding of the Gospel as the *nova lex Christi* remained alive and well, most prominently, perhaps, among the representatives of the Radical Reformation, but by no means only there. *Legalism* was to surface ever and again, not least in the Reformed tradition and in the various movements that spun off from it, especially in seventeenth century England, which may be seen as a veritable hothouse of ecclesial and para-ecclesial experimentation, and that within the context of social and political upheavals which in their course and consequences constituted a unique epoch in early modern history. Think of the mix – Anglicans, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, Quakers, Calvinists, Arminians, Puritans, Cavaliers and Roundheads, Royalists and Regicides, Neonomians and Antinomians, emerging Hyper-Calvinism, nascent Deism and Unitarianism and the slow, struggling birth of the idea of tolerance. Add the political and constitutional controversies and developments, the rise of natural science, especially of physics and astronomy, and the dawn of the Enlightenment and we begin to have a faint impression of all that was going on (and at that we haven't even yet mentioned the American colonies!). Of course this ferment was not confined to the British Isles – the seventeenth century also saw *inter alia* the Thirty Years' War, the Westphalian Peace, the second Turkish siege of Vienna and the revocation of the *Edict of Nantes*. Nevertheless, the mix in Britain, specifically in England, was distinctive, not least in the variety of churches, denominations and other Christian groups which emerged there in that century.

At the same time it may also be said that there was a certain broad theological tradition which, while not universally shared – for example it was not subscribed to by Laudian "Arminians" or other more "high" or "catholic" streams in the Church of England on the one hand, or by Quakers on the other – was common to many Anglicans, Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists in spite of their differences in matters of church order, ministerial office or sacraments. That tradition may simply be designated

[3] A clear explanation of the "third use of the Law" is to be found in Calvin, *Institute* (1559), II.vii.12; this section first appeared in almost the form it has here in the edition of 1539 (see Calvin's *Opera Selecta*, volume III, 1957, p 337). A similar position is taken by Melanchthon in the section *de usu legis* of his *Loci praecipui theologici* (also 1559), (*Studienausgabe*, volume II/1, 1952, pp 321-326) and subsequently in the Lutheran *Formula of Concord* (*Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche*,

"English Calvinism" (though one must be clear that it was not as a system of doctrine merely a replication of Calvin's thought[4] – which, incidentally, also applies with equal force to continental Calvinism of the same period). It may also be called, perhaps more accurately, Puritan Federal Theology, provided one remembers that both the terms "puritan" and "federal" designate complex streams with various currents.[5] It is relevant for our topic that within this tradition, as already hinted above by the reference to "Neonomianism" and "Antinomianism", questions of the nature of Christian obedience, of the perfectibility of Christian life and of the status and role of the divine Law were energetically debated. This wide field can only be illustrated here by one or two examples.

Neonomianism was associated particularly with such prominent Reformed divines as Richard Baxter, one of the most widely read Puritan theologians in the middle of the 17th century.[6] In this approach – which was very much concerned with the practice of Christian piety, with the *syllogismus practicus* and with conscientious self-examination – authentic Christian life was understood chiefly in terms of obedience to the Law of Christ, in the sense of the *tertius usus legis* mentioned earlier. This provoked the criticism that the distinction between Law and Gospel had effectively been dissolved, that a legalistic conception of Christianity had come to overshadow the view of forgiving grace.

The resultant controversies and confusions – which were patently widespread – are reflected in a work published in the middle of the century which set out to resolve them. This was *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* published only under the initials "E.F.", but on that score generally ascribed to Edward Fisher.[7] The first (and longer) part of the work consists of an extended dialogue between representatives of three views, readily identified by their names: *Nomista, Antinomista and Evangelista.* (There is also a fourth persona, *Neophytus*, but his role is largely that of a minimalistically attenuated Greek chorus.) *Nomista* and *Antinomista* disagree about the place of the Law, so *Evangelista* begins by establishing some fundamental distinctions:

Evan. But what law do you mean?
Nom. Why, sir, what law do you think I mean? Are there any more laws than one?
Evan. Yea, in the Scriptures there is mention made of divers laws, but they may all be comprised under these three, viz. - the law of works, the law of faith, and the law of Christ; and, therefore, I pray you, tell me, when you say the law ought to be a rule of life to a believer, which of these three laws you mean.
Nom. Sir, I know not the difference betwixt them; but this I know, that the law of the ten commandments, commonly called the moral law, ought to be a rule of life to a believer.

Göttingen 1979, pp 793-795 and 962-969).

[4] See e.g. R.T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, (Oxford University Press 1979); M.C. Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology*. The Doctrine of Assurance, (Edinburgh 1985).

[5] The best concentrated overview of the history of federal theology is probably still J.F.G. Goeters, "Föderaltheologie", *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 11 (1983), pp 246-252; a somewhat lighter but very useful survey of much of the same ground is offered by W. Klempa, "The Concept of the Covenant in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Continental and British Reformed Theology" in D.M. McKim (ed.), *Major Themes in the Reformed Tradition*, (Grand Rapids 1991), pp 94-107. Among more recent English literature may be mentioned: J.W. Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant: The Other Reformed Tradition*, (Athens, Ohio 1980); A.I.C. Heron (ed.), *The Westminster Confession in the Church Today*, (Edinburgh 1982); John von Rohr, *The Covenant of Grace in Puritan Thought*, (Atlanta 1986); D.A. Weir, *The Origins of the Federal Theology in Sixteenth Century Reformation Thought*, (Oxford 1990); C.S. McCoy & J.W. Baker, *Fountainhead of Federalism. Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenantal Tradition* (Louisville 1991); D.N.J. Poole, *Stages of Religious Faith in the Classical Reformation Tradition. The Covenant Approach to the ordo salutis*, (Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter 1995)

[6] See G.F. Nuttall, *Richard Baxter*, London 1965. Baxter lived from 1615 to 1891 and for most of his life found himself falling between all the available theological and ecclesiastical stools. In theology he may be described as a Catholic Puritan; in politics as a parliamentarian royalist; in churchmanship as a non-episcopal, non-presbyterian seeker after ecclesial unity. From 1662 onwards (having previously been a royal chaplain) he was an outsider to the episcopal establishment. Of his numerous (some 140) printed works, the most often reprinted and still best known today is probably *The Reformed Pastor*, published in 1656. Though our reference to him here may seem to put him in a negative light, he was far from being a narrow-minded or intolerant man. Of this his dossier of autobiographical writings, the *Reliquiae Baxterianae* which was published in 1696, supplies abundant proof. For a modern abridgement see *The Autobiography of Richard Baxter, being the Reliquiae Baxterianae*, edited with introduction and notes by J.M. Lloyd Thomas, (London 1925; Everyman Edition 1931).

[7] I am using here the reprint version published in 1978 by Reiner Publications, Swengel, PA: *The Marrow of Modern Divinity, in Two Parts*… by Edward Fisher, A.M., with Notes by the Rev. Thomas Boston. Fisher's other works are recorded on p 8: *An Appeal to the Conscience as thou wilt answer it at the great and dreadful day of Jesus Christ* (1644); *A Christian Caveat to Old and New*

Evan. But the law of the ten commandments, or moral law, may be either said to be the matter of the law of works, or the matter of the law of Christ: and therefore I pray you to tell me, in whether of these senses you conceive it ought to be a rule of life to a believer?
Nom. Sir, I must confess, I do not know what you mean by this distinction; but this I know, that God requires that every Christian should frame and lead his life according to the ten commandments; the which if he do, then may he expect the blessing of God both upon his own soul and body; and if he do not, then can he expect nothing else but his wrath and curse upon them both.
Evan. The truth is, Nomista, the law of the ten commandments, as it is the matter of the law of works, ought not to be a rule of life to a believer. But in thus saying, you have affirmed that it ought; and therefore therein you have erred from the truth. And now, Antinomista, that I may also know your judgement, when you say the law ought not to be a rule of life to a believer, pray tell me what law you mean?
Ant. Why, I mean the law of the ten commandments.
Evan. But whether do you mean that law, as it is the matter of the law of works, or as it is the matter of the law of Christ?
Ant. Surely, sir, I do conceive, that the ten commandments are no way to be a rule of life to a believer; for Christ hath delivered him from them.
Evan. But the truth is, the law of the ten commandments, as it is the matter of the law of Christ, ought to be a rule of life to a believer; and therefore you having affirmed the contrary, have therein also erred from the truth.
Nom. The truth is, sir, I must confess I never took any notice of this threefold law, which, it seems, is mentioned in the New Testament.
Ant. And I must confess, if I took any notice of them, I never understood them.[8]

Following this introductory exchange, the dialogue is divided into four sections:
Ch. 1 - Of the Law of Works, or Covenant of Works.
Ch. 2 - Of the Law of Faith, or Covenant of Grace.
Ch. 3 - Of the Law of Christ.
Ch. 4 - Of the Heart's Happiness, or Soul's Rest.

Since this dialogue (which is followed by another between "*Evangelista*, a Minister of the Gospel, *Nomologista*, a Prattler of the Law (and) *Neophytus*, A Young Christian", constituting the second part of the work) is some 260 pages long in the modern printed edition, it is not possible here to quote further from it at any length. However, even a glance at the table of contents[9] gives a fair impression of the flavour of the whole and the various distinctions which are important to the author. Chapter Three, for example, includes the following sections:
1. The nature of the law of Christ – 2. The law of the ten commandments a rule of life to believers – 3. Antinomian objections answered – 4. The necessity of marks and signs of grace – 5. Antinomian objections answered – 6. Holiness and good works attained to only by faith – 7. Slavish fear and servile hope not the springs of true obedience – 8. The efficacy of faith for holiness of heart and life – 9. Use of the means for strengthening of faith – 10. The distinction of the law of works, and law of Christ – 11. The use of that distinction in practice – 12. That distinction a mean between legalism and Antinomianism – 13. How to attain to assurance – 14. Marks and evidences of true faith – 15. How to recover lost evidences – 16. Marks and signs of union with Christ.

Sabbatarians (1650); *An Answer to Sixteen Queries, touching the Rise and Observation of Christmas* (date not given).
[8] *The Marrow*, pp 22-27.
[9] *The Marrow*, pp 3-4.

The Marrow was a private document and carried no synodal or similar ecclesiastical authority, though the author does preface it with an impressive list of his sources, over sixty in number, including:

> Dr. Ames... Mr. Beza... Mr. Bullinger… Mr. Calvin... Mr. Fox... Mr. Grotius... Mr. Thos Hooker... Dr. Luther… Mr. Marbeck... Peter Martyr... Mr. Perkins… Mr. Polanus... Mr. Rollock... Dr. Ursinus.[10]

Indeed, after it was rediscovered in the early 18th century by the Scottish minister Thomas Boston, who republished it with extensive notes,[11] it was actually condemned by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland as antinomian – one of a series of events which led up to the first of many secessions from that church and multifarious further divisions among Presbyterians not only in Scotland but in Ireland and North America as well. That is another story we cannot pursue here.[12] The work does, however, well illustrate what the author sees as the perennial danger of legalism on the one hand and antinomianism on the other. I would only add the remark that he was on the track of something important – and not only within the context of the Puritan tradition. Legalism and antinomianism – like their counterparts in ethics, moralism and libertarianism – are two fundamental tendencies deeply etched in (and deeply appealing to) the human soul, nor is it only in the religious realm that they manifest themselves. It may, however, be suspected that both might flourish in conformity with or reaction against a world dominated by puritan ideals.

The other source I wish to quote from around the same period is *The Sum of Saving Knowledge*. This was also a private publication, compiled by David Dickson and James Durham and first published in 1650, but although never formally sanctioned it acquired significant circulation and influence by being regularly bound up together with the *Westminster Confession* and the other Westminster standards.[13] Strictly speaking, *The Sum of Saving Knowledge,* which is summed up under four heads, is only the first part of the document; there follow further sections on *The Use of Saving Knowledge*, *Warrants and Motives to Believe* and *Evidences of true Faith*. The four heads of *The Sum* are:

Head I. *Our woful condition by nature, through breaking the covenant of works.*

Hos. xiii.9. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself.

Head II. *The remedy provided in Jesus Christ for the elect by the covenant of grace.*

Hos. xiii.9. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.

Head III. *The outward means appointed to make the elect partakers of this covenant, and all the rest* that are called to be inexcusable.

Matt. xxii.14. Many are called.

Head IV. *The blessings which are effectually conveyed by these means to the Lord's elect, or chosen ones.*

Matt. xxii. 14. Many are called, but few are chosen.

Part of Head II in particular repays closer attention: the idea of the *covenant of redemption* as the basis of the *covenant of grace,* which in turn supersedes *the covenant of works:*

…God, for the glory of his rich grace, hath revealed in his word a way to save sinners, viz. by faith in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, by virtue of, and according to the tenor of the *covenant of*

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[10] *The Marrow*, p 20.
[11] Cf. n.7.
[12] The history of the Marrow Controversy has often been told. See e.g. A.L. Drummond & J. Bulloch, *The Scottish Church l688-1843*, (Edinburgh 1973), Chapter Two: "The Coming of Division", T.F. Torrance, *Scottish Theology from John Knox to John Macleod Campbell*, (Edinburgh 1996), pp 204-255; or, for an older account from a more conservative perspective, John Macleod, *Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History Since the Reformation*, repr. (Edinburgh 1974), pp 139-166. Macleod's *Scottish Theology* contains ten lectures delivered at Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia, in 1939; it was first published in book form in 1943. The wider history of secessions and divisions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is briefly summarized by J.T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, (Oxford University Press 1954), Chapter Ten: "The Fragmentation of Calvinism".
[13] I am using here one such collection published in Edinburgh in 1773 simply because it happens to be the oldest of three I have by diverse paths inherited. The others date from 1857 and 1863, which helps to give an impression of how long *The Sum of Saving Knowledge* exercised an influence.

redemption, made and agreed upon between God the Father and God the Son, in the council of the Trinity, before the world began.

The sum of the covenant of redemption is this: God having freely chosen unto life a certain number of lost mankind, for the glory of his rich grace, did give them, before the world began, unto God the Son, appointed Redeemer, that, *upon condition* he would humble himself so far as to assume the human nature, of a soul and a body, unto personal union with his divine nature, and *submit himself to the law, as surety for them, and satisfy justice for them*, by giving obedience in their name, even unto the sufferings of the cursed death of the cross, he should ransom and redeem them all from sin and death, and purchase unto them righteousness and eternal life, with all saving graces leading thereunto, to be effectually, by means of his own appointment, applied in due time to every one of them. *This condition the Son of God (who is Jesus Christ our Lord) did accept before the world began,* and in the fulness of time came into the world, was born of the Virgin Mary, *subjected himself to the law, and completely paid the ransom* on the cross: But *by virtue of the foresaid bargain, made before the world began*, he is in all ages, since the fall of Adam, still upon the work of applying actually the purchased benefits unto the elect: And that he doth by way of entertaining *a covenant of free grace and reconciliation with them*, through faith in himself; *by which covenant, he makes over to every believer a right and interest to himself, and to all his blessings. (My italics)*

It is noteworthy here that in spite of the evident emphasis on the radical contrast between *the covenant of works,* with its requirement of legal obedience leading to the righteousness of the law, and the *covenant of grace,* the *covenant of redemption* which is the ground of the covenant of grace is nevertheless described in strongly *legalistic*, not to say *commercial* or *contractual* language. The result of this language here and elsewhere – *The Marrow*, for example, can talk of Christ "striking hands with God" – was that the covenant of grace was indeed held out and described as "a covenant of free grace and reconciliation" but *de facto* nevertheless widely understood as a *conditional* covenant. The words of the Westminster Confession could then be interpreted as making faith a *condition* of participation in the covenant of grace:

Chapter VII. *Of God's Covenant with Man*

II. The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised, to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.

1. Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace: wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, *requiring of them faith in him*, that they may be saved… (*My italics*)

In fact, the burdensome notion of the conditionality of the covenant of grace was one of the concerns which made Thomas Boston so enthusiastic about his discovery of the *Marrow of Modern Divinity* with its very clear distinction between legal obedience and the obedience of faith.[14] In the light of this material we can perhaps understand why.

That, then, is a first glance at our theme as it was handled in the puritan context. This world of thought may seem very strange or indeed alienating to us, but in its day it exercised a powerful hold on people's minds: this was the framework and these were the associations of sanctification, obedience and the like. It should also not be forgotten that in all this the question of *assurance of salvation* was very much in the forefront – much more than it probably is in the thoughts of most Christians today. The background of all these ideas is supplied by puritan casuistry, by interest in introspection, and "cases of conscience", by the *syllogismus practicus* and the *syllogismus mysticus*. The outworkings of this theology were not confined to England or the English-speaking world: puritan teaching was to feed powerfully into continental pietism when it began to gather momentum in the second half of this same century. Nor

[14] See e.g. *The Marrow*, pp 113 ff., and Boston's extensive notes *ad loc*.; also J.B. Torrance, "Covenant or Contract? A Study of the Theological Background of Worship in Seventeenth Century Scotland", *Scottish Journal of Theology* 23 (1970), pp 51-76; "The Covenant Concept in Scottish Theology and Politics and Its Legacy", *Scottish Journal of Theology* 34 (1981), pp 225-243.

should it be overlooked that while the sources I have quoted here may not be universally familiar, at least one much read and much loved masterpiece of vivid imaginative allegory emerged directly from this table of theology and piety – John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.[15]

Coming now to the 18th century, our topics there naturally call to mind John Wesley, Methodism and the Wesleyan ideal of "Christian perfection". While Wesley regarded himself as anti-Calvinist, even going so far as to style himself "Arminian" (though he had little enough in common with either of the movements usually so designated) one of his main associates was the Calvinist George Whitefield.[16] When the revivalist movement reached New England it provoked another Reformed thinker of a more theological and philosophical bent than Wesley to a new line of practical theological reflection. The result, published in 1746, is still a theological classic: Jonathan Edwards' *A Treatise concerning Religious Affections*.[17] The book falls into three parts:

Part I. Concerning the Nature of the Affections and their Importance in Religion.

Part II. Shewing what are no certain signs that religious Affections are gracious, or that they are not.

Part III. Shewing what are distinguishing Signs of truly gracious and holy Affections.

Space and time here permit us only to take note of the twelve signs enumerated by Edwards in the third part, using his own initial definitions (and following his idiosyncratic punctuation!):

1. Affections that are truly spiritual and gracious, do arise from those influences and operations on the heart, which are spiritual, supernatural and divine.
2. The first objective ground of gracious affections, is the transcendentally excellent and amiable nature of divine things, as they are in themselves; and not any conceived relation they bear to self, or self-interest.
3. Those affections that are truly holy, are primarily founded on the loveliness of the moral excellency of divine things. Or (to express it otherwise), a love to divine things for the beauty and sweetness of their moral excellency, is the first beginning and spring of all holy affections.
4. Gracious affections do arise from the mind's being enlightened, rightly and spiritually to understand or apprehend divine things.
5. Truly gracious affections are attended with a reasonable and spiritual conviction of the judgement, of the reality and certainty of divine things.
6. Gracious affections are attended with evangelical humiliation.
7. Another thing, wherein gracious affections are distinguished from others, is, that they are attended with a change of nature.
8. Truly gracious affections differ from those affections that are false and delusive, in that they tend to, and are attended with the lamblike, dovelike spirit and temper of Jesus Christ; or in other words, they naturally beget and promote such a spirit of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness and mercy, as appeared in Christ.

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[15] Bunyan was born in 1628 and died in August 1688, his life coinciding almost exactly with the period of upheaval in England which included the Civil War, the Commonwealth, the Restoration and (just too late for Bunyan to see it) the Glorious Revolution. *The Pilgrim's Progress* was published in 1678, with the second part following in 1684/5. On his life and writings see the magisterial(!) study by Christopher Hill, *A Turbulent, Seditious and Factious People. John Bunyan and his Church*, (Oxford University Press 1988). Bunyan was a most prolific writer on theological and pastoral themes, handling them both dogmatically and allegorically, as in *A Few Sighs from Hell* (1658), *The Doctrine of the Law and Grace Unfolded* (1659), *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (1666), *The Life and Death of Mr Badman* (1680) and *The Holy War* (1682) – for a complete list see Hill, p xv.

[16] George Whitefield (1714-1770) was a member of the "Holy Club" at Oxford and had a conversion experience in 1735. Unlike Wesley he moved towards a Calvinist rather than Arminian position. He and Jonathan Edwards were the most prominent teachers in the New England revivial. See Jonathan Edwards, *The Great Awakening*, edited by G.C. Goen (=*The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, volume 4), (Yale University Press 1972); *George Whitefield's Journals*, (London 1960). The article on Whitefield in D.M. McKim (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith*, (Louisville/Edinburgh 1992), p 394 refers to A.A. Dallimore, *George Whitefield*, 2 volumes, 1970/1980, but I have not been able so far to track this work down in Erlangen.

[17] Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, edited by John E. Smith (=*The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, volume 2), (Yale University Press 1959). An abbreviated and somewhat modernized version was published in 1984 in the series *Classics of Faith and Devotion* (Portland, OR: Maltnomah Press) with an introduction by Charles Colson. The literature on Edwards is extensive, but special mention may be made of two relatively recent books: Iain H. Murray, *Jonathan Edwards. A New Biography*, (Edinburgh 1987) and Robert W. Jenson, *America's Theologian. A Recommendation of Jonathan Edwards*, (Oxford University Press 1988).

9. Gracious affections soften the heart, and are attended and followed with a Christian tenderness of spirit.
10. Another thing wherein those affections that are truly gracious and holy, differ from those that are false, is beautiful symmetry and proportion.
11. Another great and very distinguishing difference between gracious affections and others is, that gracious affections, the higher they are raised, the more is a spiritual appetite and longing of soul after spiritual attainments, increased. On the contrary, false affections rest satisfied in themselves.
12. Gracious and holy affections have their exercise and fruit in Christian practice. I mean, they have that influence and power upon him who is the subject of 'em, that they cause that a practice, which is universally conformed to, and directed by Christian rules, should be the practice and business of his life.

We are obviously now – in spite of Edwards' firm rootedness in the Calvinist tradition[18] – nevertheless in a somewhat different world and climate from English Puritanism a century earlier. We are on the way to an interest in the phenomenology and psychology of religious emotions – half-way, it might be said, to William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience.*[19] Yet Edwards is not only or even chiefly interested in religious experience as a human phenomenon or a dimension of human individual or social psychology. He is on the lookout for signs of the spiritually authentic, for means of discriminating between genuine and delusive emotions in the field of (Christian) religion. He is asking what indicates real *holiness*, which is why his enquiry belongs within our scope. Yet he offers a very distinctive style of approach – as one might expect of a theologian who was also immensely intellectually curious and well versed in the science and philosophy of his time.

These lines could be drawn out much further and added to by others in the Reformed tradition in the last two and half centuries since Edwards. But that must be a subject for another time and another paper. These selected examples from what might be called the early modern period may at least serve to remind us how wide – and also how diverse – is the field indicated by our topics.

[18] For Edwards' Calvinism see, for example, *his Freedom of the Will*, edited by Paul Ramsay (=*The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, volume 1), (Yale University Press 1957).
[19] W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience. A Study in Human Nature*, (New York 1902). James counts as the founder of the tradition of American philosophical pragmatism developed by C.S. Pierce and John Dewey. *Varieties* is based upon his Gifford Lectures in Edinburgh in 1901 and 1902.

JUSTIFICATION IN ESCHATOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE -

Thomas Finger

I. The Gaps

Traditional Protestant teaching on Justification, at least as understood by many Anabaptists, as well as many Catholics, involves two problematic "gaps". The first gap stretches between God's declaration that a person is fully justified, or righteous, and that person's actual behavior, which is not wholly righteous, and perhaps far from it.

This teaching, of course, was initially intended to resolve a significant problem. Medieval Catholics tended to identify final justification with the completion of what Protestants came to call sanctification: the attainment of fully righteous character. In medieval times, most people could expect to be justified only after lengthy time in purgatory. Martin Luther protested that this quest for complete subjective righteousness led either to self-deception: to regarding oneself as far more righteous than one was; and/or to despair of ever obtaining salvation.

However, the solution he proposed – that God regards or pronounces people righteous when their character clearly is not – raised at least as many problems for Catholics and Anabaptists. When Protestants spoke of this righteousness being reckoned, or declared, or imputed, many Anabaptists and Catholics heard this meaning fictitious and unreal: a merely verbal declaration which clashed with the way things actually were.

Most Catholics and Anabaptists viewed the issue from a different angle. For them, the ultimate purpose of God's coming in Christ was to make us actually holy and righteous. From this perspective, the message of imputed righteousness seemed to undercut Christian faith's primary goal. Anabaptists especially complained that it led to false confidence, to excuses for sinful behavior, to sanctifying the moral *status quo.* These ethical objections were more fundamental for them than strictly theological considerations.

To be sure, Protestants affirmed that all who were truly justified would eventually be sanctified.[1] But even so, this first "gap" remained. If God desires that we become actually righteous, why call something declared, or reckoned, or imputed "justification?" Justification seemed to be something that occurred in a heavenly court, far removed from earth; and/or something merely legal, far distant from ethical life. The practical effect of this teaching, whatever its theoretical claims, seemed evident to Anabaptists in the sub-Christian behavior all around them.

Protestant justification also seemed to focus on the individual – flavored by the kind of anguish experienced paradigmatically by Luther. For many Anabaptists and not a few Catholics, this appeared to create a second "gap": between individuals and their ecclesial and social worlds.

Anabaptists, however, experienced intense conversion struggles. They testified to a "baptism of the Spirit", which preceded water baptism, which tossed individuals about on its tumultuous waves and billows and finally drowned them.[2] Yet this inner baptism had to be completed by an outer one which incorporated individuals into communities where they shared their goods with, and even gave their lives for, each other, and participated in an intense process of corporate sanctification. The inner and personal was inseparably linked with the outer and communal.

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[1] But the new Protestant communions were State Churches to which nearly all citizens belonged. Anabaptists might have protested less loudly had they not been. Perhaps, had there been more congregations like those Luther envisioned early on in his *Deutsche Messe* – where "those who profess the gospel with hand and mouth" would "meet alone in a house somewhere to pray, to read, to baptize, to receive the sacrament, and to do other Christian works" (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 53, pp 63-64) – perhaps Anabaptists would have found more plausible the Protestant claim that those who were truly justified would become sanctified.

[2] See the selections on baptism in Walter Klaassen, ed., *Anabaptism in Outline* (Scottdale, PA.: Herald 1981), pp 162-189.

Further, though Anabaptists stressed the differences between this corporate life and the social life around them, they were not originally sectarian in the sense of withdrawing. They were convinced that the personal and communal renewal they experienced were integral dimensions of the coming of a whole new creation. For while eschatological expectation was strong in most Reformation movements, it was especially intense among Anabaptists. This engendered various bizarre predictions and disappointed hopes – even a few disastrous attempts to inaugurate the new world violently, such as at Münster. But it also led to widespread mission efforts. Anabaptists were convinced that individual renewal, which they indicated much more often by terms like "new birth" than "justification", was simply one dimension of an imminent cosmic transformation.

The two gaps I have mentioned have disturbed not only Anabaptists and Catholics. Lutherans themselves have often sought to stress, in the words of the recent Joint Declaration on Justification, that "good works", a "life lived in faith, hope and love", are fruits of justification.[3] And most Lutherans today, along with other heirs of the Protestant Reformation, are deeply concerned that God's righteousness revitalize the ecclesial, social and non-human worlds.

Still, I have been asked to share what new life in Christ could mean today in light of my own tradition. And I suspect, despite what scholars and Church leaders might be saying, that these two "gaps" in justification theory continue to hinder many churches, including some Anabaptist ones, from connecting beliefs about individual salvation with life's broader dimensions. This often seems true not only where "justification by faith" is still explicitly taught, but also where the traditional teaching, even though hardly known, shapes the fundamental awareness of Christian life.

I propose that certain features of the Anabaptist perspective can help close these two gaps. These insights are not uniquely Anabaptist. Many are shared in various ways with other churches of the first and second Reformations, and with contemporary Lutherans, Reformed and Catholics. Ultimately, I believe, they are biblical. Still, I propose that the Anabaptist tradition, whose theology has been largely unformulated and implicit, can make significant contributions to an overall vision of new life in Christ in general, and of justification in particular.

II. Eschatological Justification

Briefly, I propose that justification does involve a central contrast, even a tension. But this is between neither the heavenly and the earthly nor the legal and the ethical. Instead, it is between the eschatological "already" and the "not yet". In other words: how can people who are "not yet" fully righteous regard themselves as truly righteous? Because the end of the ages, when the dead shall be raised, when all God's people will be united in peace, when God will dwell amidst and renew the whole creation – is "already" a reality, and by faith, people can participate in it now.

The justified are righteous not in some heavenly sphere distant from earth, but because they are caught up, by God's grace, in the Kingdom of Heaven, which began invading earth when Jesus came, and is "already" transforming the world. They are righteous not due to some bare legal declaration, but because the Last Judgement, in which God's enemies are conquered and God's people established in new life, has already occurred. The justified are righteous not simply as individuals, but because God has already drawn them together into this new reality.

These convictions, I believe, were stressed by Anabaptists, though they spoke more often of God's "Kingdom" than of "righteousness" being present.[4] Their insistence on living by Jesus' high standards, at least at its best, flowed neither from ethical perfectionism nor desire to merit God's

[3] "The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification", printed in *Ecumenical Proposals*, (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 1996), #37.

[4] According to the detailed study of Lutheran John Reumann, which deeply influenced "The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification", Paul's gospel of justification is Jesus' message of the Kingdom, restated in light of his death and resurrection (*Righteousness in the New Testament*, Philadelphia: Fortress/New York: Paulist 1982), p 25.

righteousness, but from the conviction that since God's Kingdom was truly present, such a life was possible.[5] Yet their intense sufferings also convinced them that this Kingdom was "not yet" fully present.

In what follows, I want to clarify this eschatological notion of justification gradually, and from different angles, by showing how it throws light on some theological contours of this theme; and then (Section III) by suggesting some practical implications for new life in Christ today.

A. Eschatological Justification in Luther

First, I acknowledge that this general perspective appeared among the Reformers. Luther, as is well known, often spoke of justification as forgiveness of sins and imputation of an "alien righteousness" coming wholly from God, and in no way based on one's character. Yet while Luther regarded this as the "basic and decisive factor", he also maintained, according to Paul Althaus, that God "establishes a new being and makes a man righteous in himself" in the justifying act.[6] God, in Luther's perspective, would never "declare man to be righteous if he did not also intend to make a new man out of him" and had begun this with justifying faith.[7]

In this sense, says Althaus, justification "has an eschatological dimension", for "the Christian's righteousness exists in the present and at the same time is still coming in the future."[8] Luther could even express this in the paradoxical terminology common today: "We are *not yet* made righteous – yet we are *already* made righteous, but our righteousness still rests on *hope*."[9] In other words, though Luther stressed God's forgiveness and acceptance, in the present, of a person who was far from righteous, this same justifying act included the bestowal of full righteousness on that person in the future.

Seen from this perspective, justification is clearly a divine act – yet not a heavenly or legal one. It is the establishment of a "new creation" which, though not yet fully actualized, surely will be, and into which the justified person is irreversibly caught up. Viewed from this angle, Luther appears not too distant from the Anabaptists, who regularly spoke of salvation as a new creation, new life, or new birth.[10] Luther, of course, stressed this creation's divine origination, and one's incorporation into it apart from personal effort or subjective worth. Yet if I understand him, he regarded this as one dimension of a transformative, all-encompassing, eschatological act.

B. Justification as Union with Christ

If justification were merely a legal declaration, faith would consist simply in understanding and affirming it. Various scholars claim, however, that Luther envisioned faith not as grasping a verbal pronouncement, but as laying hold of the living Christ. According to the "New Finnish Interpretation", epitomized by Tuomo Mannermaa, Luther believed that Jesus, and thus Jesus' own righteousness, were present in faith.[11] According to Althaus, "Luther sees the essence of justifying faith in the fact that it grasps Christ."[12]

Such understandings have facilitated the Lutheran agreements with Catholics expressed in the recent Joint Declaration on Justification. Here Lutherans affirm that "Justification and renewal are joined

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[5] See my "An Anabaptist Perspective on Justification" in Milan Opočenský and Páraic Réamonn, eds., *Justification and Sanctification in the Traditions of the Reformation* (Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches 1999), pp 47-49.
[6] Althaus, p 235: "the first foundation is the stronger and more important, for although the second amounts to something, it does so only through the power of the first." (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 32, p 329).
[7] Althaus, p 236.
[8] *Ibid*.
[9] *Luther's Works*, Vol. 27, p 21 (quoted in Althaus, p 237; Italics mine).
[10] Althaus entitles the section to which I am referring "The Beginning of a New Creation". For Anabaptist perspectives, see C.J. Dyck, *Spiritual Life in Anabaptism* (Scottsdale, PA.: Herald 1995), pp 52-54. I am proposing "the coming of the new creation" as the organizing theme of Anabaptist theology in *A Contemporary Anabaptist Theology* (Downers Grove, IL.: Inter/Varsity).
[11] See Carl Braaten and Robert Jenson, eds., *Union with Christ: the New Finnish Interpretation of Luther* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1998).
[12] Althaus, p 230.

in Christ, who is present in faith", while Catholics declare that "In justification the righteous receive from Christ faith, hope, and love, and are thereby taken into communion with him."[13]

At Prague V, I sought to show how many Anabaptists understood faith much like this. According to Menno Simons, for instance, faith raises us up with Christ; through faith we are born of Christ, who is our "wisdom, righteousness and sanctification."[14] By faith we "become one with Christ through his ardent love" [15] and "become new creatures, born of God..."[16] It was because they believed that faith joins us with Christ through the Holy Spirit, and not because they were ethical perfectionists, that Anabaptists insisted that true faith always flows forth in good works.

Now if justifying faith joins people with the risen, living Jesus, it becomes clear, from another angle, how justification arises from incorporation into eschatological reality. For Jesus' resurrection was not an odd, isolated event. It was "the firstfruits" of the final resurrection in which we will participate (1 Co 15.23, cf. Js 1.18), and which therefore has "already" begun and already takes us up into its revitalizing energy. For though the risen Jesus is "in heaven", he has not forsaken our world, but is actively subduing every opposing "ruler and every authority and power." (1 Co 15.24). It is from thence, through the Holy Spirit, that he transforms human hearts and sends the gospel to all nations.

Through faith in the risen Jesus, that is, we are already righteous, even if not yet fully so, because through him we participate in the righteousness of the final resurrection, already manifested and affirmed and actualized in his.

C. Justification AND Sanctification?

Protestants frequently sought to bridge the first "gap" in their justification doctrine, between declarative and behavioral righteousness, by distinguishing justification from sanctification. This often led to regarding these two as temporal stages: first we are justified, then afterwards we become sanctified. Yet this schema could strengthen the impression that justification is simply a legal fiction. For if sanctification is the process through which we *really* become righteous, is it not obvious that when we are justified we really are not?

Catholics often sought to avoid the justification-sanctification polarity by speaking simply of justification, which comes through faith – but also of its "increase." Yet Protestants protested: if justification is God's sovereign act, how can it be "increased?" Protestants objected further to the Catholic notion that "good works" are a "cause" of this "increase."[17]

Anabaptists aroused similar Protestant objections by apparently insisting that for someone to be justified, works must be *added* to faith. Balthasar Hubmaier, for instance, could assert that "Faith alone and by itself is not sufficient for salvation... Rather, faith must express itself also in love..."[18] Jacob Kautz maintained that Jesus "has not suffered for us or made satisfaction for us in any way unless we stand in his footsteps, walk the way he blazed before us, and follow the command of the Father..."[19]

None of these three approaches overcomes at least a strong appearance of a temporal gap between justification and something quite different which follows it. In contrast, as I sought to show at Prague V, significant biblical warrant exists for denoting both God's saving act and revitalized human activity by "righteousness" terminology, rather than by different word-groups.[20] The Old Testament

[13] "The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification", #6 and 27; cf. #11 and 22.
[14] J.C. Wenger, ed., *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons* (Scottdale, PA.: Herald 1956), p 504.
[15] *Ibid*., p 343.
[16] *Ibid*, p 146. These quotations appear in the "Appendix" to my "An Anabaptist Perspective on Justification" in Opočenský and Réamonn, *op. cit*., p 85. In this Appendix (pp 64-86) I indicate that the theme of faith uniting us with the living Christ was stressed especially by Peter Ridemann, Pilgram Marpeck and Dirk Phillips as well as Menno Simons.
[17] Council of Trent, Canons on Justification, # 24 (in Henry Denziger, ed., *The Sources of Catholic Dogma* ([St. Louis: B. Herder 1957), p 243.
[18] In Klaassen, *op. cit*., p 43.
[19] *Ibid.*, p 48.
[20] Opočenský and Réamonn, *op. cit*., pp 44-63; cf. my *Christian Theology: an eschatological approach*, Vol. II (Scottdale, PA., Herald 1989), pp, 174-190.

tsedeqah indicates the deliverance initiated by Yahweh as well as the renewing energy pervading the lives and situations of those delivered. Further, I doubt that a clear distinction can be drawn between a strictly forensic use of *dikaiosune* (such as in Romans 1-4) and a transformative, ethical use (say, in Romans 5-6). Moreover, the New Testament provides no warrant for conceiving salvation in terms of a uniform progression or distinct stages.[21]

I propose, then, instead of formally differentiating justification from sanctification, or justification from its increase, or faith alone from works, that theology distinguish justification's *basis* from its *content.*[22] Justification's basis would include Jesus' saving life, death, and resurrection; and also the initial drawing towards faith, and his risen presence to faith, through the Spirit which he poured out. All these are strictly divine acts, initiated and carried out apart from any human response. Further, they are eschatological acts: they equal last judgement and the final resurrection, accomplished in the most definitive sense and dynamically invading the present.[23]

Identifying these acts as justification's basis accords with the Anabaptist intention to root salvation in divine grace, which could well be expressed in the words of the Joint Declaration:

> The foundation and presupposition of justification is the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ... 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... Faith itself is God's gift through the Holy Spirit...[24]

Nonetheless, Scripture also employs "righteousness""terminology for human activities and states, even while it intertwines these closely with uses of the same terms for God's acts. In accord with the Anabaptist and Catholic concern to stress not only the origin, but even more the overall goal, of God's saving work, it seems best to retain righteousness words for human renewal.

But if we do, human choices and productions become part of justification in some sense, and even "increase" it in some way. If we call these justification's "content", do we incorporate human activity into it in a way which fatally undercuts Protestant insistence on justification as solely God's act?

I believe not – if we continually keep in mind that however profound and wide-ranging salvific renewal might be, its *basis* never changes. No matter how extensive such personal and social transformations may be, they never add to or alter Jesus' life or death, his resurrected presence or the Spirit's initiative. Further, true salvific transformation can occur only when one relies wholly on that basis and nothing else – only when people renounce all tendencies to act autonomously, thank God for acceptance and forgiveness, and draw on the *eschaton's* dynamic presence as the source of their energy. Justification's "content" can "increase" only when people repeatedly return to that basis, repeatedly renounce efforts at autonomy, and receive divine grace anew. (This need not mean, of course, that they process all this consciously in each act; but this must be their underlying attitude.)

In the very broadest sense, justification's content does "increase" through time, starting from its historical basis in God's acts up to its fullness at the final resurrection. Yet righteousness, individual or social, does not develop in progressive linear fashion, from one step to another, once its basis has been appropriated; but only by constantly returning to that basis and starting from it afresh.[25]

I find it helpful, then, along with some current Lutheran theologians, to include human activities within justification rather than assigning them to a different category, like sanctification. For while these

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[21] Texts which appear to indicate a general progression are too diverse to be synthesized (e.g., Ro 5.1-4; 8.30; 2 Pet 1.5-7).
[22] I briefly suggested this in Opočenský and Réamonn, pp 62-63; cf. *Christian Theology*, Vol. II, pp 190-194.
[23] I am understanding Jesus' saving work chiefly according to the *Christus Victor* motif. Here Jesus' life, death and resurrection all participated, in a complex way, in a final Judgement on God's enemies and on all humans, who are caught in their grasp. Even more basically, this saving work liberated enslaved humankind and initiated the final resurrection; cf. my *Christian Theology*, Vol. I, pp 317-367; Vol. II, pp 184-190).
[24] "The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification", #15 and 16.
[25] This is a major emphasis in Gerhard Forde's treatment of justification in Carl Braaten and Robert Jenson, eds. *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II (Philadelphia: Fortress 1984), pp 395-444.

activities have human dimensions, it seems more likely that these dimensions will be separated from their divine basis, and perhaps regarded as contributing to it, if theology calls them something else.

If, instead, theology can successfully stress that justification's *content* never alters its *basis* and is continually dependent on it; then by using the same word for both content and basis, theology might better articulate what Anabaptists, along with Catholics (and really Protestants too) have insisted on: that true justification always involves renewal, that true faith always involves works, that true righteousness always involves righteous behavior.

III. The Social Dimension

So far I have addressed the first "gap" opened by traditional justification doctrine: between declared righteousness and behavioral righteousness. I have acknowledged that justification involves a certain tension, but that this can far better be conceived as one between the eschatological "already" and "not yet". I have proposed that the "already" is rooted in the risen Christ, and that justification involves living union, through the Holy Spirit, with him. Further, since this union always transforms behavior, I proposed that the divine acts which initiate it and the human responses to them not be given different names (like justification and sanctification), but the same one – justification – while making a crucial distinction between its basis and content.

Though this way of conceiving justification is highly congenial to Anabaptism, it also seems generally compatible with Catholicism and some current Lutheran theologians. However, I have not found that Catholics or Lutherans relate this eschatological orientation as closely as Anabaptists would to the second "gap" in traditional teaching: between the individual and social dimensions.[26] The Joint Declaration, for instance, mentions eschatological and social-ethical issues only once, simply as topics for future consideration.[27]

Consequently, I want to suggest several ways in which justification, as sketched in my Prague V presentation, applies directly to the social-ethical realm, in line with an Anabaptist orientation.

A. General Approach

I proposed that New Testament words for righteousness and faith be understood largely in light of their Old Testament precedents. As I recently mentioned, the Old Testament word usually translated as "righteousness", *tsedeqah*, often indicates the deliverance of Yahweh's people from enemies as well as the social-ethical character of their lives that follow. Most basically, *tsedeqah* means Yahweh's covenant making, maintaining, rescuing and renewing activity. However, *tsedeqah* also has a cosmic function. Along with words translated as faithfulness, steadfast love and peace (*emunah*, *chesed* and *shalom*), "righteousness" constitutes the foundation of God's throne – is an attribute by which Yahweh governs the cosmos.[28]

Since *tsedeqah* included both deliverance and cosmic governance, it was eventually applied to a coming eschatological judgement and liberation of the human and non-human worlds.[29] This judgement came to be understood as the manifestation not simply of *tsedeqah* as a cosmic force, but as the self-revelation of God's own character: of Yahweh's true supremacy over all gods and nations, of Yahweh's faithfulness and justice and re-creating power. This self-revelation was sometimes pictured as Yahweh's

[26] Among Lutherans, this may be because eschatology is often understood in a "realized" way where the "already" of the individual's righteousness is stressed while the broader righteousness which operates in society, but is "not yet" fully actualized, receives much less attention. I find this true of Forde's approach.
[27] "The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification", #43.
[28] e.g., Ps 85.10-13; 89.14; 97.2, 6; 99.4. See Opočenský and Réamonn, *op. cit.*, pp 51-53.
[29] e.g., Ps 96.13; 98.9; Is.61.10-l1; 62.1-2.

response to accusations, by the nations, their gods, and even the covenant people, which had put these qualities, as it were, on trial.[30]

At Prague V I also proposed, as do various New Testament scholars, that the revelation of God's righteousness in Jesus of which Paul speaks be understood as God's self-manifestation in that eschatological trial. Through Jesus' death judgement was definitively pronounced on God's enemies, and through his resurrection God's people were delivered and raised into new life. Yet this decisive eschatological event occurred "already" through only one representative person, Jesus, though in a way which would incorporate others through faith, even though the *eschaton* had "not yet" been consummated in a climactic judgement and resurrection. Through Jesus' life, death and resurrection God's delivering, re-creating righteousness had become operative and been revealed, and even God had been "justified" (Ro 3.1-8, cf. 9.6ff.) All who would be incorporated, by faith, into the sweep of this righteousness would also be "justified."

If righteousness and justification be understood this way, they can hardly be ascribed to individuals alone, for the revelation and operation of God's righteousness re-shapes the cosmos. According to Romans 5-8, justified persons are delivered from the former reigns of Death, Sin, Law and the Flesh, and incorporated into the new reigns of Life, Righteousness and the Spirit. Chapter 8 shows that the Spirit's reign transforms the non-human creation in concert with humans (8.19-27), and that no power in the cosmos can separate justified persons from God's love in Christ (8.31-39).

Such an understanding of justification surely supports Lukas Vischer's claim that "Justice becomes a reality in this world through communion with Jesus Christ, a power breaking into all realms of life, personal, communal, in society and in creation."[31] This understanding clearly underlines the importance of environmental concern, especially in its interconnections with social, political and economic issues. If justification be viewed in this way, it is hard to imagine how it could not be connected with justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

This cosmic advent of righteousness fits well with the Anabaptist conviction that the "new births" of individuals were integrally connected with the coming of a new creation, even if some Anabaptists conceived the latter crudely. Anabaptists envisioned this coming world as one of peace. It probably is not coincidental, then, that *shalom*, the Old Testament word for "peace", often indicated the kind of harmony among humans and non-humans which flowed from *tsedeqah.* It is also striking that Romans 5-8, which celebrates the new world of Life, Righteousness and the Spirit, begins by declaring that "since we are justified by faith, we have (or let us have) peace with God." (5.1) While "peace" here is usually understood individualistically, Romans' following chapters suggest that it may basically mean *shalom.*

B. The Powers

An additional dimension of *tsedeqah* would be stressed in an Anabaptist understanding of justification: God's triumph over enemies. God's self-manifestation through Jesus' life, death and resurrection involved a victory over all forces opposing God's intention. Romans 5-8, as I recently said, begins listing these, portraying them as cosmic, even demonic, powers: Death, Sin, Law and the Flesh; Romans 8 concludes by extolling God's love in Christ above every force "in all creation" (8.39). This emphasis increases the likelihood that *exousiai* in Romans 13, often translated "governing authorities", means "powers" in the more demonic sense, as it does elsewhere in the New Testament – even though Christians should be subject to them in various ways.[32]

[30] e.g., Is 41.1, 21-26; 43.8-13, 25-26; 45.20-25.
[31] Opočenský and Réamonn, *op. cit*., p 244.
[32] For a discussion of this controversial issue, see my *Christian Theology*, Vol. II. (Scottdale, PA.: Herald 1985), pp 84-88.

Generally speaking, the understanding of justification I am sketching accords with the "Christus Victor" motif, which depicts atonement as liberation from demonic bondage and incorporation into resurrection life.[33] Demonic forces include not only Sin, Death, Law and Flesh; but also "thrones", "dominions", "rulers" and "powers" which act through political and socio-economic institutions. Yet while these forces have been decisively defeated, in the eschatological perspective which I am proposing, they have not yet been destroyed. Anabaptists found them still appallingly active through socio-political institutions.[34]

From this vantage point, one would not expect righteousness to transform socio-political institutions so fully as Reformed, Catholic and Protestant liberal traditions have often supposed. Nor would the Kingdom of this World be as compatible with the Kingdom of Christ as Lutherans have often thought. One would rather expect that while God's righteousness might indeed operate powerfully in certain places and situations, society as a whole would not be uniformly transformed, but often be torn by conflicts between righteousness and sin, and that the latter would often seem to win.

Still, this socio-political outlook, while congruent with Anabaptism, may not be far different from the cautious, "realistic" perspective often found in Reformed, Lutheran and Catholic circles today. Lukas Vischer acknowledges that "The course of history cannot be foreseen", and rather than seeking to guide history as a whole, Christians should concentrate on "witnessing to God's order and seeking to establish counter-signs" in various public places.[35]

Vischer roots this outlook in an understanding of justification quite compatible with the one I have sketched. "Conversion", he emphasizes, "is not a once for all occurrence which can then be left behind. There is constantly need to resort anew to his justifying grace."[36] In other words, "The new life is never simply at our disposal... It does not become a part of our character which we could mold... As soon as we think of ourselves as having become just, certainty begins to vanish."[37]

Justification also does not permit us to expect that righteousness in society will increase, as it were, in straight-line fashion, where each step builds on the previous one, so that injustice will gradually vanish, and repentance and conversion become passé. Even in its social involvements, the Church will need to return repeatedly to justification's "basis" in Jesus' work and risen presence, to recognize the sinfulness of its efforts insofar as they do not arise from it, and to receive afresh forgiving and revitalizing grace. In light of this, and of the continuing demonic opposition to God's righteousness, we cannot expect this righteousness, which will indeed impact society, to do so in uniformly progressive, all-encompassing way.

C. Jesus' Way

A third Anabaptist suggestion for closing the gap between justification's individual and social aspects arises from the understanding of faith, or *pistis*, that I proposed in Prague V. I noted that the Old Testament *emunah*, often translated "faithfulness", is frequently connected with *tsedeqah*. *Emunah* and *tsedeqah*, sometimes along with *shalom*, frequently appear as attributes, or energies, by which Yahweh governs the cosmos. Further, Yahweh's "righteousness", as displayed in rescuing the covenant people, is also Yahweh's "faithfulness" to them and the covenant. God's *tsedeqah*, as an historical activity of covenant-maintaining, -rescuing and -renewing, also involves God's *emunah*.

God's "faithfulness (*pistis*)" is also revealed in the New Testament eschatological trial, where divine righteousness triumphs despite Israel's "faithlessness (*apistia*)", where God is "justified", and God's truthfulness abounds in the face of human lies (Ro 3.3-8). I have proposed, along with various New

[33] Opočenský and Réamonn, pp 61-62. The classic treatment is Gustav Aulen, *Christus Victor* (New York, Macmillan, 1960); for a brief description see my *Christian Theology*, Vol. I, pp 217-324.
[34] See my *A Contemporary Anabaptist Theology* (Ch. 6.).
[35] Opočenský and Réamonn, *op. cit*., pp 247-248.
[36] *Ibid*., p 246.

Testament scholars, that when *pistis* is connected with Jesus, it often means the "faithfulness of", rather than "faith in" Jesus, as has traditionally been supposed. If this is so, then the God's righteousness was revealed primarily through "the faithfulness of Jesus Christ."[38]

This reading, of course, does not void the claim that justification is received only through faith, though it encourages regarding human "faith" more as continuing "faithfulness" than as a one-time act. (And this corresponds with including ongoing human activity in righteousness' "content.")

Now if justification comes through the "faithfulness of Jesus", this faithfulness includes not only his death and resurrection, but also his life. Yet Jesus' life is often minimized or missing in traditional discussions of justification. It appears, somewhat indirectly, only twice in the Joint Declaration: his "teaching and example" are once mentioned as "a standard for the conduct of the justified", and it is once said that Jesus admonishes us to works of love.[39]

But if Jesus' life and teachings become central to the righteousness which is justification's "basis", then, as Anabaptists stressed, these must also deeply shape its "content": our positive participation in that righteousness. Jesus' way of peace, which includes non-violent resistance to all evil, will become normative for Christian conduct. Jesus' sharp critique of accumulating wealth, his unexpected favor for the poor, for women, for despised ethnicities (gentiles) – these will become central to social vision and personal lifestyle. For these reasons, as well as the resistance of social systems to the *eschaton*'s "already", the way of righteousness will be more counter-cultural – even, apparently, more unrealistic and impractical – than it usually has been in most Christian traditions.

[37] *Ibid*., p 245.
[38] Opočenský and Réamonn, *op. cit*., pp 59-60.
[39] "The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification", #31 and 37.

RESPONSE TO JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE CALLING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD - TOWARDS A BIBLICAL REVIEW OF THE SECOND REFORMATION -

Peter Winzeler

I. Concerning the Question of the *ordo salutis*

The central thesis of my answer is that we can interpret the relation of justification and sanctification in a better way that is both biblical and relevant for the life in society if we look at both in light of the calling to the Kingdom of God that stands at the beginning of the new life in Christ. This eschatological view of the topic differs however from the *"ordo salutis"* of Protestant orthodoxy and requires first of all substantiation.[1]

a) On the one hand, it could be argued that the hope of the *Kingdom of God* is not a central theme of the Second Reformation, since this was more concerned with reconciliation in Christ than with salvation or redemption. Granted, Luther identified rather sanctification with justification; he had no conception of an inner-wordly progress toward the Kingdom of God, since for him the last day was directly imminent[2] – as against that of Zwingli, who held a more sober view.[3] Nevertheless, Karl Barth emphasized correctly that the eschatological quality of the *unio cum Christo* as the high goal of justification (for Luther) or of sanctification (for Calvin) was no more lacking in mystical or fanatical tendencies than the chiliastic spirit of the Taborites or Thomas Müntzer.[4] On the contrary, there is in this ecstatic rapture the danger that the human being becomes lost in history or is swallowed up by the *eschaton*. Justification and sanctification however, concern both a human as sinner, who in this world experiences the calling to the kingdom of God: in the earthly society and fellowship of the lived s*anctorum communio.*

b) On the other hand, it could be argued that *calling* was not a central motif of the reformers, in that they assumed a natural knowledge of God, the creator, and the fall of man (see the prolegomena in Zwingli, *Commentary* 1-3; *Calvin Institute* I.1-3). But what would we know of sin and grace, how should we repent and be converted, as long as we are not challenged and called to the kingdom of God? I cannot discuss here the topic of original and heretical sin (*Erbsünde*), which was perhaps the main reason for the reformers to deny an original calling of every human being.[5] But where the path of natural theology is taken, there is at the beginning the threat that the human subject vanishes, on whom justification and sanctification should take place. Similarly, the sociological subject church is threatened when it is replaced by a religious or natural "point of contact" of the general *conditio humana* in the bourgeois society (in Schleiermacher, Bultmann, Brunner).

Certainly from Martin Luther to Albrecht Ritschl much was said about the ethical calling of the Christian in the world, to the extent that each should remain in his station and work daily for the kingdom of God (which led Max Weber to his thesis of inner-worldly asceticism and the "spirit of capitalism",

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[1] Since I had first to write and let translate this answer one week before receiving Thomas Finger's paper, I did go out of the agreements and point 4 of further discussion in the final statement of Prague V, cf. *Justification and Sanctification in the Traditions of the Reformations*, ed. M. Opočenský and P. Réamonn (Geneva: WARC, 1999), p 277, and the contributions of P. Winzeler, J&S in *Karl Barth's Reception of the First and Second Reformation*, pp 28-32; and Alasdair I.C. Heron, *J&S in the Reformed Tradition*, pp 113-122. Some remarks were added before and some after the consultation.

[2] Cf. Jürgen Moltmann, *Das Kommen Gottes*. *Christliche Eschatologie*, (Gütersloh 1995), p 177f.

[3] "Who can deny today the perception of the coming day of the Lord? Not the last day, when the Lord will judge the whole world, but the day of the renewal of the present conditions", Zwingli to Franz I, *Kommentar über die wahre und falsche Religion*, 1525, see Huldrych Zwingli, Schriften, Zürich 1995, vol. III, p 44 (Lat. Corpus Reformatorum = Z III, p 633.)

[4] Karl Barth, "Rechtfertigung und Heiligung", in *Zwischen den Zeiten* (ZdZ) 5, 1927/4, pp 281-309. 292; also *Kirchliche Dogmatik* (KD) IV/3, pp 631-636.

[5] Zwingli, who contested the Lutheran understanding of an inherited original sin, also confirmed (against Erasmus) the total corruption of the human subject in *Commentary* 4, cf. Barth's criticism KD III/2, p 31f.

which today results in the inner-worldly waste of all the resources of the earth by the privileged). D. Bonhoeffer protested against this secularization in his dissertation, since all dogmatic concepts are also sociological concepts that only achieve their validity in the *Ekklesia* of the called (see *Sanctorum communio* 1930). He distinguished between the justification of the sinner as the principle of *individuation*, where I stand not just alone, but "lonely" (in my conscience, in my person) before God, and sanctification as the principle of communication, where I necessarily live together with others and accept joint responsibility to the others in society.[6] In this view Martin Luther was a lonely and troubled monk in the *Sanctorum communio* when he asked: "How do I (a Christian sinner) find a gracious God?" His followers in today's anonymous bourgeois society are busy themselves only with the question, how do I find a sinful human, to whom I, the magisterial Reformed theologian can apply the word of justifying grace,[7] which is surely no recipe for success. Karl Barth could not accept this paternalistic searching for human sin, since without original calling there could grow neither dogmatics and proper preaching of the kingdom of God, nor a real hearing or doing of the word of God,[8] even if this would mean a mighty reduction (instead of missionary widening) of the Christian community in the world. A more radical understanding of the Reformers would lead us to assign more weight to the primacy of the challenge of individuals and groups in today's world, which would answer to the lived reality of their witness.

c) One could object that especially the third Reformation (that of Calvinism and of the Refugees) knew indeed of a special *calling* to a Christian life, not at the beginning however, but subsequent to justification and sanctification instead, as Karl Barth does in the third part of his teaching on atonement (see KD IV/3, §71). But this pattern too has shown itself as a dead end. In orthodoxy the locus "*De vocatione"* has a doleful shadow existence at the end of works of dogmatics, which Barth felt to be "strangely unconcrete, alienated from life… and above all unbelievable" (577). The basic background of the "calling of Abraham" for Jews, Christians and Moslems is lost (see F.-W. Marquardt).[9] The heritage of the first Reformation blooms here to a religious "special phenomenon" of an elite Christian caste of do-gooders, pietists or missionaries, that may be a sign of the living church, but no longer serves "as inalienable foundation, nor as *conditio sine qua non* of Christian existence as such" (Barth *ibid*. 600). Barth admonished a necessary correction, when he places his entire paragraph under the title "on the calling of man" (resp. of human beings).

d) If all of these objections were justified, and if the dualism of justification (Luther) and sanctification (Calvin) were the only thing that out of the perspective of the second Reformation could be contributed, then there would arise the suspicion that also the entire eschatological glory of the kingdom of God has no remaining real human subject in society and that Christian life takes place in a vacuum on the pages of dogmatic works that no one reads, in beautiful sermons that no one hears and no longer understands. Justification as the suggested "centre in the centre of the Christian faith" (E.Jüngel) would become an empty theological reformulation of the (former) *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*: as an old Protestant museum exhibit, which only Lutheran theologians could get excited about,[10] whereas the Reformed, on the other hand, go on with the social-political business of the day.

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[6] Bonhoeffer shows on this basis a strong connection of justification and sanctification: "So leads the perception of highest lonelyness to the other one of widest communality in sin", Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio. Eine dogmatische Untersuchung zur Soziologie der Kirche* (1930); 4th ed. 1954; Theol. Bücherei 3, (München 1969), p 73. In Justification "each becomes a 'person' and perceives God's holyness and his guilt; here everyone becomes 'lonely' […]. But the meaning of this blink of an eye is to overcome lonelyness in the community, in that the individual personality is thought to exist only in the reality of community", *ibid*., pp 214-216.

[7] Brunner argues in a sophisticated manner: "It is possible, to prove to everyone, that he is not what he wishes to be, that he will be in contradiction to himself, without a perspective to help himself […]. It is necessary above all, to show him this ambiguity of his existence, to illustrate the contradiction, whose proper name is sin, namely in that way, that he not himself steels away out of it", Emil Brunner, *Die andere Aufgabe der Theologie*, in ZdZ 7, 1929/3, pp 255-276.261f. (*translation PW).*

[8] See Barth against Brunner KD I/1 §3: 26ff.59.

[9] "Abraham is missing [*fehlt*]!", so Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt in his lucid review of the whole Protestant tradition and its anti-Judaistic tendency until to Barth: *Von Elend und Heimsuchung der Theologie. Prolegomena zur Dogmatik*, (München 1988), pp 263-277.276.

[10] Eberhard Jüngel, *Das Evangelium von der Rechtfertigung des Gottlosen als [dem] Zentrum des christlichen Glaubens*, Second ed. Tübingen 1999, p 13.

Also in the contrary interpretations and actual contestation of the "Joint Declaration" it seems, that the same dualism still would arise[11] and remain, and we never could close the "two gaps" that Thomas Finger reclaims:[12] neither between God's radical declaration of the righteousness of man and the remaining behaviour of the sinner, nor between the individual conversion of Christians and the social life. I wish to show that both gaps are based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the common Reformed consensus. But in all my agreements with Thomas Finger will my conclusions on his purposes first have a negative sense: *Justification is in fact not the first step of Sanctification and not the starting point or goal (resp. "basic") of progress in achieving New Life in Christ under the grace of God.* On the other hand: Sanctification is not the achievement of our Justification and could not be reduced to the "content" of our growing in Justification by faith alone. If we want to avoid such (in my eyes too much Lutheran) identification, there will be need for a more trinitarian framework of salvation (as also Finger intends).

II. The Calling to the Kingdom of God in the Reformers

My paper does not go into the historic-sociological roots of the tragic separation of the so-called Magisterial and Radical Reformations in Zurich (1519-25).[13] But theologically both have common roots in the calling to the kingdom of God. In his first regular dogmatics of the Reformed Christian faith (*Commentary on the true and false religion* 1525), Zwingli placed Jesus' call to repentance, to a changed life by grace, at the beginning of every hearing of the gospel of the kingdom of God (7/8), even before he dealt with law and the acknowledgement of sin, in a nearly "Barthian" order of salvation.

6. The Christian Religion [belief] (= salvation in Christ as the objective change of the whole world of man in the providence of God)
7. The Good News (= the call of Jesus to subjective *metanoia)*
8. The Repentance (= the subjective change to new life trough the Holy Spirit and faith)
9. The Law (= the call of the Torah and the Sermon on the Mount, in an *a priori* evangelical understanding of the sense of the Torah)
10. The Sin (= the acknowledgement of sin in the struggle of new life)
11. The Sin against the Holy Spirit (! = unbelieving "defeatism")

The apostolic key-authorization (= evangelical freedom)

The wrong and true church and her sacraments (understood as testaments or signs of the renewed covenant with the God of Israel)

Whoever hears this call to repentance, does not immediately say justification and sanctification, rather, he sets out on the path of discipleship, in which justification and sanctification occur, thanks to the working of the Holy Spirit, which comes to the aid of the weakness of our "flesh" (in body and reason of man). In this, Luther's Small Catechism agrees to an astonishing degree with Zwingli, so far as the third article also begins with the Holy Spirit, which has "called me through the gospel" to faith, witness and service in the world.

Calvin follows both predecessors in the third book of the *Institutio,* in the centre of his doctrine, in which he investigates the ministry of the spirit in the life of the chosen, that is "in what way we participate in the grace of Christ, which fruit grows into us and what effects (for the congregation and for society) result from this."[14] Calvin takes over here the impulse of the Anabaptists, whereby the evident

[11] The Lutheran part seems divided in a silently agreeing (Reform-Catholic) mainstream, that "shout[s] Justification, but whisper[s] Sanctification", without a deeper understanding of Luther's teaching (cf. Carter Lindberg, *J&S in the Lutheran Tradition*, in Opočenský/Réamonn [cf. Footnote 1], pp 97-112), and a rebellious academic-theologian (anti-Judaistic, anti-Roman and anti-ecumenical) minority, without a deeper understanding of Zwingli, Calvin and Barth.
[12]. Thomas Finger, "J&S in Eschatological Perspective", Paper for Prague VI, February 13, 2000.
[13] Cf. Gottfried W. Locher, *Die Zwinglische Reformation im Rahmen der europäischen Kirchengeschichte*, (Göttingen-Zürich 1979); P. Winzeler, *Zwingli als Theologe der Befreiung*, (Basel 1986).
[14] So the intentional misleading, however significant title of the third book in the German edition by Otto Weber: J. Calvin,

danger of a Christian salvific egoism arises, which simply asks what distinguishes the chosen minority of the called from the big bad world, whereas *the massa perditionis* only externally takes notice of the call, but can not hear it internally nor live according to it (as in the parable of the seed that falls among the thorns and on the ground of stones). We have to ask, if the gift of the Holy Spirit (by the grace of God) could be conditioned by the privilege of baptism or the true faith (see Acts 10.44f).

It is probably because of this overpowering Anabaptist-Calvinist-pietistic tradition that Barth delays his discussion of the calling until the third part of his teaching on atonement. Yet he turns the topic on its head, since it is not here a question of a special religious performance (“*religiöse Sonderveranstaltung”*), not a “Christian soliloquy” among the converted (572), but that of the actual point of contact (in the true sense of Brunner’s “*Anknüpfungspunkt”*!) in the life of a person in the human world and in constant dialogue of the subjectively called with the not-yet-called (569).

The subjectively called are not the only called in the world, since election includes all of humanity and the calling in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit may not be limited to a little flock. The call to the kingdom of God goes (objectively) to all humanity, Jews and Greeks, free and slaves, men and women, but to each in his or her place and in different ways, under discrete social, cultural and subjective conditions. For this reason, Barth can say with regard to predestination that the election to salvation occurs for the whole world, “in that it comes to the calling, justification, sanctification and glorification of humans” and we thereby “are awakened to faith, to love, to hope” (KD II/2,204), which includes now no temporal order or linear progress, but insists from the outset on the hope of the Kingdom of God (KD IV/3, 686.815f). Calling originates in the *eternal* counsel but occurs *in time*, by the Sea of Galilee, to the human subject, in concrete responsibilities and partisanship, as a first “call and summons” in the midst of temporal and wordly events (*ibid.* 588), because after all the Lord Jesus also eternally “lives as *contemporary* of all humans, and is active in their midst in his word, through his spirit, as prophet” (572).

Here I agree with Thomas Finger about the fatal absence of the earthly life of Jesus in the “Joint Declaration”. The earthly (Jewish) life of Jesus has no need (or Christian merit) only on the ground of cross and resurrection (see KD IV/2,148), but leads in his praxis and climax to cross and resurrection. The fishermen in Galilee knew nothing yet of Pauline theology, as they dared to take the first steps to a new life, but they remembered the teachings of the Lord after cross and resurrection. I would suggest then that we take this beginning from the end of Karl Barth’s *Church Dogmatics* and place it at the beginning of all orthopraxis and understand the church from its very basis as the fellowship of the called. It is only on this foundation that we can ask what sin, grace, sanctification and perseverance really are or (for us, non-Jewish Christians) will be.

III. The Hope of the Kingdom of God as Foundation of the New Life in Christ (in calling Justification and Sanctification)

If the call stands at the beginning of the new life in Christ, then justification and sanctification will have each their own place and significance in regard to the Kingdom of God and do not have a merely secondary societal, ecumenical and eschatological connection. The *eschaton* is not just an appendix consisting of the last judgement and eternal salvation, rather justification and sanctification are *a priori* based on Jesus’ call to *metanoia* in light of the God of Israel, who is renewing heaven and earth, the entire world of the creation and the covenant, in that the Gojim – as Paul says – are implanted (Romans 1.17-20). It is in light of our retardedness, our individual and collective failure to do what the kingdom of God requires of us that our justification as sinners comes in view. But the learning, doing and better hearing of the commandments of the Torah, and therefore the sanctification of one’s life can in image and letter take precedence before faith and the “Lord, Lord-saying” of the pious (Matthew 25). Justification by faith is not the achieving goal of our progress in sanctification, but a kind of “down-

Unterricht in der Christlichen Religion (1559), vol. 2, p 337.

payment" on the last day[15], without a causative priority before sanctification, for it is in the shipwreck of one's own sanctification that we experience to what degree we are godless, powerless and desperate, who need total justification alone in Jesus Christ (see Anselm's questions *Cur Deus homo*? and: how great the sin must be, what Zwingli regards in his foregoing chapter 6 as a metatheory of the objective need of salvation). In the eschatological perspective of the kingdom of God, justification and sanctification belong together: as person and deed, gospel and Torah, faith and social commitment, charisma and solidarity. Also our *calling* must be justified and sanctified (in a godless world that denies and hates every call and ambition to another world). In the church we recognize ourselves individually justified as powerless sinners, but in solidarity with all sinners (not the sin!), who dare live the new life. In the sanctification of the earth, politics and society however, we are in solidarity with all who hope and fail, and hear the call to repentance of the kingdom of God. Justification is (still more as) necessary for the freedom of the individual to do the will of God; sanctification however is aimed at how we live together in society, at the will to serve the Kingdom of God in life and deed.

From this perspective it makes good sense that Martin Luther placed subjective justification in strong conjunction with end-time theodicy that reaches beyond our own experience. The true faith is not a condition, but is *sufficient* to participate in the coming Glory of God, it does not occur in my self-confirmation, but in justifying God (*justificare Deum*) as Creator and Saviour,[16] that is, the personal recognition and hope that God does not abandon neither me nor the world to evil, because he is setting all in motion including the deliverance of the son of God to death on the cross so that the world of creation can and will be saved. In this true affirmation (*certitudo*) justification does not aim then at our private salvation, but frees us from our concern about such salvation, so that we can become free for God's coming kingdom. "*securitas... tollit fidem*", says Luther in regard to the dangers of a cheap grace of the "faith alone".[17] Just here I see the deepest agreement of Zwingli's understanding of Jesus' call to repentance, that opens the field to our will for sanctification. For "when the divine majesty fashioned the plan for the salvation of humanity, it did not do so in order to leave the world in its evil and allow it to grow old. For if that had been God's purpose, it would have been better for him to have sent us no saviour (at all) instead of such one whose act of liberation changed nothing in our previous condition and our depravity (the so called 'Prästen' of flesh)" (Zwingli, *op. cit*., p.131).

IV. Towards a Biblical Renewal of the Order of Salvation. Perseverance in Christian Life Only on the Basis of Israel's Hope in the Kingdom of God

In the biblical view there is not only one principal order of salvation for Jews, Christians and other peoples and tribes; the dogmatic and temporal issues of what comes earlier or later have a secondary meaning, since the last can always be first and the first be last. Also the warning of Paul to the justified Gojim (Romans 9-11) remains valid, not to rebel against the Jewish roots of their claim. Both points of view speak against viewing justification of the godless by faith alone as the first and only hinge of the Christian life – or as a Lutheran "*proprium*", which for a Catholic should naturally be incomprehensible (as in New-Lutheran polemics against the "Joint Declaration").[18] The historic coalition of Luther, Zwingli

[15] Also the social democratic engagement was for Barth "only a small self-understanding, very insufficient, poor and preliminary down payment for that, what a Christian today debts to his faith", Karl Barth, *Vergangenheit und Zukunft*, 1919; J. Moltmann, *Anfänge der dialektischen Theologie*, vol. I, (München 1963), p 153.

[16] "*Et iustificatio illa Dei passiva, qua a nobis justificatur, est ispa justificatio nostri active a Deo*", Rm II 65, 7; Hans-J. Iwand, *Glaubensgerechtigkeit nach Luthers Lehre*, ThExh 75, (München 1941), pp 11ff., 66.

[17] In his struggle of the true *certitudo* of faith and hope Luther understands the *securitas* of Christian life as the main sin or perversion of Christian belief, Iwand, *ibid.* p 38; also Jüngel, *ibid.* pp 115ff.208f. Also, faith alone cannot be a "good work" that merits salvation.

[18] *The Joint Declaration on Justification* confirms in an ecumenically significant way that the Lutheran *articulus* of the "*sola fide"* no longer has the character of a church-dividing *status confessionis* (see the contribution of André Birmelé). Yet it shows a very small and limited consensus of ecclesiastical authority and does not overcome the different basic structures and cultural and scholarly meanings since the 15/16th centuries. The main ecumenical question today – Judaism (Karl Barth) – is left aside. The Old

and Calvin in the defence of magisterial Reformation (against Judaism, Messianism, Hussites, Papacy, Anabaptists and revolutionary fanatics, etc.,) rests on no timeless dogmatic hierarchy and could give way one day to a new ecumenical coalition, as soon as a new *processus (*or *status*) *confessionis* arises.[19] Certainly our political, economic and ecological efforts at sanctification without justification degrade to a collective striving after "good works", which tend rather to be evil and loveless works as long as we use the suffering of others as an occasion to work our own salvation and in this way fail to serve the world (in what I see the original meaning of Luther's witness and also of Zwingli's distance to some movements of "radical" Reformation, that seemed not radical enough in the freedom and abundance of God's grace). But at the same time, in a depraved justification through "faith alone" we risk a lonely striving after personal salvation, were we to simply leave the godless world to its own destruction (as supposed by Zwingli against Lutherans and Fanatics, but also by many Radicals, Humanists and Spiritualists against Luther, Zwingli or Calvin!). Who can help us out of this confusion?

One thing is the historical and sociological analysis of these battles that we no longer have to repeat. Another thing is the common starting point and background of all Protestant congregations and denominations: the unconditional justification through divine grace alone, which no one could achieve for himself. That means today also the putting right of all the superfluous ones who are squeezed out of the world, those whom the market no longer needs in its efforts to achieve the paradise of a throwaway society. Further: the witness of the second Reformation would have no perseverance, if it were not deeply bound to the covenant faithfulness of the God of Israel and on this ground in the solidarity of all peoples, nations and religions. The doctrine of justification resists every attempt to present Christianity as the exclusive path to salvation for the whole world, as if we Christians could raise ourselves as an elite above the failed efforts of the socialist or Islamic world (as religious socialism recognized). To the contrary: justification is not an exclusive possession of our belief, it resists us Western European Christian pagans, it angers us, awakens our deepest anti-Jewish rebellion, since no one wants to live "by grace alone" of the God of Israel. It denies us all reward and befalls our faith as a necessary corrective. Biblically speaking, it is not the first thing in the calling to the new life in the whole body of Christ, but rather the unhoped-for portion, the confirmation of the promises of the kingdom of God and the fruit of the indestructible covenant faithfulness that God shows his people Israel as well as the entire creation and all peoples of the earth in the Jewish Messianic presumptive Jesus.

V. Sanctifying the Name of God (Epilogue)

What does Sanctification mean if not achieving the goal (or content) of our Justification? Seen in the light of the Calling, I understand (first) the call to the kingdom of God as the promising offer to all humanity, to witness to, to believe, to hope, to live the coming of the kingdom of God from heaven to earth until all nations with Israel can live together in peace and justice. This universal project requires however its substantiation, refinement, differentiation and correction through Jesus of Nazareth, called the Son. Justification is the answer of God's Divinity to the repeated failure of this (his) project for humanity, which also uncovers the roots of this failure, to the extent that it was begun in a non-communal, elitist and greedy way and promises nonetheless encouragement, power and a better capability to the powerless so that they hold on to the radicalism and universality of the covenant promises and grow in them (*simul iustus et peccator*, that is, in the continual battle between the old and the new being). Sanctification is the thankful confirmation of this permission and power of freedom and liberation; not its quenching through

Testament has only a propaedeutic function for the acknowledgement of sin (Nr. 8); the unrecallable covenant with Israel (in the eternal love and gracefulness of God: Romans 11,25ff), seems non-existant. In other words, without the basic and critical support and the contributions of the Reformed and Radical traditions, there is no hope for a real new understanding of the divided churches and confessions in the one and same body of Christ.

[19] The radical options and confessions against all the godless powers of sin in the world of economic globalization are perhaps not yet sufficient without clearer political distinctions of human rights, justice and law in modern democratic societies that include also the issues of magisterial and communal Reformation.

Christian worry and moralizing. It is a fruit of the grace of God, a growing experience of the gratuitous "shot of love" (Bob Dylan) against the drugs and merchandise-idols of capitalistic world. Its asceticism touches all areas of life, wherever humans sanctify the name of God (what is the main aspect in all struggles for human justice and righteousness),[20] in communal fellowship shares the unpayable goods of the earth with others, heed the laws of good association and for this reason places the well-being of the other over the greed of the achievement of personal salvation and gain.

But in all I have no vision of a globalized "Christian world" (as seen by Richard Rothe, Adolf von Harnack and the liberal *"Kulturprotestantismus"*). The process of growing sanctification could indeed lead to a reduction in Christian predominance in the world, but in its place lead to an increase in solidarity (between divided Christian minorities as well as between all divided religions, that have their own approach to Jesus and his God).[21] The community of saints has a centre, but no border, it is not a visible association of the purely good, pious and just, but an invisible group of the near and far, and at the same time an actually visible *oikumene*, brotherhood, sisterhood and society (*societas*) of the Jew Jesus, in which people of all places and continents unite in order to participate in the new life and share its visions in the collective *persona* (the spiritual body) of Christ – not as if we already were it, but so that this messianic pretender of Israel would become and be that which he as the promised, as the arrived and the expected one is proclaimed to be.

[20] See Karl Barth, *Das christliche Leben*, Fragmente 1959-61 zur Ethik KD IV/4, (Zürich 1976), pp 77/78.
[21] See Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, *Christus peregre proficisciens – Jesus ausser Landes* (= "Jesus under Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, Hindus, Marxists, etc"), in *Das christliche Bekenntnis zu Jesus, dem Juden*. Eine Christologie, Band 1, (München 1990), pp 11-106.

TOWARDS A MORE INCLUSIVE CONCEPT OF THE REFORMATION - A HANDFUL OF "CZECH" SUGGESTIONS -

Luděk Brož

Towards a more comprehensive and inclusive concept of the Reformation and its significance today is the topic of our discussion, and I have been asked to present an introduction to it from the perspective of the First Reformation. I must say first of all that I had to reduce that perspective to the Czech component of the First Reformation and to its most compelling expression, which began with Chelčický. There are two reasons for this reduction. (1) To talk in this context about the *Unitas Fratrum*, the ancient Unity of Brethren or of Czech Brethren would take more time than we have at our disposal. (2) Even the ancient Unity throughout its history did not belong to the First Reformation, and if anyone here asks whether there are members of the First Reformation present among us, I would probably have to give "no" as an answer. Thus I can only hope to offer a satisfactory explanation from my point of view, but before doing so, I would like to point out some rather obvious facts.

The Causes and Consequences of Certain Ambiguities

In dealing with this subject we are faced with a constant fluctuation in the meaning of the basic term "Reformation" as well as of its attributes as First, Radical, Second, Magisterial or even Official; a fluctuation of meaning which cannot be avoided – at least, not completely.

I guess that all of us are aware of this problem. Perhaps we are less sensitive to another latent obstacle to our common understanding of this topic: the term *Reformation* itself. In some European languages the terms *reformation* and *reform* can be applied indiscriminately (perhaps only the Germans watch jealously over the correct meaning of what they call *die protestantische Reformation* – "die Reform" in the German language is nothing other than "*die verbessernde, planmäßige Umgestaltung oder Neugestaltung*" of anything). But much less consideration is given to the assumption that if we could go back five hundred years in time and could speak about *reformation* or *reformers* to the people who we think actually gave meaning to these expressions, they would not be able to understand at all what we were talking about. These terms are later creations which we owe to our historicist paternalism.

If you did not look at the ideological classifications but at the aims of these *dramatis personae* and religious events from the 12th to the 16th century, you would see a countless crowd of clerics and laymen, scholars and merchants, craftsmen and soldiers, members of the upper classes as well as of the lower classes, all with one common characteristic: all of them, in different ways, felt strange in the midst of the actual *corpus christianum,* that is: estranged and/or opposed to the established social structures and conditions of life.

This finding has led me to question whether we are right in delimiting our concept of the Reformation when what we encompass here is only the so-called "pre-Reform", i.e., the First, Radical and Magisterial Reformation movements as special or specific movements or social entities with their own theology. In doing so, we are consciously excluding a number of other important individual and social protests against the prevalent religious and moral decay within the medieval society headed by the Pope. In this approach the still prevailing concept of *pre-Reform* begins with the Dominican Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498), but its real commencement took place a full three centuries earlier. Throughout the entire 11th and the beginning of the 12th century the religious behaviour of the laity went through profound changes. A new current of thought, linking up with the Gregorian reform but overrunning it, aimed at a more radical reform not only of institutions but of the spirit of the church. These are the centuries of *pauperes Christi*, of various forms of mysticism, monasticism, eremitical life and of

countless groups of pious laity. Preaching against the Pope and emphasizing poverty according to the gospel, Arnaldo da Brescia established the Republic of Rome in 1145 and it lasted a full ten years. The following centuries saw attempts to reform church and society at every level, among both clergy and laity. Italian humanism, the rediscovery of the Bible and the *iustificatio ex fide* among Augustinians was a nursery for the Reformation of Luther and Calvin. I am reminded, for example, of Luther's interlocutor when he stayed in Rome, the general of the Augustinian order Girolamo Seripando (1493–1563), who struggled all his life for a Romanist Reformation and himself became a member of the Inquisition. In an act characteristic of Italy of this time, the same Sacred Office condemned his works soon after his death. Another nursery for Reformation aspirations was the *Oratorio del Divino Amore*, a number of pious societies established after 1498 in various Italian cities including Rome. These societies produced many open-minded people, like Cardinal Contarini, the famous protagonist for agreement at the Diet of Regensburg, where his efforts were very promising (up to the moment when the German lords ordered Lutheran theologians to go home) or the English Cardinal Reginald Pole, who became president of the Tridentine Council, and whose house was used as a meeting place by the group led by the secretary of the Spanish viceroy Juan de Valdés (1500–1541). This group was the most remarkable phenomenon of genuine Reformation endeavor of Spanish origin with strong Erasmian inspiration, which naturally met or was also influenced by Luther's thought, nevertheless rooted in such Spanish traditions as that of *Alumbrados*. Several outstanding personalities emerged from Valdès' group, among them Bernardino Ochino, one of the Italian converts to Protestantism so implacably repudiated by Calvin.

Amedeus Molnár, the historian who created the term "*First Reformation*", was himself very well aware of this oneness of the various streams of Reformation. In his short article that opens the section "World Reformation" in *Směřování* (*Pointing at*, or *Aiming to*), appearing in the *Festschrift* for his 60th birthday, he did not mention the First, or the Magisterial or any other Reformation. He says: "We could see the first signs of later variability and diversity. Already before the culmination of the Middle Ages on this expedition in history we would meet small groups and even crowds following the simple Jesus of the Gospels, such as Waldensians. We come across the scholarly reform endeavour of the humanists, the deep mystical abandon of oneself into the Creator's will which cannot be fettered by ceremonies, the militant protest of the Hussites, the countless struggles for new fidelity, for more faithful understanding and interpreting of God's work achieved in Christ by word and deed." But in spite of "all its diversity", Molnár argues, and many "more doctrinally rigid streams (Brotherhood, Lutheranism, Calvinism)... the Reformation was of one mind in its conscious effort to render glory and thanks to God for what fundamentally he has done for humankind… *The unity of Reformation is given... by the theocentrism and christocentrism of its message and piety in contrast to the anthropocentrism of humanism and to spiritualism of any kind*" (italics, LB). From this theological finding Molnár differs a little in his historicist answer to the question "whether there were within the medieval church already earlier some signs of a similar emphasis on the priority of God's action": His reply is that there were, "but completely covered up by other regards and practices", especially where the Dominican tradition was leading to utter submission to the *magisterium*.

Nevertheless, aware of all the tension we find between the theological and historical approach to this matter, there are several reasons for looking at "reformation" in a more inclusive way. And I wonder whether we should not also include in this concept those just mentioned and other similar figures and movements, in spite of the fact that a number of them visibly failed and were destroyed, remembering that the Nazarene rabbi was ostensibly not too successful either?

It goes without saying that we would have to include many of the reform phenomena which remained within the limits of the Roman church; among other things we would be obliged to deeply reconsider our "Protestant" attitude to that Reformation, sometimes called the *Third* or *Erasmian*.

The Czech Reformation: Seen as One of the "Several", "First" and "Radical", or Simply as "Reformation"

With reference to what was formulated in the second paragraph above as a question, i.e. whether or not we have included in the concept of reformation the many reformed movements appearing in European history, the Czech Reformation unambiguously says "yes" from its very birth. If you look at the Introduction by Amedeus Molnár to the *The Message for the Last Days - the Three Essays of Milič of Kroměřiž* (edited by Milan and Jana Opočenský in *Studies from the WARC, 1998*) you will see that the "file" or "dossier" Cola di Rienzo was one of the formal stimuli of Milič's *metanoia* in 1363 (the conversion of this rich notary of the Emperor's chancellery). Convinced of the importance of biblical sermons in preparation for Christ's return, Milič of Kroměřiž (†1374) established in Prague, in 1372 the New Jerusalem, a preacher's school with a social centre especially concerned with bringing back the prostitutes of the city to a decent and healthy life. In his revolutionary preaching other incendiary ideas such as those of Waldo were obviously not absent, and thanks to these activities the Czech Reformation began – or as declared by Milíč's follower, another great man of this Czech movement, Matthias of Janov, "by the grace of God... Prague has turned back from Sodom to its old values and by the Holy Spirit, become not Babylon, but Jerusalem".

The above-mentioned "file" contained correspondence between Cola di Rienzo and the Czech king and German Emperor Charles IV, as well as some books Cola brought to the Emperor in order to make him the ruler over the Holy Roman Empire. These books (as Molnár says) contained the rather "curiously distorted" prophecies of Gioacchino da Fiore and of several others. Nevertheless, it was this discovery which enabled Milíč to become acquainted with Gioacchino's principal ideas, especially those concerning expectations of the Antichrist's arrival in connection with historical events, along with the assurance that the age of the Spirit had begun, and Cola's passionate defence of the Franciscan programme of *paupertatis affectatio*. Whereas another Czech historian has related Milič's words about "revelation" to his discovery of the contents of Cola Rienzo's "file", Molnár in his Introduction to Milíč's *Message for the Last Days* was much more restrained. In the study on "Cola, Petrarch and Origins of Hussitism" published in 1964 in *Protestantesimo*, he wrote that the influence of Cola (which naturally had an effect on him together with other, rather grim documents of the chancellery) "does not mean absolute dependence and that the strong personality of Milíč will transform substantially the items of the 'file Cola di Rienzo'."

What Molnár did not mention in this context (though I know he was aware of it), is a fact of tremendous importance for our quest of inclusiveness of the Reformation. After his arrival in Prague Cola found accommodation at the home of his compatriot, the apothecary Angelo, whose apothecary's garden lay where today the Prague Central Post Office stands. The tablet commemorating this *familiaris regis* can be seen on the facade in Jindřišská Street. But the name of this Italian layman can be found as well on the foundation charter of the Bethlehem Chapel of 1390, that new centre of the Czech Reformation which was built to take the place of its lost centre, Milíč's Jerusalem, which had been destroyed a mere two years after its establishment (when the king gave the unfinished building to the Cistercian order).

It is naturally but a hypothesis to presume here the existence of an inclusive and international reformation movement, but a hypothesis based on two solid presuppositions: (1) The Italian *apothecarius* Angelo was obviously not only unaware of whom he received in his house, with the all implicit dangers from the Inquisition (which captured Waldensian heretics in southern Bohemia several times, among other victims, and brought them to Prague for burning), but very probably, as *familiaris regis*, he mediated between Cola and the chancellery. (2) His signature on the Bethlehem Chapel charter is a *facinus confessionis* because it expresses manifestly his adhesion to the beginnings of the great Czech struggle against the corrupt Church, which were to lead to Hussitism and the Unity of Brethren. The mission of Cola di Rienzo, the presence of Waldensians who were systematically persecuted in Bohemia

during the whole 14th century, suggests that in Europe at this time there existed an intertwined and well developed international organization of dissent and opposition to the ruling structures headed by papal authority.

Witness of a Solitary Layman

We are well enough aware of the great protest of Huss and Hussitism so that it can be skipped in this inevitably brief consideration. We are much less – and in any case much less than we should be – touched by the legacy of Petr Chelčický, that enigmatic, or *κατα σαρκα*, opaque personality appearing on the Czech reformation stage in the first decades of the 15th century. We can only conjecture the approximate dates of his birth and death – 1390 and 1460 – from later mention and records. His name refers to his assumed birthplace and home, the village of Chelčice in the South of Bohemia, an area much frequented by Waldensian immigrants from Austria. We can only guess at his social standing as we read his books and treatises. He speaks about himself as a "peasant" but he must have been a rich freeman, since he could freely move about, and not only live in his home but stay for some time in other places (such as Písek or, in 1419 and 1420, in Prague) and that he had sufficient resources to be able to devote himself to study and writing. From his reference to his scanty knowledge of Latin, some scholars have concluded that he could not read Latin texts, but Molnár is convinced (on the basis of his research on the Chelčický treatise *"Instructions on the Sacraments"*) that the opposite is true, and that the false assumption that he knew little of Latin is the consequence of our own insufficient knowledge of his erudition, which in Molnár's words "lags considerably behind our knowledge of the literary efforts of other Hussite thinkers... because the publishers of his writings have devoted relatively little attention to his work from the point of view of the authorities quoted. "

This solitary Taborite had links with Matthias of Janov, Huss and perhaps the greatest theological mind of Hussitism, Jakoubek of Stříbro. He also met with many Taborite theologians, with whom he clashed on occasion. He could not remain indifferent to the Waldensians and was very much concerned about the "Master Opponent", John Wycliffe. He knew all about the current theological discussion in his land and manifested surprisingly broad knowledge of European theological trends past and present. His two main works *Postilla* and *The Net of Faith* show that he stood above all parties, criticizing very sharply the Hussites and the Romanists, and rejecting everything that was contrary to Scriptures, especially to that of the New Testament. Such a great contradiction to the gospel is the established church, in claiming to be spiritually at the helm of the secular empire. This is pilloried allegorically in his *Net of faith*, insisting that the corruption of the church began with the *donatio Constantini*, because two great whales - the Emperor and the Pope, i.e., secular and spiritual power, got into the net of faith and tore it so much that only a little remained whole. Chelčický did not know that the *donatio Constantini* was a medieval falsification. Pertinent debate had taken place for some centuries but had been terminated by Lorenzo Valla in 1420, almost at the time that *The Net of Faith* was published. But he is absolutely right in his anticonstantinianism, his greatest contribution to the Czech Reformation programme, unfortunately not always appreciated and fully advocated. Through the mediation of Matthias of Janov Chelčický took up the principle of the common people as bearers of the Reformation. Common to both was their disgust at the clergy both high and low; although acknowledging the need for them, he upbraids both the Romanists and the Hussites for their "fleshly and naughty life". When the priest is morally unfit, the layman may administer the sacrament. The local Christian community should be self-governing and has the right to elect its spiritual leaders.

In his sharp criticism he does not even spare Janov, Milíč, Waldhauser and Huss (not to mention his contemporaries), convinced that they "are drunk with the wine of the great harlot", the Papal Church, and poisoned with her false doctrine and practice (false sacraments, purgatory, indulgences and "long-roaring", which was his description of the temple hymn-singing, saying of the rosary, the breviary, etc.).

With all this sometimes ruthless criticism of established church structures Chelčický as well as his followers were not fighting against but for the church – at least that was their conviction.

Chelčický's *rejection of war* was strong and implacable. Advocating *strict non-violence* he denounced the Taborites as murderers. Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoi based his doctrine of non-resistance on reading the Russian translation of *Net of Faith* by Annenkov and Jagič in 1893.

The Heritage We Lost?

Looking around my own Czech Protestant churches I do not find too much of the heritage expressed in the messages of Milíč and Chelčický. Our much appreciated (ancient) Unity of Czech Brethren could not conserve and transmit this heritage in its fullness either. Initially the Unity was faithful and true to it, but in the following years of its existence the old Constantinianism crept often into both thought and practice. What was quite singular and is still most notable (as regards our own church establishments), this ancient *Unitas Fratrum* did not cease to struggle with this very old Christian heresy. A perfect demonstration of this constant endeavor and effort is the work of her last senior, Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius). It became a theological custom to denounce the greater part of this struggle in the Brethren Unity as moralism, and to deplore similar characteristics in Comenius' thought and work as his questionable humanism. It goes without saying that his *Labyrinth of the World and Paradise of the Heart* has very much in common with the *Praise of Foolishness.* But is it possible to be inclusive without being exclusive? To say *Yes* to peace without saying *No* to arms? To try to create a new world without hunger and not to fight against the so-called free market? Can we realize a worldwide ecumenism without fighting against *l'esprit de clocher* (the parochial mentality) of our confession?

The Czech Reformation of days gone by reminds us that perhaps the most suitable epithet for an actual Reformation would be "*radical"*.

TOWARDS A MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND INCLUSIVE VIEW OF THE REFORMATION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE TODAY -

Carter Lindberg

The title of our session recalls us to the papers and discussions of our 1994 "Prague IV" consultation on "The First and Second Reformations."[1] My reflections on this continuing discussion will first focus on the topic of a more comprehensive and inclusive view of the Reformation, and then suggest the continuing contemporary significance of the Reformation.

Is a More Comprehensive and Inclusive View of the Reformation Possible?

A more comprehensive and inclusive definition of the Reformation continues to remain elusive. For example, the confessional basis of the Lutheran churches, the Augsburg Confession (1530) is hardly comprehensive and inclusive in condemning the Anabaptists.[2] Hence it was not surprising that the Mennonite community politely declined the invitation to attend the 1980 celebration of the 450th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession. There is, after all, a certain cognitive dissonance in celebrating a document that condemns the celebrant. We may wholeheartedly celebrate contemporary ecumenical agreements which "lift" such condemnations, but we cannot claim the 16th century events and confessions themselves were comprehensive and inclusive.

Similarly, ecumenical agreements and good will are not sufficient to expand the term "Reformation" normally used to designate evangelical movements of the 16th century to include renewal movements of prior centuries. Such "antics with semantics" is of course not without precedent; for example, medieval cultural developments have been linked with the Renaissance by the designation "twelfth century renaissance." *Mutatis mutandis*, the response to this linkage by Paul Oskar Kristeller may apply to our discussion of expanding the concept of Reformation. "I do not pretend to assert that there was a sharp break at the beginning or end of 'the Renaissance', or to deny that there was a great deal of continuity… I merely maintain that the so-called Renaissance period has a distinct physiognomy of its own, and that the inability of historians to find a simple and satisfactory definition for it does not entitle us to doubt its existence…"[3]

One can always find similarities between historical eras and movements, the names of which are constructs developed by later historians. But what is gained by this? Do we not so expand the construct that it becomes an umbrella over everything? Where do we stop? Wyclif and Hus? The Gregorian reform movement? Augustine? If indeed biblical faith is characterized by prophetic self-critique, then the biblical community is *semper reformanda*. Luděk Brož suggests that there is a "common characteristic" of the "*dramatis personae* and religious happenings" from the 12th to the 16th century. "All of them, in different ways, felt strange in the midst of the actual *corpus christianum* – that is: estranged and/or opposed to the established social structures and conditions of life."[4] Be that as it may, personal comfort level with respect

[1] See D. F. Durnbaugh, "The First and Radical Reformations and Their Relations with the Magisterial Reformation" and C. Lindberg, "A Specific Contribution of the Second Reformation", in Milan Opočenský, ed., *Towards a Renewed Dialogue: Consultation on the First and Second Reformations* (Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches 1996).

[2] See Articles 5, 9, 16. Theodore Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959), pp 33-34, 37; *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1963), pp 58, 63, 71. Even a cursory review of the immense amount of literature surrounding the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession reveals that churches descended from the so-called "Radical" and "First" Reformations received very little attention.

[3] Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanist Strains* (New York: Harper & Brothers 1961), p 4. Chapters 1 and 5 review the issues and literature on this topic.

[4] Luděk Brož, "Towards a More Inclusive Concept of the Reformation: Some Suggestions from a Czech Perspective", Prague VI paper, 1. M. D. Chenu, for example, speaks of "the evangelical awakening" following the Gregorian reform, but this "apostolic life"

to an establishment is both so relative and elastic that it provides no criteria for either a historical or a theological construct such as "Reformation".

To speak instead of the "first" and "second" Reformations also is less than helpful because it immediately raises the related issue of "forerunners", if for no other reason than "first" comes before "second." This too is a fraught topic. "The idea of Forerunner is fundamentally an ahistorical one, since it throws over any given period in intellectual thought a veil of interpretation which is alien to the period itself, rather than allowing the interpretation of the period from within and in the context of its own presuppositions… [Also] the concept of Forerunner is a product of a typically Protestant effort to ward off the charge of innovation with its connotation of heresy."[5] Luther, of course, was delighted to discover his understanding of the gospel expressed by others, regardless of their place in history. But at the same time, Luther's concern was not with forerunners, but with God's promise for the future. "These Forerunners do not provide Luther with an 'argument from tradition', as would be the case with Flacius and the *Magdeburg Centuries*, but testify to him that the state of the Church is not beyond repair."[6] In brief, Luther looked forward rather than backward. But the future for Luther was not a mere projection of the past, but the advent of God's kingdom. Advent identifies what is coming in terms of the power of the future over the past.[7]

What is gained or lost by applying the same term to disparate phenomena? A recent article by Zdenek David suggests that the preoccupation of Czech historians and theologians with expanding the concept of the Reformation to include the Utraquist movement is a misguided tendency that may be a central European variant of the Whig interpretation of history. He writes:

> The liberal and positivist historians (as well as later Marxist ones) – inspired, as they were, by the ideals of 19th century progressivism – tended to view a fully fledged religious Reformation (of the Lutheran or Calvinist type) as a generally legitimate and necessary stage in the intellectual development of Europe. This *Weltanschauung* would predispose the historian to regard any continuing or potential ties with the Roman Church as defects or imperfections in the supposedly correct development of Czech Utraquism. Hence the powerful temptation to consign Utraquists to the realm of historical aberrations for violating the laws of history posited by Hegel, Comte or Marx. Conversely, within the same mind set, linking the Czech religious movement with the Lutheran Reformation would enhance the historical stature of the Bohemian Reformation by making it the prototype of a world-class historical phenomenon, instead of merely a limited local defection, no matter how dramatic and ominous in its implications. In a somewhat paradoxical way, since it involved associating national pride with a primarily German occurrence, such a historical aggrandizement appealed to the nationalism of modern Czech historians.[8]

In another article, David asserts that "the overall impact of Lutheranism on mainline Utraquism appears to have been one of disappointment. At first, it might have seemed that the German Reformation would confirm the truth of the Bohemian Reformation… [T]he truth of Lutheranism manifestly failed to coincide with the truth of Utraquism."[9]

Can we develop a more comprehensive and inclusive view of the Reformation if we shift from historical to theological comparison? In a recent essay on Bohemia, Frantisek Kavka wrote:

> "Reformation – understood as a new approach to the evangelical message, as the rise of a new religious doctrine and of churches independent of the papacy, and involving radical changes in society – occurred at an earlier date in the Czech Kingdom than

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movement focused on poverty can hardly be compared to the sixteenth-century Reformation concern for apostolic faith. See Chenu, *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 1968), pp 239-69.

[5] Heiko A. Oberman, ed., *Forerunners of the Reformation: The Shape of Late Medieval Thought Illustrated by Key Documents* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston 1966), pp 3-4.

[6] Oberman, *Forerunners*, p 19.

[7] See Steven Paulson, "The Place of Eschatology in Modern Theology", *Lutheran Quarterly* 12/3 (Autumn 1998), p 333.

[8] Zdenek David, "The Strange Fate of Czech Utraquism: The Second Century, 1517-1621", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46/4 (October 1995), pp 647-48.

[9] Zdenek David, "Pavel Bydzovzky and Czech Utraquism's Encounter with Luther", *Communio Viatorum* 38/1 (1996), pp 62-63.

> anywhere else in Europe."[10] The "theological premises" of this reform, attributed to Master Matthew of Janov (d. 1393), focused on a restorationist ecclesiology and observance of biblical rules set forth in Janov's fundamental work titled "Rules of the Old and New Testaments."

The theological dominance of the doctrine of the "law of Christ" distinguishes Janov's orientation from the later dominance of the gospel of unconditional forgiveness that marked Luther's initiation of reform in the 16th century. "The cornerstone of the first Reformation was the authoritative *lex Christi* as a binding norm for the church and all believers… It was mainly derived from a new interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount... The solemnity and anxious awe of the divine law aimed at a transformation of faith into morality and of Christ into an unrelenting judge."[11]

This description of Czech renewal certainly echoes in the 16th century orientations of Karlstadt and Müntzer, but clearly not in that of Luther. Alasdair Heron makes this same point when he refers to the *leitmotif* of medieval renewal movements as "radical Christian obedience to the law of Christ." The Reformation as initiated by Luther constituted a "central paradigm shift" from this medieval orientation. "The central paradigm shift was Luther's rediscovery and reinterpretation of the Pauline theme of justification by faith, not by works. That represented a radical break not only with the official theology and piety of the medieval western church but also with the tendency of earlier reform movements to understand the Gospel as the *nova lex Christi*."[12]

> In brief: Luther's *theologia crucis* is not the continuation of the medieval *imitatio Christi*. Here is the central difference between the so-called "First" and "Second" Reformations. Other theological differences followed from it. Utraquism's late medieval orientation "preserved the traditional liturgy (including the seven sacraments), a belief in the sacramental episcopate and priesthood in a historic apostolic succession, and the belief in the efficaciousness of good works in the drama of salvation…[T]he Lutheran Reformation….rejected all the doctrine just enumerated."[13] "[T]he differences between Utraquism and Lutheranism were not vague or ineffable but sharp and clearly defined."[14]

> While Hus has frequently been regarded as a precursor or forerunner to the Protestant movements, this notion has been called into question. Hus challenged the structure and authority of the medieval church, denounced abuses, and approved the practice of Utraquism but held the soteriological principle *fides caritate formata*, retained the eucharistic dogma of transubstantiation, and delineated his paradigm of authority in terms of scripture, conscience, and tradition, not *sola scriptura*. He neither replaced the altar with the pulpit (Calvin, Zwingli) nor preached justification by faith (Luther).[15]

How, we might ask, can such a critical evaluation of the relationship between the Bohemian renewal movement and the German Reformation be maintained in light of the numerous manifest positive statements Luther made of Hus?[16] "I have", Luther wrote to Spalatin in 1520, "taught and held all the teachings of John Huss, but thus far did not know it. John Staupitz has taught it in the same unintentional way. In short we are all Hussites and did not know it. Even Paul and Augustine are in reality Hussites."[17] Equally well known is Luther's appropriation of Hus' prophecy: "St. John Huss prophesied of me when

[10] Frantisek Kavka, "Bohemia", in Bob Scribner, Roy Porter, and Mikulas Teich, eds., *The Reformation in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1994), p 131.
[11] Kavka, "Bohemia", p 150.
[12] Alasdair Heron, "Sanctification, Evangelical Obedience, Holiness, Christian Perfection", Prague VI paper, pp 1-2.
[13] Zdenek V. David, "Utraquists, Lutherans, and the Bohemian Confession of 1575", *Church History* 68/2 (June 1999), p 295.
[14] David, "Utraquists, Lutherans and the Bohemian Confession of 1575", p 331.
[15] Thomas A. Fudge, "Hus, Jan", in Hans J. Hillerbrand, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation* (New York: Oxford University Press 1996), 2: 277.
[16] I think one of the reasons for this is an isogesis of Luther's writings that ignores historical context and views Luther's writings as a collection of "eternal truths" that may be arranged by topics. Until recently the field of Luther studies was dominated by German Lutheran systematic theologians.
[17] Letter to George Spalatin, about February 14, 1520. LW 48: 153. At the Leipzig Debate (1519) and then in his response to the papal condemnation, "Defense and Explanation of All the Articles" (1521), Luther asserted the truth of Hus' teachings. LW 32: 82. Years later (1537) Luther referred to Hus as "St. John Hus". LW 24: 413.

he wrote from his prison in Bohemia, 'They will roast a goose now (for "Huss" means "a goose"), but after a hundred years they will hear a swan sing, and him they will endure.'"[18]

Luther's enthusiasm for Hus should not, however, be read as an endorsement of a historiography of a more comprehensive concept of the Reformation. Luther esteemed all the saints who had preserved the gospel – including the papacy![19] So, for example, in a sermon affirming infant baptism, Luther affirmed that "Christ most certainly bestows the Holy Spirit [and thus confirms baptism], for Bernard, Bonaventura, Gerson, and John Hus had the Spirit, because this is God's work, believe therefore that infant baptism is true."[20] In this sense, Luther regarded Hus as an unjustly executed witness to the truth. But even though Luther conceded Hus "was the first to call the pope the Antichrist,"[21] he "did not go far enough and only began to present the gospel."[22]

Luther's own theological view was that Hus' concern focused on ethics whereas his own focus was on doctrine. "Doctrine and life must be distinguished. Life is as bad among us, as it is among the papists, but we don't fight about life and condemn the papists on that account. Wycliffe and Huss didn't know this and attacked [the papacy] for its life. I don't scold myself into becoming good, but I fight over the Word and whether our adversaries teach it in its purity. That doctrine should be attacked – this has never before happened. This is my calling. Others have censured life, but to treat doctrine is to strike at the most sensitive point…"[23] Luther's appreciation of Hus centered on his criticism of the papacy, not his theology. Again, I posit that the Reforming movement in 16th century Germany was different in kind rather than degree from that in 15th century Bohemia.[24]

I belabor this point once again because there is more at stake in this issue than confessional or national pride of place. The homogenization of theological distinctives ironically echoes recent social historical studies that reduce Reformation studies to anthropology. In other words, when everything is the Reformation, then nothing is the Reformation. Steven Ozment makes the case vis-à-vis some social historians that "'The Reformation' as a historical category is now threatened with extinction to the extent that one wishes to apply it to an entire age."[25] To argue that "Reformation" is an important term specific to the 16th century is not to deny that the Reformation "was a long drawn-out process of complex historical interrelation,"[26] nor is it to claim the "Reformation" was a monolithic event normed by Luther.[27] It is possible – as evidenced by numerous ecumenical agreements – to maintain the historical-theological distinctiveness of communities without making these identities church-dividing.

[18] "Commentary on the Alleged Imperial Edict", 1531. LW 34: 104. See *Luther mit dem Schwan: Tod und Verklärung eines grossen Mannes*. Katalog zur Ausstellung in der Lutherhalle Wittenberg (Berlin: Schelzky & Jeep 1996) especially the essays by Volkmar Joestel, "Die Gans und der Schwan. Eine Allegorie auf Jan Hus und Martin Luther" and Siegfried Hoyer, "Luther, Hus und die 'Böhmen'".

[19] In his 1528 tract "Concerning Rebaptism", Luther argued that the abuse of something is not a reason to reject it. "[T]here is much that is Christian and good under the papacy; indeed everything that is Christian and good is to be found there and has come to us from this source. For instance we confess that in the papal church there are the true holy Scriptures, true baptism, the true sacrament of the altar, the true keys to the forgivenesss of sins, the true office of the ministry, the true catechism in the form of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the articles of the creed... I contend that in the papacy there is true Christianity, even the right kind of Christianity and many great and devoted saints." LW 40: 231-32.

[20] "Ten Sermons on the Catechism", 1528. LW 51: 186.

[21] "Commentary on Psalm 112", 1526. LW 13: 417.

[22] "Defense and Explanation of All the Articles", 1521. LW 32: 82.

[23] Table Talk, 1533, No. 624. LW 54: 110. See also "Commentary on Psalm 2", 1531(?), LW 12: 10; "Commentary on Psalm 118", 1530, LW 14: p 92; and Hoyer, "Luther, Hus und 'die Böhmen'", p 19.

[24] My conclusion at the "Prague IV" consultation. See my "A Specific Contribution of the Second Reformation" in Opočenský, ed., *Towards a Renewed Dialogue*, p 55.

[25] Steven Ozment, "The Public Reformation", *Lutheran Theological Seminary Bulletin* (Gettysburg) 70/1 (Winter 1990), p 7.

[26] R. W. Scribner, *The German Reformation* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International 1986), 1.

[27] Hence the plural title of my textbook, *The European Reformations* (Oxford: Blackwell 1996). Scribner, *The German Reformation*, 2, suggested that one way to avoid "myth-making about the Reformation" is "to set aside any kind of teleological perspective, to refuse to read history backwards with the view that the outcome of the religious upheavals of the sixteenth century was inevitable, or that what was successful was somehow better than that which failed."

The Contemporary Significance of the Reformation

The significance of the Reformation today remains the proclamation of the radical promise of unconditional forgiveness of sin. As André Birmelé's presentation makes clear, this meta-theological claim is not one doctrine among others but rather governs the entire proclamation of the gospel.[28] Hence, justification is significant for every aspect of human life and relationships. Obviously, a brief paper can hardly begin to sketch this significance; and fortunately, Birmelé's presentation has already provided us with a road map or a cartography of grace, so to speak, for further explorations. In this framework, there are two areas of modern life so similar to Luther's medieval context that I think his Reformation discovery applies so directly we need do little translation. I am thinking here of the anxiety about death and the piety of achievement which are as pervasive in modern American culture as in the late Middle Ages. But first a brief review of the radical nature of justification is in order.

Luther was convinced that God "does not lie" when God promises salvation. "'He will not lie to me.' Thus the weak should be buoyed up with these words: 'Do you not think that He will live up to what He has said?' Thus Christ gives the consolation in Luke 12.32: 'Fear not, O little flock.' This consolation has always been necessary for all believers; for if a man looks about him, he stumbles at the idea of eternal life."[29]

The traditional Lutheran expression of justification by grace alone through faith alone means that salvation is not the goal of life but rather the foundation of life. We are not called to live *for* salvation, but rather *from* salvation. Luther's conviction that salvation is received not achieved is clearly expressed in his distinction between covenant and testament. He viewed covenant language negatively because it is an "if… then" construction, the contingency of which in religious language throws the burden of proof back upon the person regardless of the fact that the covenant is divinely initiated. Testament language however has a "because… therefore" construction that throws the burden of proof for salvation upon God. Luther expressed this in his interpretation of Hebrews 9.17 as the New Testament – i.e., the new will – in Christ already given us as "the forgiveness of sins and eternal life."

> A testament, as everyone knows, is a promise made by one about to die, in which He designates his bequest and appoints his heirs. A testament, therefore, involves, first, the death of the testator, and second, the promise of an inheritance and the naming of the heir…Christ testifies concerning his death when he says: "This is my body, which is given, this is my blood, which is poured out" (Luke 22,19-20). He names and designates the heirs when he says "For you (Luke 22.19-20; 1 Cor. 11,24) and for many" (Matt. 26.28, Mark 14.24), that is, for those who accept and believe the promise of the testator. For here is a faith that makes men heirs, as we shall see.[30]

To make his point crystal clear, Luther wrote of testament:

> Everything depends, therefore, as I have said, upon the words of this sacrament. These are the words of Christ…Let someone else pray, fast, go to confession, prepare himself for mass and the sacrament as he chooses. You do the same, but remember that this is all foolishness and self-deception if you do not set before you the words of the testament and arouse yourself to believe and desire them. You would have to spend a long time polishing your shoes, preening and primping to attain an inheritance, if you had no letter and seal with which you could prove your right to it. But if you have a

[28] Prague VI paper,"Justification, Ecclesiology, Ethics", pp 2, 4, 12. See Eric W. Gritsch and Robert W. Jenson, *Lutheranism: The Theological Movement and Its Confessional Writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1976), pp 42-43: Justification by faith alone is "a metalinguistic stipulation of what *kind* of talking – about whatever contents – can properly be proclamation and word of the church." And: "The reformation's first and last assertion was that any talk of Jesus and God and human life that does not transcend all conditions is a perversion of the gospel and will be at best irrelevant in the lives of hearers and at worst destructive." See also my "Justification by Faith Alone: *The* Lutheran Proposal to the Churches", *New Conversations* 10/2 (Winter/Spring 1988), pp 31-41.

[29] "Lectures on Titus", 1527. LW 29: 12.

[30] "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church", 1520. LW 36: 38. See Kenneth Hagen, *A Theology of Testament in the Young Luther: The Lectures on Hebrews* (Leiden: Brill 1974), p 82; and his "The Testament of a Worm: Luther on Testament to 1525", *Consensus* 8/1 (1982), pp 12-20.

> letter and seal, and believe, desire, and seek it, it must be given you, even though you were scaly, scabby, and most filthy.[31]

The proclamation that God has named us in his last will and testament as his heirs, and that God the testator has died to make that will effective is one of the clearest expressions that salvation is received not achieved. We inherit the new reality of life with God as a sheer gift. As Birmelé puts it: "The cross and resurrection put an end to the familiar situation in which death, putting a term to life annihilates all hope. Now death is limited by life, all life is sustained by faith in this Lord who is the surety for the future and who comes to meet us."[32] Hence, Luther reverses the medieval saying that in the midst of life we are surrounded by death. Luther summarized his view of death in his lectures on Psalm 90. The law says: "In the midst of life we are surrounded by death", but the gospel reverses this sentence. "In the midst of death we are surrounded by life because we have the forgiveness of sins."[33] What a proclamation to a culture obsessed with preserving youth and warding off aging and death!

Our culture is also no less imbued by the piety of achievement than that of the Middle Ages. Indeed, our age may even be more gripped by the fear of failure than Luther's contemporaries because achievement for us has lost its religious referent. For the medieval the piety of achievement was graphically presented in the image of the ladder to salvation. Medieval piety strove to ascend to salvation through ethical and spiritual renewal. A well-known illustration of this is the "ladder of virtues" from a twelfth-century Strasbourg manuscript, *Hortus Deliciarum*, "the garden of delights". The ladder reaches from earth to heaven, and persons representing the social estates and religious vocations are on different rungs. An inscription in the upper left reads: "This ladder represents the ascent of the virtues and the religious exercise of holiness by which one seeks to acquire the crown of eternal life." A dragon at the base of the ladder and two demonic archers seek to hinder the ascent of the pilgrims while two angels fight them. The figure at the top, "Charity", receives the crown of life from the hand of God. All the others fall to the ground because they turn toward earthly delights. Here is expressed the Augustinian theological theme of concupiscence – turning toward lower goods (*curvatus ad inferior*). The inscription at the top of the ladder next to "Charity" reads: "This personification of virtue signifies all the saints and elect led by angelic protection to celestial reward." On the left side of the ladder is written: "Whoever falls can begin the ascent again, thanks to the remedy of penance." Thus one picture illustrates the whole of medieval theology and piety.[34] The sacrament of penance facilitates progress from vice to virtue in the midst of temptations and demons.

Our culture has substituted the corporate ladder for the ladder of virtues. The goal of achievement and success remains, but there is now no remedy of penance. Our progress receives no help from God; we are thrown back upon ourselves. Indeed, the picture is even grimmer for our fate is in the hands of faceless boards of directors and avaricious stockholders. The medieval had at least an order of salvation; a means to appease an angry God. We have neither a ritual nor a social safety net.

In this context the gospel proclaims that God descends to us in Christ. Luther was fond of saying Christ cannot be dragged too deeply into the flesh. "The Turks say: 'Whoever observes the Koran ascends into heaven.' The Jews claim: 'Whoever keeps the Law of Moses has a way of ascending into heaven.' The Pope declares: 'Whoever obeys me ascends into heaven.' There is no end or limit to the variety of methods. But they all prescribe heavenward journeys on which the travelers will break their necks. These are detours, and they spell disaster; for Christ says here [John 3.14]: 'No one ascends into heaven.'" Luther continues: "Of course, I must lead a moral, godly, and upright life in the world; but I must not presume to ascend into heaven by virtue of this." It is only because of Jesus' descent that we have life and

[31] "A Treatise on the New Testament", 1520, LW 35: 88; see also "Lectures on Galatians", 1519, LW 27: 268.
[32] Birmelé, "Justification", p 1.
[33] WA 40III: 496, 4f. Luther thus also reverses the medieval *dies irae* to an invocation of the "blessed Last Day." WA Br 9, Nr. 3512, p 17. See my "Eschatology and Fanaticism in the Reformation Era", forthcoming in *Concordia Theological Quarterly*.
[34] See my *The European Reformations Sourcebook* (Oxford: Blackwell 2000), p 2; Margaret Miles, *Practicing Christianity: Critical Perspectives for an Embodied Spirituality* (New York: Crossroad 1988), chapter 4; and Christian Heck, *L'Échelle Céleste dans*

salvation.[35] For Luther, Jacob's ladder refers to the incarnation not to human striving to achieve heaven.[36] The good news of Christ's descent to us includes the proclamation that our humanity, our value, does not depend upon our success, upon what we become, but rather reflects Whose we are.

Birmelé expresses Luther's point here when he says the gospel breaks "the logic of our society which is centered in individualism, self-fulfillment, the power to have power. We are not condemned to make a name for ourselves. We have been named: God calls us by our name. He gives us our identity and makes us witnesses to that other logic, the logic of grace which makes us exist even before we have been able to merit it. We are not what we make of ourselves; we are called to be what we are – children of God."[37] This is the significance of the Reformation; where and when this unconditional promise is proclaimed the Reformation is both comprehensive and inclusive.

L'Art du Moyen Âge. Une Histoire de la Quête du Ciel (Paris: Flammarion 1997).
[35] "Sermons on the Gospel of John", 1537. LW 22: 334-35
[36] See his "Lectures on Genesis", ca. 1541. LW 5: 212-25 on Gen. 28,12-14.
[37] Birmelé, "Justification, Ecclesiology, Ethics", p 1.

BRAZILIAN REFORMED CHURCHES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ECUMENICAL AGENDA -

Odair Pedroso Mateus

I. Many Reformed Denominations in Brazil

The Reformed family in Brazil consists of 22 different Reformed, Presbyterian and Congregational denominations. Out of those 22, 11 were created in connection with Hungarian, Dutch, Arab, Swiss, Japanese, Taiwanese and Korean immigration. Out of the other 11 denominations, 8 are directly or indirectly related to the "evangelization" work started by British Congregationalist and North American Presbyterian missionaries between 1855 and 1859[1]. They have added to their traditional Reformed names adjectives such as "Independent", "Conservative", "Renewed", "Traditional" or even "Fundamentalist" and account for more than 95 per cent of the Reformed family membership in Brazil. Most of them are Presbyterians. Only one of them, the small United Presbyterian Church[2] has an official ecumenical engagement. They are the object of this brief communication wherein I will try first of all to make clear the link between their theological profile and their historical roots (part II), then to draw exploratory implications of that link for some ecumenical efforts in which we are all involved such as unity in mission (part III) and, more specifically, WARC's *processus confessionis* concerning economic justice and environmental destruction (part IV).

II. Link Between Theological Profile and Historical Roots

I contend that the way Brazilian Presbyterian churches understand today the biblical message, live as Christian communities and bear witness to the gospel remains to a large extent determined by the biblical interpretation, the Christian spirituality and the concept of mission held by the first North American missions that managed to establish themselves in the country during the first years of the second half of the 19th century. Let me try to argue in a more concrete way.

One of the constitutive elements of the Brazilian Presbyterian identity is the rather conservative character of its theology or theologies. The most widely accepted understanding of Christian faith one can find among Brazilian Presbyterian churches is quite similar to fundamentalist theology insofar as the Bible is largely understood to be inerrant not only in matters of doctrine and discipline, but also in matters of history and science.

This is a rather persistent outcome of the theology North American Presbyterian missionaries brought to Brazil during the second half of the 19th century. In those days, the Presbyterian theological scene was dominated by Charles and Archibald Alexander's "Princeton theology". Drawing from the Turrettini's scholastic Calvinism – which tried to provide a rationale to the claim of infallibility of the scriptures, as well as from Thomas Reid's common sense philosophy whose optimistic and democratic epistemology led to an approach of biblical interpretation which was on the opposite pole to the hermeneutic problem — Princeton theology "understood the Bible to contain a logical system of divinely chosen words" in harmony "with the results of 19th century science"[3] and helped to pave the way for early 20th century Protestant fundamentalism.

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[1] Cf. J.-J. Bauswein and L. Vischer (editors), *The Reformed Family Worldwide – A Survey of Reformed Churches, Theological Schools, and International Organizations*, (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans 1999), pp 79-93.

[2] IPU, which "was organized September 10, 1978, as a result of a protest movement in the 1970s within the Presbyterian Church of Brazil…", has 80 congregations with a total membership of 5200. Cf. J.-J. Bauswein and L. Vischer (editors), *The Reformed Family Worldwide*, *op. cit*., p 85.

[3] Cf. Jack Rogers, *Reading the Bible and the Confessions (*The Presbyterian Way, Louisville / Geneva Press 1999), p 22.

In the Brazilian Presbyterian context, fundamentalism was a dividing force. However, with a few exceptions, this was not because some churches rejected it whereas others did not, but because Presbyterian churches adopted it in different ways or in different degrees. Fundamentalism was not a matter of quality (judged as being good or bad), but of quantity (it was adopted fully or partly). Its influence led to widespread doctrinal and theological intolerance and provided the rationale for a sheer rejection of the ecumenical movement that goes beyond pan-Protestantism.

Another constitutive element of the Brazilian Presbyterian identity is its persistent and growing rejection of traditional Reformed logocentric/severe spirituality. It tends to conceive Christian spirituality – worship included – primarily in terms of an emotional, individual rather than collective, "spiritual" rather than historic religious experience.

The first North American Presbyterian missionaries arrived in Brazil in 1859. In the previous year, 1858, known in American Church history as the *annus mirabilis*, the so called "Methodist Era" – with its camp meetings, its revival gatherings and its gospel hymns and songs "marked by a focus on personal religious experience and the comfort and security of Christian faith"[4] – reached one of its culminating points.

This means that when Presbyterian worship was first celebrated in Brazil, the "grave and seemly manner" the Westminster divines prescribed as the most convenient way of joining the Presbyterian assembly[5] was already being largely counterbalanced, if not overthrown, by a tendency to emphasize spiritual fervor, personal decisions of faith and greater spiritual vitality.

On one hand, this new tendency marked – and considerably limited – the Presbyterian understanding of mission in Roman Catholic Brazil. It was equalized to individualistic proselytism, something very different from *Missio Dei*, from "many sided" mission or from "holistic" mission. On the other hand, this legacy of the awakenings would progressively win the support of the majority of Brazilian converts and thereby fertilize the Brazilian church soil for the remarkable outburst of Pentecostal movements particularly during the second half of the 20th century. In a highly competitive religious market and in a Reformed context in which it is common sense to take church growth as evidence of faithfulness to the gospel and of a successful ministry, Brazilian Presbyterian churches are being forced today to equate their future with the adoption of Neo-Pentecostal forms of spirituality.

The third constitutive element of the Brazilian Presbyterian identity reinforces the problem of the reception of a many-sided or a holistic understanding of mission by the Reformed family in Brazil particularly in regard to the gospel and culture issue. I am speaking of the cultural legacy of Puritanism.

It is needless to remind you that despite the fact that the 17th century movement devoted itself to the "purification" of the rites, the discipline and polity of the Church of England it was not able to maintain for more than thirteen years the political power conquered by Parliament and by Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army. Its theological and moral programmes, taken to New England by the Mayflower Pilgrim Fathers, played such a decisive and lasting role in the shaping of North American Presbyterianism that the words "Presbyterian" and "Puritan" became virtually synonymous.

I mean by "the cultural legacy of Puritanism" not only the well-known objective, severe, ascetic morality related to a particular understanding of classical Calvinist themes such as the sovereignty of God, election and secular life as divine vocation, but also one of its most important mental structures: objective hierarchical dualism featured in terms of good and evil as well as spiritual and material.

In Brazil, the first North American missionaries as well as the churches they helped to create put the popular, "permissive" and (for many) "libidinous" lifestyle engendered mainly by the interplay of medieval Iberian Catholicism as well as Native and African cultures on the side of "evil" whereas puritan morality, reshaped and exacerbated by the cultural context I've just mentioned, was taught to be the

[4] Donald K. McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press 1996), p 119.
[5] "The Directory for the Public Worship of God", http:// www.reformed.org/documents/wcf-htm. 27/01/00, p 4.

"good" way of living out Christian faith. Economic, social and political problems of the country as well as of the subcontinent were often analyzed in the light of the same dualism, the underdevelopment of Catholic South America, when compared to highly developed Protestant North America, being explained in terms of the good religion and individual morality. It is not difficult to imagine that "the cultural legacy of Puritanism" gave rise to a Presbyterian tradition bound to constantly experience cultural schizophrenia: it still rejects to a large extent the cultures it is supposed to incarnate; it still incarnates to a large extent the cultures it is supposed to criticize.

I have contended so far that during the past 140 years, these theological, spiritual and practical elements, in different degrees and in a wide range of combinations, have largely shaped Presbyterian tradition in Brazil and conditioned the way Presbyterian churches formulate their Reformed theological identity, the way they experience the Christian gospel and the way they fulfill their mission in the Brazilian context. Let us now take into account some of the important implications of this particular "Reformed way of being".

III. Implications for Unity in Mission

As you certainly know, the painful experience of the divided way Christian churches bore witness of the triune God is said (may be too often) to be the ultimate impetus of the modern ecumenical movement. Unity is therefore a missionary quest both in its origins and in its destination. Unity is often considered a matter of missionary credibility. These assumptions, by virtue of being obstinately repeated worldwide for almost a century, have become a sort of ecumenical dogma. Well, I argue that for Brazilian Presbyterian churches Christian unity – be it visible or not – is not an *a priori* for mission but one of its biggest threats. Let me try again to argue in a more concrete way.

The 1835 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States adopted a motion according to which the Roman Catholic Church was not a Christian church. Fifteen years later – and fourteen years before it began to send its missionaries to Brazil – the annual General Assembly of the same church ceased to recognize Roman Catholic baptism as Christian baptism. This happened in a context in which increasing immigration of Roman Catholic Europeans to North America was often experienced as a threat to white Anglo-Saxon Protestant identity.

Whereas for the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, PC(USA), those decisions ceased to be effective, Brazilian Presbyterian churches still stick to them in practice as self-evident biblical and theological truths. They are minority Protestant denominations in the largest Roman Catholic country of the world. As mission concerned minorities, their Reformed identity has been largely "feedback shaped" by their opposition to the hegemonic church. Together with other Latin American Protestant churches, they were excluded from the 1910 Edinburgh Conference on World Mission on the grounds that Roman Catholic Latin America was not a mission land.

Excluded from the liberal Protestant agenda, they were quite sensitive to Protestant fundamentalism and its campaign against modern exegesis, against the social gospel, briefly against history as a constitutive element of the Christian message, as I have already indicated[6]. The critical, challenging and renewing role played by Reformed theological education among Reformed churches in Brazil, important as it has been, was successful just to the extent of limiting, among the leadership of some denominations, the influence of North American fundamentalist movements, churches and organizations.

In recent years Brazilian Presbyterian churches have been also quite sensitive to traditional Pentecostalism and especially to neo-Pentecostalism. The outburst of neo-Pentecostal churches (the most well-known being the transnational Universal Church of the Kingdom of God) and their "Health and

[6] I will come back to this reference to history in my remarks about the *processus confessionis* (part IV).

Wealth Gospel" during the past two decades marked by economic and social stagnation has not only exacerbated the harsh competition for the religious market, but has also been a rather dividing force.

In the same line of the challenge represented by neo-Pentecostalism, it is worth mentioning the growing utilitarian nature of religious engagement. I mean the "ultimate concern" engaged in the relationship between believers and religious institutions. Ecumenical in its outlook, since it encourages believers to ignore the borders separating denominations, confessional families as well as religions, it is often experienced by mainline churches as a threat to their own confessional identity.

As a result of this wide range of historical, theological and religious factors, Brazilian Presbyterian churches prefer to give priority to conservative denominational programmes at the expense, it goes without saying, of the ecumenical imperative of unity on behalf of mission "that the world may believe".

I have been arguing therefore that Brazilian Presbyterian churches find it very difficult, if not dangerous, to equate the ecumenical imperative with an understanding of faithfulness to the Christian gospel formulated first and above all in terms of church growth and in terms of institutional development. Common witness, unity for mission or mission in unity mean for them *contradictio in terminis*, self contradictory expressions.

IV. Implications for WARC's *Processus Confessionis* on Economics and Ecology

My last point concerns the prospective reception of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches' *processus confessionis* by its Presbyterian member churches in Brazil. Are they in a favorable theological position to share with Debrecen delegates the same concerns for economic and environmental justice that led WARC 1997 General Council to engage in what we have been calling *processus confessionis*?

As you certainly know, churches of the Reformed family have a long-standing tradition of confessions or declarations of faith with liturgical, doctrinal or historical purposes. A great deal of them were produced during the 16th and the 17th centuries. Enlightenment, religious tolerance, pietistic emphasis on religious experience, modern religious individualism as well as a 19th century ecumenical emphasis on the *norma normans* vis-à-vis the confessions themselves, have contributed to the decline – yet not to the rejection – of the authority of those earlier confessions.

Following the positive approach of non-universal confessions to which neoorthodox Protestantism gave rise precisely in a century of intense and dramatic transformations, Reformed churches from different continents have experienced the call to witness in and to the contemporary world by means of producing new declarations of faith.

From resistance to Nazism[7] and to *apartheid*[8] through a reflection on Christian constructive witness in a socialist context[9], History has been a major actor in the writing of 20th century confessions of faith. It is intimately related to the contemporary usage of the expression *status confessionis* in relation not only to orthodoxy, but mainly to orthopraxis. According to WARC's 1982 Ottawa General Council, declaring that a situation constitutes a *status confessionis* means "that we regard this as an issue on which it is not possible to differ without seriously jeopardizing the integrity of our common confession". Any declaration of *status confessionis*, according to WARC's 1989 Seoul General Council, "stems from the conviction that the integrity of the gospel is in danger… It demands of the church a clear, unequivocal decision for the truth of the gospel, and identifies the opposite opinion, teaching or practice as heretical"[10].

[7] Cf. The Lutheran-Reformed "Theological Declaration of the Present State of the German Evangelical Church" or Barmen Declaration of May 31, 1934.
[8] Cf. K. Blei "Apartheid as Status Confessionis", P Réamonn (ed.), *Farewell to Apartheid? – Church Relations in South Africa*, (Geneva: WARC 1994), pp 17-29. The Lutheran World Federation declared *status confessionis* against race discrimination in Dar es Salaam in 1977.
[9] Cf. The 1977 Confession of the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba.
[10] *Apud* K. Blei, "Apartheid as a *Status Confessionis*", *op. cit.*, p 17.

History is also intimately related to the call the WARC's 1997 Debrecen General Council addressed to the Alliance and its member churches "for a committed process of progressive recognition, education and confession (*processus confessionis)* within all WARC member churches at all levels regarding economic injustice and ecological destruction"[11].

The process we are starting now as an international fellowship of Reformed churches whose decisions have moral force only is one that requires from member churches a minimal consensus concerning both the vital importance the Reformed tradition attaches to the confession of Christian faith and the understanding of the theological density of History to the extent of realizing that in orthopraxis the integrity of faith is as much at stake as in orthodoxy.

I contend that if Brazilian Presbyterian churches are a test case for the implementation of the *processus confessionis*, then the above-mentioned stage of "recognition", prior to "education and confession", might be the most demanding one. This has to do, on one hand, with the fact that those denominations, attached to the Westminster Confession, never acted as churches based upon the experience of an "acutely perceived insufficiency of the older Reformed Confessions for the present" (I. Rohls). It has to do, on the other hand, with the fact that because they feel indebted to a 17th century distinction between covenant of nature and covenant of grace and to other dualisms already mentioned, they seem to find it very difficult to experience the theological density of history allowing for the affirmation that "a system which claims human and environmental sacrifices is sinful" and that "it has a bearing on our salvation, on our ultimate stance before God, how we relate to the mechanisms of the global market"[12].

V

I have argued that Brazilian Presbyterian churches remain largely indebted to the biblical interpretation, the Christian spirituality and the concept of mission held by the first North American missions that managed to establish themselves in the country in the first years of the second half of the 19th century and that in a religious context marked by the hegemony of the Roman Catholic Church and the remarkable growth of traditional and new Pentecostal churches, those denominations, in a sort of *repli identitaire*, are likely to become less sensitive to the ecumenical imperative and to historical engagement in the coming years.

As a staff person of an international confessional and ecumenical organization, I am now looking at the ecumenical challenge represented by Brazilian Presbyterian churches not only from the prism of the local situation but also from the perspective of what I am calling here the international ecumenical agenda. I am personally committed to it. However I must admit that I see a growing communication gap between the theological language of the ecumenical agenda and the theological language of the agenda of churches which quite often are formally members of this or that international ecumenical organization but which in practice live without "receiving" the implications of their membership.

[11] "Section II Report – Justice for all creation", Milan Opočenský (ed.), *Debrecen 1997* – Proceedings of the 23rd General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (Presbyterian and Congregational), Geneva, (WARC, 1997), p 198.
[12] Milan Opočenský, "From *processus confessionis* to *status confessionis*", Speech delivered at WARC *Padare* during the WCC 8th General Assembly, Harare, December 10, 1998 (unpublished).

A RADICAL REFORMATION PERSPECTIVE ON APPROPRIATING A MORE INCLUSIVE REFORMATION LEGACY TODAY -

Walter Sawatsky

As is true of so many of the post-Reformation confessional traditions represented at the Prague consultations, it has been easier to approach this question by making certain that the deepest values of one's own tradition are understood, and to assume that other traditions were more responsible for the fragmentation of the church and needed to start retracing their steps toward true catholicity. I am thankful therefore that within the ranks of my own tradition there are new indicators of a readiness to take a more critical look at the discrepancy between speaking out against abuses of Christian practice, including the theological drift in teaching about indulgences that made the Lutheran rearticulation of Pauline justification by faith alone so refreshing, and the readiness to justify separate churches theologically.[1] Characteristic of the reformers was a predilection toward restitution of apostolicity, understood differently than in terms of a succession of laying on of hands (problematic in any case between Eastern and Western churches long before), so that apostolic faithfulness outweighed the concern for the *una sancta*. The free churches rooted in the Radical Reformation tradition, so Miroslav Volf, maintain understandings of unity, holiness and apostolicity that are problematic "precisely because it is uncatholic."[2]

What I propose to attempt here, that surely also reflects my bias toward historical analysis, is to show what I think we have been learning, by applying a series of perspectives. First I wish to make some general remarks about what we are learning to rethink, noting a few specific discoveries. Secondly, I want to address the great difficulty we have regularly had in examining the ambiguities that are inherent in how we have lived with our legacies. Thirdly, it is vital to delineate more objectively, also with the help of references to social analysis, the plurality of contexts within which the Reformations need to be understood. That contextual perspective necessarily relativizes all of them, especially in light of the entire two millennia of earthly existence of the one holy catholic and apostolic church, that is, the church as body of Christ in fullness in the sense of its eschatological significance and yet always broken and beset by sin and fallenness in its visible story.

Further, when seeking out what common affirmations about the Reformation for today we are beginning to articulate, I need to examine how I might address this to my people, to my Anabaptist tradition, in which there are contradictory voices seeking to point the way. This calls for a framing of the broader Reformation legacy that my people will still recognize as more truly our own search for authentic apostolicity and catholicity. The recognition of the difficulties along the way may turn out to be more helpful than to generate a long list of items for the common agenda for today, hence my short final section.

Learning to Re-Examine the First, Radical and Magisterial Reformation Streams

Each of the Reformation tradition churches has taken that heritage very seriously, which is different from saying that their perceived task continues to be to advocate for those causes most in keeping with their origins. To take it seriously indicates how much their manner of living as Christian community, their witness to the world, or their way of doing theology (i.e. faith seeking understanding) is

[1] Neal Blough in an unpublished paper "The Anabaptist Idea of the Restitution of the Early Church" presented at the second round of Catholic-Mennonite dialogue (Strasbourg, October 1999) noted the need for dialogue partners to be aware "that important parts of their own self-understanding and theologies have to do with proving that they are right and that others are wrong." p 16, see also p 6.
[2] Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1998), p 259.

shaped, often framed or even limited by that reformation perspective, be it Lutheran, Reformed, Anabaptist or Unity of Czech Brethren. Taking one's own reformation tradition seriously should mean that one repeatedly returns to the sources, not so much to cite them as authoritative in the manner that they used to cite Marx, Lenin or Stalin, but rather to re-examine the issues and intentions in order to draw insights for our questions of today. It remains true that our knowledge of Reformation beginnings is still more characterized by knowing the quotations, and by understanding the leaders' intentions, than by a detailed comprehension of how the Reformation movements were put into practice, especially after the first generation.[3]

When we set out in 1986 to review our Radical and Hussite traditions from a comparative perspective, we assumed that although we had in common the fact of having been marginalized as heretical, dangerous, or irrelevant, as far as the developing theological tradition of the West was concerned, nevertheless, during the course of the 20th century we had been rediscovered and were now generally cited as legitimate wings of the Reformation. So when the successive Prague conversations shifted to include Lutheran and Reformed representatives, who seemed generally to claim the real "Reformation" title, these conversations were premised on the assumption first, that the minority traditions understood themselves as offering vital perspectives for the 'common reformation of the church' intentions, and secondly, that the classic or Magisterial traditions were indeed seeking conversation as they said, rather than another series of colloquies to convince each other of error.

Specific questions we set out to test concerned how we had attempted to live out our eschatological hope. It meant asking seriously whether a church can be a peace church, whether the disciplined ethics of the gathered community (as ecclesiological form) could be lived out. We were keenly aware that we had consistently been dismissed as broadly impractical, though constituting welcome small signs of hope and of interesting alternative communities. Our intention was to take another look from the perspective of this past century of excessive violence, unimaginable atrocities and killing, of grand social and economic experiments and a resultant eco-system ready to self-destruct. In short, this was a more modest hope of sharing the record of strengths and weaknesses of seeking to be a peace church or of being a community attempting self-discipline.

It turned out that we knew too little about each other. That was especially true when we realized how few scholars had examined Czech, other Slavic or Hungarian sources. In other words, we learned to include movements further east, on the edge of the classic East/West Christian division. I might point out that within my own tradition, as long as intellectual history in the sense of tracing who read whom remained the major research method, it was considered fact that direct influences from Prague to Zurich or Amsterdam were tenuous at best, hence what mattered was the first time or original discoveries of the Anabaptists.

Our capacities to seek out a common Reformation perspective have to do with the recognition that fundamental to our current thinking and research method is a renewed assumption about the oneness of the Church, yet recognizing how differently this was lived out in the particularities of time and place. The reformers in the Western church over a period of several centuries were pursuing a common vision for renewing it, a commonality close enough to merit inclusion by a growing number of historians under the rubric "Reformation". Fundamental too was the hope that we would not collide over favored terms, but seek dynamic equivalence where possible. In my own mind, I am more aware than fifteen years ago, how difficult and complex most of these assumptions become as the conversation goes deeper.

[3] I assume here that a restorationist logic was common to all the reformist traditions, including the Catholic reformation - which relativizes somewhat the claim of those scholars arguing that the "radical reformers" were searching out the roots of Christianity more thoroughly than mere reformist agenda - a point made by Hans Hillerbrand in "Anabaptism and History", *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, April 1971, p 110, and made much more generally by Felipe Armesto-Fernandez & Derek Wilson in *Reformations: A Radical Interpretation of Christianity and the World 1500-2000*. (New York: Scribner, 1996, p 18. When revising this paper I discovered that this is the central and most persuasive argument in Scott H. Hendrix, "Rerooting the Faith: The Coherence and Significance of the Reformation", *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, XXI, 1, new series 2000, 63-80.

Particularly with reference to codewords such as 'justification', 'sacrament' or 'peace' I find myself noting the definitional assumptions of one speaker that the next speaker cannot work with.[4]

More attractively surprising were the experiences of listening to a theologian of the *Evangelische Kirche Deutschlands* rethink the Lutheran legacy in light of the German fascist challenge[5]. The Barmen Declaration had become possible because Lutherans (by then already united with the Reformed, though each side tried to ensure its traditions were respected in the statement) had found a way of moving beyond Luther's two kingdom teaching. The Stuttgart Guilt Declaration had been a further step. That rethinking had made Professor Klappert more appreciative of the left wing of the Reformation, with its greater concern to resist the idolatrous demands of the state. Having myself been schooled to concentrate on how Luther had turned against the peasants, and even against the more democratic reformers, and had made his peace with princes, I learned how going back to the young Luther enabled Lutherans to reclaim a social ethics tradition, even though social services worthy of note did not emerge till the 19th century[6]. But then, it behooves me to acknowledge, that even though Luther's vitriol against the *Schwärmer* still seems beyond the bounds of charity, the Anabaptist record of social service also had its limits. Hutterian community of goods did function for a time, and is now again an impressive way to run agricultural communities, but the continuity was broken. The majority of Anabaptists did not attempt socialism, retained a reputation for mutual aid, were active in the cooperative movements at the end of the 19th century, but there was little social ministry beyond the church community before the global changes of the 20th century.

Without trying to be comprehensive, it seems to me we have been getting close to affirming several things as common Reformation convictions, at least now if not then. We are ready to affirm that "by grace alone we are accepted by God" as long as that does not constantly have to mean a Pauline formulation from the book of Romans, but a soteriology that is inescapably linked with ethics or sanctification understandings, that has personal, social and cosmic dimensions. In contrast to 16th century protagonists, the common assumptions of biblical scholarship today place the vision of the Sermon on the Mount rather central to the Gospel. As a smaller group we affirmed in 1987 that we therefore assumed that the Gospel had consequences not just for the individual, that the social orders needed to be shaped by the rule of Christ, that the economic order must also be subordinate to the rule of Christ, and that a community of faith lived by the way of peace[7]. Those phrases are recognizably Anabaptist and Hussite, so it is worth asking whether those affirmations hold for a larger group. Indeed, it is worth asking whether they really are that Anabaptist, to ask at what point would modern Anabaptists get anxious when the social and economic order would indeed begin changing in the desired direction, and how, as church leaders, we should assume more social responsibility.

A more gradual realization that no doubt needs further testing, is that the ecumenical movement as we know it has a great deal to do with the Reformation. It is out of a dissatisfaction with the state of our churches in this past century, not only with the fact of the fragmentation of Christianity, that ecumenists of deep conviction have been seeking to reform or renew the Church[8]. The missionary movement provided new impulses for reassessing what of the separate Reformation traditions could be

[4] One element of "cannot" has to do with a speaker consciously or unconsciously utilizing contested terms where a responsible representative of another tradition must restate the contestation, and "cannot" also points to the as yet insufficient readiness to abandon semantic jousting for the sake of dynamic equivalence.

[5] Bertold Klappert, "Barmen V and the Hitler State: The Justice and Limits of Governmental Power", *Brethren Life and Thought*, Winter 1990, pp 72-95.

[6] Carter Lindberg, "A Specific Contribution of the Second Reformation" Towards a Renewed Dialogue. The First and Second Reformations." *Studies from WARC*, 30 (Geneva 1996) 39-62; and Lindberg, "Do Lutherans Shout Justification but Whisper Sanctification? Justification and Sanctification in the Lutheran Tradition", *Justification and Sanctification in the Traditions of the Reformation. Studies from WARC*, 42 (Geneva 1999), pp 97-112.

[7] "Prague II: Eschatology and Social Transformation", *Justification and Sanctification in the Traditions of the Reformation*. *Op cit*., pp 261-265.

[8] See my "Eschatology and Social Ethics in Ecumenical Perspective: Reflections on the Prague Consultations", in Loren Johns, ed. *Apocalypticism and Millenialism. Shaping a Believers' Church Eschatology for the Twenty-First Century*. (Kitchener: Pandora Press, 2000), pp 309-325 for more detailed treatment.

held in common. Once Rome signalled *Aggiornamento* it too sought the "separated brethren" for the sake of common renewal. So finding a common view of the intent of the reformation has become a major premise within the ecumenical movement. This accounts for the awkwardness that Eastern Orthodox churches have always experienced, since they were forced to join conversations run along established patterns of Reformation discourse, patterns that were shifting, hence western Protestants were inviting them in, but certain dominant notions of the essence of a reformed Church remained. Those Majesterial Reformer tones account too for the reluctance of the minority churches to join the WCC. Only gradually are we noticing what has been a persistent theme through the many reformation movements, not just those of the 16th century, namely, the increased involvement of the laity. That bodes well for the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition I represent, but I am not at all sure that consultations grouped around faith and order themes are particularly prepared to contemplate the implications. That is a way of indicating a reason for the less than eager participation from the churches of the south.

The Ambiguities of Living with Our Heritages

We have regularly attempted to assess how well we have lived with our legacies, but it has been a difficult exercise. That difficulty begins with our lack of readiness to acknowledge that the traditions that emerged were not quite what the reformers had called for. Once the era of confessionalism had finally come to be a burden, there emerged a renewed reformation effort. Continental Pietism was characterized by a new stress on the Holy Spirit, a stronger emphasis on the heart than head, and it was also characterized by the development of social ministries to the neighbor and to the needy. Put in sociological terms, both the heart religion and the social services represented further advances toward democratization of church and society. It is curious that many historians and theologians in my Anabaptist tradition have learned to regard the impact of Pietism negatively, as a giving up on Anabaptism. The instructive exception has been the Church of the Brethren, who view their origins as rooted in Anabaptism and Pietism, and who have been conducting a series of conferences to draw attention to the richness of both traditions.[9]

As a result of the emergence of the modern Protestant missionary movement, each of the traditions present at the Prague consultations have undergone transformations. They became churches no longer limited to a designated territory or ethnic group. Hence the differences of language and culture that have served to justify the separations between East and West, and between denominations in America, now so pervade each of our global families, that some comprehensive sharing of the reformation intentions has become a necessity. Though we have not yet managed to focus on the subject, it is difficult to converse seriously about our Reformation legacies unless we acknowledge our influence on each other to the point of indebtedness. In my own tradition, it is still customary to speak of the missionary ardor of the 16th century Anabaptists as models for mission - some even say we were the first to recover the mission mandate - whereas the fact of the matter is that had it not been for the stimulus to mission from Moravians, Baptists and others from the era of the Awakening and Pietism, Mennonites would not be speaking of half of their members no longer being Euro-American. In the majority of places outside Europe and America, the de facto church model of most Protestant mission churches is that of a free church. That has significant implications for the future, but the Reformation origin free churches do not really account for that situation. That is, there have been several different roads to the formation of churches no longer so dependent on the state, with the necessary theological adjustment lagging behind in places.

[9] Don Durnbaugh has been unusually prolific; his papers presented at the Prague conferences have regularly listed further literature, including also Mennonite scholars such as Richard McMaster, Theron Schlabach and John Roth who have been showing the flaws in the Robert Friedmann thesis that claimed that drinking from Pietist fountains contaminated the pure source of the Anabapist stream. See for example, John D. Roth, "Pietism and the Anabaptist Soul", in Stephen L. Longenecker, ed. *The Dilemma of Anabaptist Piety: Strengthening or Straining the Bonds of Community*. Bridgewater VA: Bridgewater College Forum for Religious

Our constellation of participants guaranteed some attention to the impact of Marxism on Christianity, though our sense of that impact has been far less obvious than I had anticipated. Nevertheless the challenge of Marxism to Christianity, whether as an ideology or in the form of Marxist socialism in power, has been significant, and we do ourselves harm if we now attempt to ignore the impact.[10] Above all, the challenge of Marxism has sharpened our sensitivities to the necessary linking of Word and Deed, or of Theory and Praxis.[11] Our readiness to affirm the importance of clear teaching, of doctrine, and at the same time our efforts to stress ethical living, once more likely to drive us into partisanship, has been restrained by Marxism as voice of conscience to us all. The collapse of socalled Communist or Marxist states with their announced alternative to imperialist capitalism, may well account for the the increasingly apparent lack of will by churches (especially from those capitalist countries) to sustain, never mind to expand, programs on behalf of the marginalized and poor globally. We should remember also that most organized church-based social service agencies have only been organized on an established basis since 1945.

Finally it is worth reminding ourselves of our roles during the era of Cold War and overkill weaponry. Not only did we manage to live within the strictures, given the struggle for containing communism, or given the limits within which Marxist authorities permitted our existence; these conditions also took a toll on our legacy of pacifism and our capacity to act out our social ethic. The Anabaptist and Hussite origin churches were active in seeking peace and reconciliation across the East/West divide, often together with other Reformation churches, whether through the WCC or CAREE. When the revolutions of 1989-91 ended the cold war, reconfigured boundaries, and placed more participatory governments seeking the good civil society into office, this was in no small measure a nonviolent and moral revolution that looked to the churches for guidance, even leadership. My own tradition failed to enter into these events very seriously, I think because we had learned to think in ways that were too small to encompass moments when an entire people started to repent like Nineveh of old. Ten years after, we now face the daunting question of 'what to do', to borrow Chaadaev's famous phrase, now that both the societies and the churches in Eastern Europe are generally reeling from a world turned topsy turvy. We have witnessed killings in the name of peoplehood or ethnicity, systematic cleansings of the 'other' people of faith. Not only has the world seemed powerless to stop the bloodletting, we know that our fellow brothers (and possibly sisters) in Christian faith have manifested an intolerance, have appeared to condone atrocities in the name of a Christian notion of communion that is much smaller than the *una sancta*.

So we now know about the 'power of the powerless' that can neutralize the largest arsenal of nuclear destruction, but we also need to ask ourselves whether seeking help from sister Reformation traditions is adequate. It is hard to imagine finding our way forward, unless it includes serious conversation with Eastern Christians and includes a more intentional familiarization with the world of Islam than was true when the Turks were at the gates of Vienna. Something has been fermenting in Europe since 1517 and 1453, a revolutionary process of long duration, in which the classic western Reformation makes sense if seen in a much broader frame of reference.

Studies, 1997, pp 27-33.

[10] See the excellent restatement by Charles West, "Should Christians Take Marxism Seriously Anymore?" *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, January, 2000, pp 2-7.

[11] What I have in mind is well expressed in Jose Miguez Bonino, *Toward a Christian Political Ethic*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1983, especially pp 28-36. That a Latin American liberationist perspective is more likely to sustain a critical appropriation of Marxist social analysis than is true of the former socialist world or the socalled first world, needs more attention among the group of Prague interlocutors, including the re-definition of Reformation for today utilized by Justo González in his *Mañana. Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990, pp 73-74.

Perspectives for Contextualizing the Reformations and the Prague Consultations

Too many times as I have listened to papers presented at this consultation series, as well as at other theological conferences, the speaker would apologize for limiting his paper to that part of the Reformation he knew best. It is understandable that one feels less certain about being taken seriously when venturing out into comparative discourse, not familiar with the dominant literature or the languages in which it is written. On the other hand, does the assumption that one will make a better contribution if speaking from a specialized knowledge base really hold? There once were reasons for Lutherans speaking to each other, Reformed to each other, Anabaptists to each other, and either caricaturing the other side or passing over them in silence. But those partisan ways no longer serve, even our own members want to understand more broadly.

If indeed we have been moving toward a more comprehensive perspective on the Reformation, then this needs to become evident in our stated sense of contextual limits and our deliberate attempts to extend that context. If much of the reference is to persons living in Wittenberg, Strasburg and the Swiss cantons of Zurich, Basel and Geneva, it is worth checking whether our generalizations matter beyond that little part of Europe. Including the Anabaptists as part of the Reformation does change the agenda, but in a contextual sense it serves primarily to heighten the tension around the type of church to be restored and who are to be the leaders, and how more threatening this reformation then seemed to the established order. To take seriously the diverse movements within Anabaptism, especially Dutch Anabaptism as it developed over the next decade, extends the territory northward[12]. We have begun to acknowledge the curious absence of representatives from the English Reformation, including the limited reference to that quite convoluted story in our body of essays, yet after 1740 it seems unthinkable that we can review the legacy of the Reformation unless we examine the many new impulses coming from England, whether it be the Puritan experiments, their "errand into the American wilderness" as Perry Miller stylized their North American impact, the great awakenings and the volume of devotional literature that flowed back to the continent, including eventually the network of Bible societies, unthinkable without the British dissenting tradition and the missionizing role of Quakers in particular.

Although a Roman Catholic representative has been present for half the consultations, rarely have we spoken appreciatively of the Catholic Reformation, whose progress in no small way accounts for the fact that no secular historian of the 16th century can avoid dealing with the Reformation impact. To say, as we have at times, that specific reformation movements were part of the medieval renewal traditions, different in kind from the Lutheran Reformation of doctrine, has left the Catholic Church as a useful foil for sharpening our arguments. Not only did this place those reformers who were calling for the elimination of abuses and for serious attention to Christian living into a less serious category, such an approach in effect implied that the transformations within the Roman church were of little consequence. Indeed to view the Lutheran Reformation of doctrine as something qualitatively new, somehow distinct from the general trajectory of Christian history, may help account for the widespread misperception that but for the genius of Luther there would not have been this great watershed in Christian history, seemingly second only to the incarnation event. This is why our necessary inclusion of the Czech lands, with its 15th century reform struggles and 16th century particular form of the Reformation, lead by persons of ability worth taking seriously, now that their writings appear in English, helps us see in what additional ways the spirit of God was renewing God's church.

[12] See for example Sjouke Voolstra, "'The Colony of Heaven': The Anabaptist Aspiration to be a Church Without Spot or Wrinkle in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries" and Alastair Hamilton, "The Development of Dutch Anabaptism in the Light of the European Magisterial and Radical Reformation", both in Alastair Hamilton, et al. eds. *From Martyr to Muppy: A Historical Introduction to Cultural Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in the Netherlands: The Mennonites*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1994, pp 3-29.

When we then apply the so necessary sociological perspectives to this era, it becomes evident that there were reformers struggling to be understood and heard as far east as Moscow.[13] We have been learning to notice the way this era marked the transition to the age of the book and the resultant impact on the manner of thinking. Whether the reformers were in Moscow, Oxford, Paris or cities further south, the old ways of orality, of a religion of imagery, drama or the physical reassurance of relics and miracles, was giving way to an appeal to the rational and ethical. It was the era of the rise of preachers of ethics in Moscow and of the publication of Biblical texts in the vernacular, also in Russia, giving to a growing element of the population the opportunity to appropriate Christian faith with a keener sense of personal responsibility. Is it not our sense of the impending transition away from the heavy focus on the linear thought ways of the book, to the more iconic style of thinking signaled by our technological sophistications that helps us recognize what broad agenda the reformations had in common?

The recent articulation of a comprehensive appropriation of the Reformation, by Scott H. Hendrix, as a Lutheran joining the Princeton Seminary faculty, points the way. All of the reformers denounced traditional religious practice when it was less than Christian, and with a missionary zeal sought to reroot the faith, which made them all radical. They differed in strategies, including on the degree to which traditional forms and rituals should be abolished, but the common concern was a return to real roots. The reformers in common faced at least a seven-fold challenge: how to create a more truly Christian society, how to respond to the new challenges of the city, whether rerooting could be accomplished while retaining infant baptism, critiquing various manifestations of christendom, exploring restructuring options for church and for theology, and seeking to counter either the inroads of magic and superstition or those of secularization. In this inclusive view (also Catholic and English, though not as inclusive of the East) Hendrix specifically proposes to think of the radical traditions, not as "stepchildren" but as "full-blooded brothers and sisters in a common endeavor to recover the family's roots."[14] Seen from the hindsight of the 20th century, Hendrix is also right in pointing to a "common burden" of this family of reformers, including the former "stepchildren", namely the hostility towards Judaism and Islam, so that the Reformation becomes a necessary lesson in humility. True, wherever reformation groups sought to survive as minority groups, they shared a common lot with Jews, but that sympathy did not make much difference during the Holocaust.

So What do I Say to My People?

For us to move toward a more comprehensive perspective on the Reformation requires that we address that message to our separate confessions. What do I say to my people? This task has far less to do with reporting conversations and informing them about new ideas, than it has to do with the matter of rearranging the particular peoplehood memories that inspire our confessional calling and identity.

Currently Anabaptist Mennonite leaders are pursuing conflicting notions about the legacy that is to shape our future. On the one hand have been the voices deeply aware of the plurality of influences on American Mennonites, more so on Mennonites globally, and who have come to think that an appeal to history no longer provides the basis for modern Mennonite identity. Their new call is to a Mennonite peace theology, as a systematic construct that relies on its dissociation from the classic Christian tradition for its appeal. Whether in a conservative theological bent or more in a post-modern idiom, this appeal essentially posits a sectarian way, for the sake of being truly Mennonite (or Anabaptist as the preferred ideological designation).[15] Less consciously sectarian, but nevertheless granting virtually no space to

[13]See for example the central argument in Paul Bushkovitch. *Religion and Society in Russia. The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. Cf. Ted Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart*. Columbia SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1991, pp 130-144.
[14]Hendrix, "Rerooting the Faith...", p 80.
[15] For an early indicator of the subsequent lines of debate, see J. Denny Weaver, "The Search for a Mennonite Theology" and A. James Reimer, "Why Do Mennonites Need Theology", in Diether Goetz Lichdi, ed. *Mennonite World Handbook*, Carol Stream IL: Mennonite World Conference, 1990, pp 143-152; pp 159-166.

seeking shared identity with other Christians, is a recent effort to describe the essentials of an Anabaptist Mennonite vision for today in terms of a little seed that grows, actually an image Jesus used, but in this case the seed was planted in the 16th century, though its roots reach down only to early Christianity.[16] This seeks to articulate a theology of Anabaptist beginnings based on doctrinal assertions and unique ordinances in the hope of universalizing them for Anabaptist-Mennonites around the world in 2000, but with virtually no recognition of a developmental story. What is most profoundly disturbing in my judgement, in either of these approaches, is the failure to take seriously the continuing legacy of struggle and suffering of Mennonites and related groups in the intervening centuries. It is that uneven story of living with a legacy that accounts for Mennonites now participating in the appreciative rediscovery of the other Reformations, indeed of other Christians as a whole, and to ask how that discovery was possible, given that we had thought they were part of fallen or apostate Christianity.

Another stream of theological discourse rather different in orientation, is saying quite explicitly that "the Mennonite peace witness cannot be the foundation of our theology, although it is intrinsically part of Christian theology. The ultimate foundation is God in God's threefoldness."[17] These words signal some of the ways in which a conscious effort at locating Mennonite theology within a broader Christian framework is proceeding. That is, it seeks to spend less time delineating the Anabaptist distinctives, seeking rather to affirm common Christian theological understandings, drawn not only from an appeal to Scripture, but understood also within the framework of the Nicene Creed that no Anabaptists rejected outrightly (until the 20th century), even though they were more at home with the Apostles Creed. Nevertheless, to stay with the Reimer example, such theology remains within the Western rationalist theological frame, Reimer's positive remarks about the Eastern Christian understandings of ecclesiology and its theological formulation are more appreciative than most, but it is hardly more than making a beginning in entering into what an ecumenical ecclesiology might look like - his general objective. There is still a readiness to claim the fullness of church for Mennonites, when enough of the list of charisma from Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 or Ephesians 4 are in evidence in a local church (here meaning local congregation). Yet there is also an appreciation of the understanding that the catholicity of the church refers to the "eschatological gathering of the whole people of God" and that therefore each congregation [and necessarily each Mennonite conference or the Mennonites as a whole family] "can only be partially Catholic."[18]

Without taking the time to enter into detail, suffice it to say that it has become increasingly apparent that the Anabaptist-Mennonite claim to specializing as peace church, fully committed to pacifism, is in need of revision. The necessary deeper reflection on historical development is probably only possible in conversation with other Christian traditions, most particularly the Calvinist Reformed tradition in light of its recent theological articulation and newly learned praxis in the South African Truth and Reconciliation process.[19] On the other hand, it remains true that the legacy of the Radical Reformation is so powerful that in almost any Mennonite setting, the desire to be a peace church is still axiomatic, even when we disagree on what that means. Where that was once imagined to mean avoidance of military service, some also avoiding all civil service roles, the activist nonviolence efforts of recent decades have centered more on witnessing truth to power, whether in the Quaker model or in learning from Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement. Most of our peace training now concentrates on mediation, however, essentially an instrumentalist focus with little theological underpinning.

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[16] Commissioned by Mennonite World Conference to foster common theological understandings, the essays were published in booklet form as: C. Arnold Snyder, *From Anabaptist Seed. The Historical Core of Anabaptist-Related Identity*. Waterloo: Pandora Press, 1999.

[17] A. James Reimer, "Mennonites and the Church Universal: A Critical Engagement with Miroslav Volf", unpublished paper presented to Mennonite Ecclesiology Conference, Elkhart IN Feb. 5, 2000, p 15.

[18] *Ibid*., p 12. The paper is constructed as an extended conversation with the arguments in Volf's *After Our Likeness*...

[19] See for example the work of Walter Wink, particularly his *When the Powers Fall. Reconciliation in the Healing of Nations*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. Cf. Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness*. New York: Doubleday, 1999.

In the context of social reconciliation agenda, however, so widely acknowledged as place for the churches to be involved today, Mennonites remain hampered by a deep suspicion of entering into social responsibility thinking, worried about the temptation to surrender to power or the delusion that one is in control.[20] That is less the case for the Dutch-Russian tradition, also present in Latin America, which learned the ambiguities of civil administration in the era of colonies within an empire, but Mennonite intellectuals rarely draw their resources from that rich experience. What would need to change in the way Anabaptist Mennonite theologizing proceeds in order to respond to the challenge of social reconciliation in places as diverse as Russia, Serbia, Rwanda, South Africa or Guatemala - to stay with a list where Mennonites have been present - evokes a complex of ways of reframing notions of the Kingdom of God, of the Shalom Society, that might well be helped if we attended to the ways in which Reformed Churches, for example in South Africa, advanced through the painful process of once legitimizing apartheid, to now declaring the issue of race a matter of *status confessionis*.[21]

Agenda for Today, Re-energized by the Broad Reformation Vision

For Western civilization that continues to impact the entire globe, the legacy of the Reformation as a whole remains a powerful one, whether one recognizes it consciously as do most secular historians, or unconsciously. That still begs the questions whether to highlight its negative or positive legacy, more so it begs the question of the Reformation defined. Our own effort at a more comprehensive and inclusive perspective on the Reformation serves to direct our thinking toward seeking common vision and common witness that has the authenticity of recalling the tradition, recalling it more truly as we seek to re-direct it toward the future. The futurist visions of the revolutionary era from 1789-1989 carried the optimistic and triumphalist tones of revolutionaries with "fire on their minds", to recall James Billington's apt descriptor. The tones that the velvet revolutions since 1989 have struck have demonstrated the vivifying and freeing power of the way of penitence.

Can there really be anything but a penitential starting point and tone of discourse as we seek to delineate an inclusive agenda for today? Will it soon become possible to enter into a mutual 'healing of memories' process as we name each other's dead and present a more inclusive martyrology, one that does not so quickly ascribe sanctity to the martyrdoms in the name of Reformation partisanship[22], but a

[20] This line of thinking is associated with John Howard Yoder, key essays warning against the temptation to control history re-appeared in his *The Priestly Kingdom: Social Ethics as Gospel*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984, as well as in his classic *The Politics of Jesus*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972. Yet in contrast, efforts at articulating a theology of responsible use of power, for example, Rodney J. Sawatsky & Scott Holland, eds. *The Limits of Perfection. A Conversation With J. Lawrence Burkholder*. Waterloo: Conrad Grebel College, 1993, scarcely move outside Niebuhrian ethical categories, that is, they reveal a similar penchant to develop normative stances, which is different from leading the church through the traumas of actual historical experience.

[21] For example, C. W. du Toit, ed. *Confession and Reconciliation. A Challenge to the Churches in South Africa*. Pretoria: Research Institute for Theology and Religion, UNISA, 1998.

[22] The reference is to Boyd Gregory, *The Anathema of Compromise*, (Oxford, 1999) examining in detail the historiography on 16th century martyrologies. Ephraim Radner, *The End of the Church. A Pneumatology of Christian Division in the West*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998, offers a more systematic critique of too easy appeals to the Holy Spirit, even when Reformation

martyrology of lived witness, even unto death, in the face of the violence of the Soviet era, of the national security states of Latin America, of the racisms in Africa?

It seems to me that it is by recognizing the ways even the general public has been noticing the classic marks of the church, as one, holy, catholic and apostolic, when seen in the lived witness of Christians enduring the traumas of this century, that we find the contours of a broad reformation vision for the future. Specifically for participants in the Prague conversations, to take up the agenda called for in the new Programme to Overcome Violence would seem to be our obvious vocation.

partisanship extended, and still extends, to the church's martyrs. Some of the broader dimensions of a re-arrangement of appeals to the witness of the martyrs (i.e to the 20th century versus the 16th century martyrs) that Mennonites need to undertake, are delineated in my article, "Dying for What Faith: When Do Martyrologies Inspire and When Do They Foster Christian Division", in *Conrad Grebel Review*, June 2000, pp 31-53.

NATURE OF WORKING GROUP PROCESS -
Walter Sawatsky

This short commentary, placed at the end of the materials from Prague VI, not only seeks to communicate a stylistic feature of the Prague VI consultation not captured in the papers or findings statement, but is intended to make more explicit what made this multi-lateral dialogue series so unique and potentially promising. Very little said here did not already appear in the papers published, especially in those by respondents to major papers, but the import may be easier to ponder when presented in a narrative style. The Prague consultations proceeded in a style, that for purposes of comparison, could be seen as pointing to the positive intentions inherent in the new consensus decision-making model of the WCC.

As the Preface makes clear through Don Durnbaugh's quick summary of the seven consultations, the initiative for consulting came from the minority groups of the Reformation era, Anabaptist and Hussite traditions starting to talk. They hoped that by learning to understand their long separated legacies better they would not only benefit jointly, but that their legacy of eschatologically driven ethical concerns could become a positive contribution to the ecumenical movement as a whole. **How** they talked quickly became an essential dynamic for attaining those goals. How this mattered, and what it implied for future ecumenical discourse, especially at the level of the 'reception process', became most apparent during Prague V (1998 in Geneva). That consultation on the theme of justification and sanctification involved a broad representation of confessional traditions, and was almost overshadowed at one point by the delegation from the Vatican and Lutheran World Federation reporting on their just achieved common statement on justification by faith. When a Quaker participant expressed frustration with the technical theological terminology that had set the tone, another participant inquired whether Lindbeck's guidelines for ecumenical discourse were known sufficiently to serve as rules for the game. Not only did the minority traditions respond by pointing out how much those 'rules' gave privileged place to the theological categories and language of the 'magisterial' traditions, participants from those traditions who represented Asia and Africa concurred. Nyambura Njoroge of Kenya had startled the participants when she stated her reluctance to speak about "Justification and Sanctification" that spoke so little to concerns of her fellow African church leaders who were on a quest for "an authentic and viable African Christianity". Those doctrines had been mediated to them via missionaries as justification from such private sins as fornication, drunkenness, gambling. She asked why had the various Reformation traditions taught so little in the face of colonialism, racism, poverty, oppression, genocide, sexism.

The tone in the consultation changed thereafter, it was time to listen differently, time to recall the silenced ones in each of our traditions. The return to the justification and sanctification themes in Prague VI, but coded as "new life in Christ", and the return to the prophetic and eschatological topics for Prague VII (see Part II) must be understood as a deliberate attempt to resume a conversation that had seemed to marginalize some for a while.

A central dynamic for starting to talk, already being forgotten by many today, was a deliberate attempt to bridge the East/West divide in light of the heightened tensions of the cold war, President Reagan's light hearted joke about a nuclear Armageddon starting in a few minutes had shocked many. Prague was an old university town, its people had long known themselves to be in central Europe (not on the eastern periphery), but during Prague I-III we were meeting inside socialist eastern Europe. Sensitivity to the East/West talk cultures shaped conversation far more, than would have been true if meeting in London or America. The dynamic of a conversation between persons from the first and second (socialist) world's 20th century histories continued to shape the conversation, more explicitly so again

when returning to Prague in 2003. By then, so much of the viciousness of market capitalism had been experienced by east Europeans, and the receding grand visions of the Velvet Revolution had left some Czech church leaders probing what a 'public theology' now needed to consist of, considering the churches' shrinking impact. The meetings in Geneva made possible a more deliberate inclusion of representatives from the third world, and evoked the issues of seeking to understand the many reformation legacies through the prism of the mission legacies.

So the consultation process was stimulated by at least three expressions of the legacy of distrust of the 'magister', the educated elite, who usually had set the tone. There were those from the Anabaptist tradition in the West, long relegated to 'sect' status, whose representatives now also were theologically educated, yet the Hutterians still distrusted higher education. There were those from the Lutheran and Reformed traditions from the South, wishing for a theology of praxis that addressed the issues of poverty, injustice and the scourge of AIDS. There were those churches from the second world, the *Unitas Fratrum* tradition in particular, that had incorporated the *Confessio Helvetica*, for example, but because of communist-driven separation of church from the state, especially the resultant renewed difficulties for clergy in the Czechoslovak Republic after 1968; had come to mean that such churches placed more trust in those clergy struggling to survive, than in those state salaried but too conformed to communist demands. As a result, at the first three consultations the worship time and the reporting time, was deliberately structured so that Hutterian representatives were heard in their style of preaching and sharing together. Already in 1987, one highlight was a late evening gathering to converse with Ondra, former general secretary of the Christian Peace Conference (when Hromadka was its president) who was dismissed in 1969 and had only recently been permitted to teach at the Comenius Faculty again. He told us how personal ties with Marxists (from the time of the Prague Spring of 1968) had continued, even with individuals now in the Czech army's think tanks, who had shared with him secret papers from the rethinking going on for some years already inside the Soviet high command. So that he had realized, when listening to Soviet president Gorbachev speaking in Prague on a recent visit, that Gorbachev's speech was laced with ideas and phrases from those confidential discussion papers shown to him by Marxist friends. The search for a moral revolution, for a nonviolent reduction or end to the cold war, was serious.

Although the Hutterians ceased to attend, a fact lamented in Opočenský's introductions to consultations thereafter, Prague VI incorporated a participatory style that seemed a mix of getting minority and majority voices on a level playing field and of adopting contemporary styles of discussion group process during larger gatherings. After major papers participants met in four groups to discuss and bring back consensus statements for the final findings paper. Since the content of that group work does not come through clearly in the Prague VI proceedings, it needs to be described as a key element in getting to a final statement. In the free flow of conversation in small groups, the personal character of participants played a role in building understanding and trust. One personal illustration from this writer's small group, that may serve for others, was the way I came to appreciate the Vatican's representative, Msgr John Radano. Most of us repeatedly experienced how easy it was to slip back into pushing our tradition's key emphases and language, especially when trying to think together on a comprehensive appropriation of the Reformation visions. Surprisingly frequently, in my opinion, Radano would remind us what the basics of the Gospel were about (without coding it in Catholic terminology) and as a result we were able to find the formulations to which all of us in the small group could give assent. It reminded me of the way in which during the ancient ecumenical councils, finding recognizable biblical phrases for articulating christological and trinitarian doctrines made consensus possible.

Commentary on the process would be incomplete without pointing to the binding elements that surrounded the formal conversations. We prayed together. We ate together. We sang together. Each was a sharing with the other. Private conversations did much to clarify what concerns that person had about his or her church tradition, what strategy of renewal for one's own tradition was behind the public remarks.

So we often disagreed intellectually yet wanted to pray in thankfulness for that sister or brother's ministry. Daily there was a Word from the Lord - usually also selected from the margins of the Church. For Vespers Opočenský read the daily text from the *Losungen* of the Moravian Brethren. For the Monday night conclusion of Prague V, the Losung text "happened" to be 1 Cor. 3:11 "no one can lay a foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ."

The last consultation (Prague VII) included a small group, easily working together in plenary session, but carrying on the effort to listen to and hear each other. It was also the last time that Milan Opočenský hosted us and lead the meetings. It was clear to all, that in addition to the factors noted above to explain the working group process, Milan's personal commitment to serious hearing and listening was crucial to making the Prague consultations an extended conversation that changed all its participants. I know all who took part were and remain deeply grateful for Milan's leadership.

FINDINGS STATEMENT - Prague VI - New Life in Christ (Strasbourg 11-15 February 2000)

I. Introduction

Seeking unity through focused and informed dialogue has been a *Leitmotif* of modern ecumenical endeavor since the World Missionary Conference of 1910. This has also characterized a series of international and interdenominational conferences since 1986 known informally as The Prague Consultations.

The formal title of this year's meeting is "A Consultation on the First, Radical, and Second Reformations", thus using language that requires some definition. The term "First Reformation" includes Waldensian Church, the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, the Moravian Church (*Unitas Fratrum*), and the Hussite Church, all understanding their spiritual origin as having occurred before 1500. In this context, "Radical Reformation" refers to the Mennonites, Hutterites, Friends, and the Church of the Brethren (together often known as the Historic Peace Churches). The phrase "Second Reformation" designates the classical Protestant (Magisterial) Reformation, including the Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican communions.

This consultation is the latest in a series that began in Prague in January 1986. In that year representatives of the Historic Peace Churches met with representatives of the Evangelical Czech Brethren, the Moravian Church, and the Hussite Church to identify common concerns. The intent of the gathering was to seek a more unified and hence more effective engagement in ecumenical conversations. The warm communality there found was deepened in June 1987 in a consultation focused on "Eschatology and Social Transformation." "Prague III", held in June 1989, studied "Christian Faith and Economics." Common commitments made there have influenced wider circles, especially the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC).

The next meeting, held in late 1994, was known as "Prague IV", although its locale shifted to Geneva under the sponsorship of the WARC, with assistance from the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Mennonite World Conference (MWC). Its theme, "Toward a Renewed Dialogue", signaled a broadening of discussion partners to include Lutherans and Reformed, along with members of the Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic Churches.

Geneva was again the site of "Prague V" in February 1998. This meeting continued to expand the range of those involved in the consultations by incorporating church leaders from Asia and Africa, facilitated through joint sponsorship by the WARC, LWF, and MWC. Its theme, "Justification and Sanctification", reflected recent Lutheran-Reformed discussions as well as the then-current Lutheran-Catholic negotiations on the same subject.

Now "Prague VI" continues the same discussion theme by considering aspects of that theological complex left open at the previous meeting. The phrasing of this year's title – "New Life in Christ" – also indicates that justification-sanctification language had not reflected customary usage of some consultation members. Participants were further concerned with the linkage of ecclesiology and ethics to salvation, as well as with analyzing its connections with ecology and creation. Finally, we addressed the question of a more comprehensive understanding of the concept of Reformation. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of conference planners, this year's discussants numbered only one from the South and only two women, although an Orthodox theologian and a Seventh Day Adventist scholar were welcome additions to the communions represented in the series of consultations.

In the course of our days together, we have identified areas of common understandings as well as areas where questions remain open. These two areas are sometimes called "convergences" and

"divergences", but we prefer to use other language to avoid a sense of binding churchly quality, although the two phrases have been used in earlier consultations. The common understandings and open questions are briefly noted in the following.

II. Common Understandings

We are ready to affirm that by grace alone we are accepted, liberated, and empowered by God and that soteriology involves ethics and sanctification. Thus, justification has not only individual but communal and social consequences.

Despite our legitimate commitments to our several confessional heritages, our understanding of new life in Christ calls us to affirm and assert our shared identity in Christ. We recognize that in this growing sense of shared identity we are achieving a basic intent of the consultation.

In faith we know that new life in Christ is grounded in the reality of the triune God.

All of the traditions here represented agree that justification comes through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, which includes his life and actions, in light of his death and resurrection.

We have learned throughout Christian history, in particular again during the bloody 20th century, that life in Christ involves costly grace, that the challenge to costly discipleship continues. We should make greater efforts to tell the stories of such discipleship expressed in human lives, recognizing in them authentic Christian witness that points to the reason for doctrinal confession.

Instead of speaking of "The Reformation", it is more helpful to speak of different specific and historic "Reformations", identifying similarities and differences, rather than seeking one comprehensive definition.

Our sense of the relationship between church and world is now very different from that of 16th century Western Europe. We now need to acknowledge the impact of pervasive secular society, so that our common task and challenge are to image forth a social vision of the Gospel, including attention to issues of justice and injustice. In this way, we reflect our prophetic heritage.

III. Open Questions

Though we were agreed on the many Biblical images of growth in Christ, we differed on whether growth had a progressive quality, since such growth does not merit salvation. How does our ecclesiology relate to this concern?

In light of the Quaker understandings of continuous revelation and our diverse habits of discourse, we need to consider the question: does the continued discussion of traditional issues of theological discourse still have a useful function? Will the formulation of new vocabulary help us get beyond stereotypes?

Finally, in the face of desperate human need and pressing social problems, we ask ourselves: what is the most appropriate investment of energy, time, and priority to be given to theological discussion?

IV. The Future?

At the end of earlier consultations we agreed that we wanted to continue the conversation. After considering whether we have now completed our work, whether there are further questions we are particularly constituted to address, whether some of the participant groups should reconstitute a successor body to pick up newly urgent agenda, we agreed to name a small continuation committee to plan another consultation, preferably located in Prague, within two or three years. It was agreed to seek Anglican participation.

The following topics or questions have been put forward as possible themes:

Are the participant groups of the Prague VI Consultation ready to take seriously their obligation to find helpful prophetic words to help overcome the violence and exclusions of our world?

How can we move toward deeper cooperation as churches to address the problems threatening us ecologically and to reduce the widened resource and financial gaps between peoples, especially since the end of the bi-polar world?

PART II

PRAGUE VII

SIGNIFICANCE OF REFORMING AND PROPHETIC MOVEMENTS FOR CHURCH AND SOCIETY

December 2003

INTRODUCTION to PRAGUE VII -
Walter Sawatsky

At the conclusion of the Prague VI meetings in Strasbourg, there was a widespread sentiment, especially among those speaking for the three sponsoring bodies, World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and Mennonite World Conference (MWC), that shifting ecumenical structures and sources of funding, plus personnel changes meant that what had been achieved so far needed to be carried forward by some other means. Those other means did not really emerge. As we worked at the task of preparing the proceedings for publication, Milan Opočenský kept emphasizing that the Prague initiative had not completed its work, it must continue until indeed the vision and task (essentially to work toward a more inclusive and comprehensive use of the Reformations for the Christian churches in the 21st century) was picked up by others. Donald Durnbaugh supported his argument, stressing that our way of preparing careful presentations that reviewed previous work was needed, and would serve as helpful guide for future ecumenical initiatives. Prague VII met in Prague (November 30-Dec. 2, 2003) in the former facilities of the Comenius Faculty (on Jungmannova) to work more explicitly toward closure, or toward passing on the torch.

Several key participants had died, several others were forced to cancel their planned attendance due to unforeseen circumstances, and numerous others who wished to attend were unable to secure the necessary funding. It was nevertheless a high quality meeting, even if small in number. Three persons had attended all seven consultations (Opočenský, Durnbaugh, Sawatsky) and carried forward the memory, having served also on most of the findings committees. The high quality also referred to the quality of ecumenical openness, fraternal sharing, the fruit of years of keeping in touch while observing the grand societal changes of our diverse settings.

This time the return to the themes from Prague I-III, was less limited to the 16th century era, but more oriented to the broader, more than 550 year legacy. So there were papers presenting developments in service and witness in the 19th and 20th centuries, and there were papers, such as Papini's, that set the even earlier Waldensian movement into a comparative perspective with what we had learned from the "First" or Hussite Reformation of the 15th century, and from the "Radical" and "Magisterial" movements of the 16th century.

The papers presented here build on what was, but they also present what was not generally known, even within the group of participants itself. When Opočenský started out with his paper on the Hussite movement, what we noticed were the series of stages in organizing for the future - with conflict from without, fissures within - until the formation of the *Unitas Fratrum* in 1457 made sense as a necessary unity. Brockwell's attempt to interpret the self-limiting ecclesial claims of Methodism in light of models from Waldensian efforts toward renewal of the whole Church, made sense because we had been learning to see a geographically broader and chronologically longer reform effort. It was also an answer to Radano's forthright query whether the Reformers had set out to reform the one Church, or had intended to establish a new one, because it allowed for seeing Rome's internal reform or renewal efforts (from the time of the Conciliar Movement through Trent) as belonging to the inclusive story.

The papers that follow therefore present information and analysis, and enable the reader to think comparatively. The volume concludes with references to the published materials from the entire consultation series. It includes citations of recent English language publications (largely from the Hussite Reformation), not already cited in footnotes. There was encouragement for the sponsoring bodies to post the entire corpus of Prague Consultations on a website, hopefully it will soon happen.

A special feature, not reported elsewhere, was a Sunday morning trip to Tabor to share in a contemporary worship service of the local Church of Czech Brethren. The central city square contained monuments to the Tabor uprising, as did a nearby castle. Not only did it enable us to visualize the past, the contemporary worship placed us centrally in the minority Christian context of today's deeply secular Czech Republic. On that Sunday a partner church congregation (EKD) from Germany participated in the service, all of us getting better acquainted over a coffee hour and lunch. We saw the "ties that bind" in new ways.

THE HUSSITE MOVEMENT -

Milan Opočenský

The theme of this meeting which was convened again to Prague is "The Significance of Reforming and Prophetic in Church and Society". I am going to speak about the Hussites and I consider the entire movement as a prophetic challenge. Within that movement it is especially the Taborite part of that movement to which I wish to devote my attention. Although I do not use the word "prophetic" very often let us keep in mind that the Hussite movement in its different expressions is filled with both a reforming and prophetic spirit.

There was an apocalyptic mood in the air and an idea occurred that the reign of the Antichrist has started. These ideas dominated the thinking especially of Milič of Kroměřiž. He gave up his diplomatic and ecclesiastical career and became a simple preacher of repentance. Many people came to listen to him. He was much influenced by Konrad Waldhauser.[1]

The legacy of Milič continued and was deepened by Matěj of Janov. He stressed the significance of sermon and longed for a Czech translation of the Bible. According to Matěj of Janov the entire church should be reformed by the Word of God. The church of Jesus Christ should return to its unfalsified beginning as it was manifested in the time of the early congregation and of the Apostles.

Some of these plans were materialized when the construction of the Bethlehem Chapel was begun in 1391. This chapel should be devoted to the preaching of the Word of God. It was the culmination of the ideas of Konrad Waldhauser, Milič of Kroměřiž and Matěj of Janov. These men were the principal forerunners of the Czech Reformation.

John Wycliffe

Another man has to be mentioned in this connection. The ideas of John Wycliffe (died 1384), an Oxford professor, represented an important stimulus for the Reform movement in Bohemia. He saw the Bible as the binding theological standard and considered the early Christian community to be the model that was to be emulated. According to him, since the time of the Emperor Constantine the Pope and the church power structures had became abettors of the Antichrist. Wycliffe expected the secular power to help in the struggle with the secularized church, which had become unfaithful. The traveling preachers whom Wycliffe sent out on the model of Matthew 10, and who were soon referred to as heretical "Lollards", had to withstand severe persecutions in England. In Bohemia Wycliffe's views found fertile soil and were enthusiastically disseminated. His most radical demand was that priests should give up all property and live in poverty.

Jan Hus

Theologically Hus (1371-1415) continued in line with the writings of Wycliffe. Philosophically he aligned himself with the more conservative trend (realism), that is the doctrine that general concepts really exist and are not merely definitions of reality. In his view of the Lord's Supper Hus continued to adhere to the dogma of the transsubstantiation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. In many respects Hus was a loyal medieval Catholic. But two things became particularly important to him: faith and Holy Scripture. Jesus Christ, as Hus came to know him from the Bible, became for him the Supreme Lord and Judge. He did not regard faith only as assent to a recognized truth. Hus wanted to remain true to the revealed truth. From Wycliffe he took over the view that priests and secular rulers

[1] Cf. Milič of Kroměřiž, *The Message for the Last Days*, Geneva 1998.

forfeit their office if they live in mortal sin. His rigorous consistency made him unpopular with the church power structures and also with the king.

Initially Hus did much for the reform of the university (1409), which led to the founding of a new university in Leipzig by discontented students and teachers of German nationality. Soon afterwards Wycliffe's books were burned as heretical. When Hus protested against this, the Archbishop of Prague excommunicated him. Later the situation was exacerbated when Hus attacked indulgences. After the interdict on Prague was pronounced in 1412 (to the effect that no official business could be undertaken in the presence of Hus), he had to leave the city. He went into the country and became a favorite popular preacher. In this period he wrote some works in Czech (collections of sermons, explanations of the Creed, the Decalogue and the Lord's Prayer).

When the Council was convened at Constance, Hus went there in the autumn of 1414 to stand his trial before that ecclesiastical assembly. Despite the imperial letter of safe conduct which guaranteed his life and his return, he was arrested in Constance and brought before the Inquisition, the examining tribunal for matters concerning the faith. The main question in dispute, on which he had to state his case at the Council, concerned the problem of authority. The final authority for Hus was not the Council but Christ, as Holy Scripture testified to him. Hus was willing to submit if he could be convinced from Scripture of error. Because this did not happen, and because he was unwilling to recant and yield to the Council, he was burned at the stake outside the walls of Constance on July 6, 1415. The same fate overtook his friend Hieronymus (Jerome) of Prague in May 1416.

Hus has sometimes been portrayed as an Czech nationalist. This is unjustified. "He was concerned only that the Czech people in their own country should have the right which is the due of every people in their fatherland."[2]

The enhancement of Czech linguistic culture and improved orthography also owed something to Hus. He cared about the Czech language because he saw in the vernacular an important instrument for the proclamation of the Word of God.

The Hussite Movement

Jan Hus' martyrdom led to the emergence of a movement which had the force of an earthquake in the church of the day and in European society. As early as the year 1414 people in Prague begun to distribute the Lord's Supper *sub utraque* (in both kinds). For this reason those who supported the movement were called Utraquists. Even the University of Prague reacted positively to its distribution *sub utraque*.

Contacts with the Waldensians

There are so many points of contact between the Hussites and the Waldensians that we sometimes hear of a Waldensian-Hussite International. Jan Hus himself probably knew the principles of the Waldensians but initially he had little sympathy for them. Only later when he was preaching in southern Bohemia to people who had been influenced by the Waldensian church did he begin to see the Waldensian way as an alternative to the prevailing church. Above all he valued highly the strict biblical approach of the Waldensians. Jakoubek (Jacobellus) also found himself positively disposed towards them, although he was concerned that the emergent Czech Reformation should remain on orthodox lines. Perhaps this circumstance led him to consider the Waldensians as mere sect after all. But from the Waldensians the Hussites learned to be willing to suffer.

An important centre of Waldensian thought was the Prague house known as "The Black Rose" ("Zur schwarzen Rose"). Here lived a group of radicals of German origin who contributed to discovering

[2] R Říčan, *Das Reich Gottes in den böhmischen Ländern*. Stuttgart, 1957. p 31.

the extent of the Waldensian diaspora, the scattered congregations in Europe. From this centre came those missionaries of the Hussite Reformation who - in line with the Waldensian view - ignored the system of local or parish churches and followed the tradition of the roving preachers of the apostolic age. One of them was Nicholas of Dresden (died 1417) whose treatise *Von der vierfachen Sendung des gepredigten Wort Gottes* ("On the Fourfold Mission of the Preached Word of God") was very well-known in Waldensian circles.

Petr Payne had also been influenced by Waldensian ideas. Thus he rejected oaths and the death penalty. (cf. his work *De juramento* - On oath). He dreamt of a close cooperation between the Hussite movement and the German Waldensians. "The disciples of the Prague school 'The Black Rose' spilt their blood for the bold idea of creating an international ecumenical community which would unite the resolute Hussites in Bohemia with the Waldensian diaspora in German-speaking countries."[3]

In the south of Bohemia Waldensian principles were linked with Hussite aims. When in 1419 pilgrimages to the mountains began, Waldensian ideas also played a part. The Hussite movement for its part had given new strength to the Waldensian groups, who were intimidated and dwindling. Both entities began to support and enrich each other.

For some time there was a plan to make use of Waldensian hiding-places and places of refuge and spread Hussite ideas in other countries. But the pressure of the Inquisition prevented this plan from being realized.

Jan Želivský

During his time the progressive movement in Prague reached its culmination. He gave the first signal for the start of the Hussite revolution. In the name of the Gospel Želivský stood on the side of the poor against the rich, on the side of simple believers against the prelates. Želivský manifested the fact that the message of the Scriptures is liberating.

He appeared when the Catholic opposition could count on the king's favor. Hus' final step asked for a decision, for before his death, Jan Hus had offered Jakoubek the chalice as a symbol. Whoever rallied around the chalice registered their loyalty to Milič of Kroměřiž and Matěj of Janov. From then on the new sovereign arbitrator would be the Scriptures.

Armed multitudes attacked the monasteries and the mansions that refused to distribute Holy Communion in both kinds. Town after town joined the Hussite movement. Radicalism had its stronghold in the countryside. The poor people longed for social change.

In the beginning this radicalism was not supported by Charles University. On Nov.11, 1417, Oddone Colonna became pope and took the name of Martin V. The king ruled that the exiled priests and monks could return. At that moment it seemed that the legacy of Hus had been entirely lost.

It is a miracle that the movement expanded into the broad masses of the countryside and urban population. The hour of Jan Želivský had arrived. He preached in the church of St. Stephen in the New Town. Because of its social composition this part of the city was driven into revolutionary action. However, he was removed from the church in the New Town at the beginning of 1419. Then the voice of Želivský was heard to echo in the church of Mary in the Snow. The pulpit became a real superpower in front of which the powerful shivered and trembled.

On July 30, 1419, Želivský preached on the need to advance from words to deeds. Following this sermon he led a procession to the Na Rybnieku church. As the procession passed by the townhall of the New Town, Želivský entered the townhall and requested the release of prisoners - all those who had been imprisoned because they received the Eucharist in both kinds. Želivský's request was rejected. But the people in the procession stormed the townhall and threw the mayor and several councillors out of the window. At this moment, Želivský was at the center of a revolutionary development in Prague. His

[3] G. Tourn, *Geschichte der Waldenser-Kirche*. Erlangen, 1980, p 72.

purifying actions were directed against the monasteries, against the brothels and against the mansions of conservative priests. The interdict pronounced by the archbishop in September 1419 was thus rendered worthless.

At the Diet which was convened in Prague, the first draft of the famous Articles of Prague was written. Želivský constantly preached in support of the first three articles. He also preached against the king who, because of sin, lost his right to the throne. The knowledge of God's will is mediated through the Scriptures which belongs not only to the priest but to all believers.

Želivský deserves much merit for the success of the revolution because he arranged for an alliance between Prague and Tabor. In the name of the Four Articles the capital city struggled against the invading crusade. Želivský was appointed administrator of the Prague armed forces and was respected as their representative.

He was chosen to be a member of the consultative body of twenty land rulers. Ideologically Želivský should have continued taking part in the victorious revolution but his days were numbered. Under the pretext of a consultation on the public good he was lured into the townhall, was imprisoned and finally beheaded. With the death of Želivský the difficult period of radicalism in Prague came to an end.

The Articles of Prague

The differences between Prague and Tabor lay in the fact that the Four Articles represented the maximum programme for Prague, whereas for the Taborites they were only the beginning. In any case, these articles were the common denominator on which the main Hussite tendencies could unite when they were under threat. The Articles demanded:

1. that the Word of God should be freely proclaimed;
2. that the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ should be dispensed in both kinds to all faithful Christians who were not in mortal sin;
3. that priests and monks should be deprived of secular authority and property and that all should be led to live exemplary lives on the model of the primitive Christian community;
4. that all mortal sins should be punished without respect for any person's status.

Like the demand for dispensing the cup, the other three Articles also express what had been the main content of the Reform movement in Bohemia ever since Milič's day: the Word of God was to be proclaimed without being restricted by man-made inventions, for the moral renewal of the clergy through the removal of worldly wealth, and for the observance of Christian moral standards for everyone."[4]

The Taborites

We must not overlook a close relationship between Jan Želivský's Prague movement and the Taborites. This community in Prague and the Tábor network grew out of the hope that the order and conditions in this world would be revolutionized under the lordship of the returning Christ. After 1410 the conviction became very strong that the ordinary people would play an outstanding part in the event of the end-time. Above all Tábor and the Taborite party nourished this hope.

The conventicles on the mountains from which the Taborite community and the League of Five Cities (Plzeň, Louny, Žatec, Slaný and Klatovy) developed, were sustained by the conviction that the Hussites were living in the last days, the decisive period of history. The eschatological message represented by the pilgrimages to the mountains, is plainly reflected in Taborite theology. In this stage, Tábor "worked out a doctrine of the church, a social theology and a theory of war which had in mind the dawning of a thousand years' imperium, i.e. chiliasm as a specific version of biblical eschatology."[5]

[4] Řičan, *Das Reich Gottes*, p 45.
[5] A. Molnár. *Valdenští*, Praha, 1973, p 202

Against this background one can understand the revolutionary choice of Mikuláš of Pelhřimov (Mikuláš Biskupec) as Taborite bishop - a choice made without regard for the demand that bishops must have genuinely obtained their office from the first apostles in an uninterrupted succession ("apostolic succession").

Those who went up from the villages and cities into the mountains in 1419 and founded there the fortified settlement of Tábor became the main tendency of the Hussite movement. F.Ilrejsa describes the Taborite position as follows:

> They were represented among the country folk and townspeople, partly also in Prague but especially among the peasants. Their concern was for a religious life following the example of the primitive apostolic church. They eliminated everything which they saw as contradicting the ordinances of Christ in Holy Scripture (orders of the mass, clerical vestments, Latin; they destroyed statues and pictures of saints and they stormed the monasteries). They acknowledged only two sacraments. They held services in private and also in open air or - when possible - also in churches. Their worship was very simple. Czech hymns were sung but the prayers, readings and exposition of Holy Scripture were also in Czech. At the Lord's Supper they did not regard the bread and wine as mere symbols but as the true presence of the body and blood of Christ. They did not however regard this presence as physical and material, as the Prague university teachers taught, but as sacramental and spiritual. Among the Taborites the Lord's Supper was also administered to small children. They pursued a simple, morally strict way of life and treated each other as brothers and sisters. They strove (at least for a time) for an economic reform with common property. They firmly rejected Sigismund as the successor to the throne of King Wenceslas IV. The royal authority should be handed over to the people - there should be no longer lords and knights. The Taborites were close to the people. They rejected the Roman Church as morally corrupt and given over to this world. They set themselves against the Roman priesthood, the bishops and the Pope. They had no interest in the ordination by Roman bishops. By choosing a bishop of their own (Mikuláš Biskupec) they made themselves independent and separated from the Roman Church, but also from the conservative Utraquist party. We have to acknowledge the consistency of the Taborites, their loyalty to principle and their resoluteness, but we must perhaps also mention their ruthlessness and relentlessness in regard to their relation to the current order. For them, who once had rejected killing, it was tragic that they in the end had to resort to arms to solve religious questions.[6]

Initially there was a certain hope that the Taborite movement would capture the soul of the entire nation. But later it was increasingly confined only to Tábor and those towns (such as Hradec Králové) with which Tábor was linked by alliance or by a similarity of views. But we must always remember that apart from Jan Želivský it was almost exclusively the Taborite movement that represented the progressive and creative elements in the Hussite movement.

As Howard Kaminsky notes, it seemed initially that all taxes and payments were to be abolished in the area controlled by the Taborites. Although this demand had a theological basis, this pattern of liberation from taxation of a city could not be put into effect after all. The treasury was administered by the new bishop Mikuláš, who had both spiritual and financial duties. In those years from 1421 to 1436 we may speak of an independent church in the towns of the Taborite league. With the help of their manifestos the Taborites made their demands known throughout Europe. A great variety of expeditions abroad served this purpose. And indeed the poor rose repeatedly against their overlords because of the Taborite demands. Many foreigners joined the Hussites. Their presence in the Hussite movement is a proof of the international character and European dimension of this new venture.

[6] F. Hrejsa. *Česká reformace*, Praha, p 6-8.

The Taborite programme

The Taborites' concern was for the renewal of the church. But their aim also meant an attack on the unjust feudal order. Tabor grew out of the hope of the poor for a readjustment of all orders under the lordship of Christ. Here the eschatological orientation of the Czech Reformation reached its zenith. The biblical message was seen as a challenging call for a move away, an exodus, from the old orders.

According to Zdeněk Nejedlý the whole world was fused into a unity for the Taborites. Everything they did in their lives was to be aligned to the truth of God. For them there was no fundamental difference between the earthly and the spiritual world. Already they advocated the view that all believers could be priests. The spiritual priesthood for them entitled every believer to preach, baptize and ordain. Appealing to Acts 2 and 4 the Taborites introduced early Christian "common property". They regarded all private property that went beyond the direct needs of the individual as robbery. In their eyes, those who had previously been of lowest social standing were capable of taking part in decisions on public affairs. Although Tabor affirmed itself as a city state, a city republic, it always retained a deep mistrust for German city law and commercial life. The Taborite movement radiated far beyond the borders of Bohemia. We have evidence of instances where the German proletariat sympathized with the Czech "heretics" (in Brandenburg, Thuringia, Bavaria, in Augsburg and Regensburg) and where German cities turned against their own bishops (Mainz, Cologne, Würzburg, Bamberg).

The most important sources of information on the Taborite position are the synods and disputations in which they defended it. In Pisek (1421) they criticized the plundering and violence that had developed during the campaigns. Perhaps it was also a criticism of Jan Žižka, who at that time went to eastern Bohemia and dissociated himself from the Taborites. At the disputation in Konopiště (1423) the question of authority was central. There already the core of what the Taborites later defended was formulated - that Christ is the sole authority in questions of faith.

At the synod of theologians from Tábor and Prague (1431) Mikulás Biskupec appeared with a detailed document representing a defence and exposition of the Taborite position. This was the famous Taborite Confession which was widely disseminated throughout Europe. This document of the Czech Reformation also testifies to the relationship between the theology of the Taborites and that of the Waldensians. "Even if we had no other sources, the *Confessio Taboritarum* would be capable of guaranteeing for the Taborites an outstanding progressive place[7] in the history of Protestant dogma."[8]

In this document there is marked criticism of the official church, rejection of extravagant sacramental piety, of many customs in worship, the doctrine of purgatory and the invocation of saints. The binding authority is Jesus Christ. He is the lawgiver in questions both of faith and of life. His simple Gospel is sufficient as a rule for the administration of the church militant. The church may take into consideration the teaching of the Councils and Church Fathers only if their pronouncements rest expressly on the basis of the biblical tradition. This principle was briefly asserted in the negotiations between the Taborites and the representatives of the Council of Basle (1433).

It seems that the military victory of the Hussites at Domažlice (1431) over the army of the Fifth Crusade led by Cardinal Cesarini compelled the Council of Basle to enter into negotiations with the Czech "heretics". But before the Hussites decided to go to Basle they made some arrangements for their safety with the representatives of the Council. In May 1432 they negotiated for ten days in Eger (Cheb). The outcome was a success for the Czechs and especially for the Taborites. The Council undertook to observe eleven principles in the negotiations. This was the condition for the Hussites' participation in the Council. The most important stipulation was: "As to the four Articles they advocate, this Council in Basle will have as its basis the law of God, the practice of Christ, the apostolic and primitive church together with the Councils and doctors who genuinely are founded on them."

[7] Molnár Amedeo, *Pohyb teologického myšlení*. Praha 1982, p 253.
[8] Macek Josef, *The Hussite Movement in Bohemia*. Maryknoll Orbis NY, 1958, p 84n.

This agreement entered history as the *judex compactatus in Egra*, the judgement of Cheb. According to J. Macek this document represented a tremendous breakthrough or "breach in the Catholic system of dogma". For the first time in history the representatives of the Catholic Church recognized a higher authority over them than the Pope and Council - that is, the authority of Holy Scripture. The representatives of the Council then strove to appease the Hussites with the "pious" reference to the Holy Spirit as the real *judex* or arbiter. But the Hussites wanted to tie the working of the Holy Spirit to the words of Christ as these are attested in the New Testament.

The Council of Basle (1431-1449)

At the beginning of 1433 the Hussites came to Basle. They were led by Prokop Holý, the famous and feared general who in his early years had been one of the most radical priests in Tabor and had led the Hussite army from one victory to another after Žižka's death. In the Czech delegation along with Jan Rokycana were all the other representatives of the Taborite tendency (Miku1áš of Pelhřimov, Oldřich of Znojmo, Petr Payne). In passing, it may be mentioned that a further condition for Hussite participation in the Council was the closing of the brothels in the city. The task of the Hussites was to defend the Four Articles of Prague to the Council. The Czech deputation wanted the renewal of the whole church, but certainly not separation from the church. On the basis of the Bible every Christian could judge the life of the church, of the priests and of the whole of society. Christ's claim is also directed towards the life of society. It was not for the church to govern. This task was in the hands of the secular authorities.

The Czechs denounced the fact that the church and the priests had great wealth at their disposal. That violated the commands of Christ. The church should give up its great possessions. Indirectly this was a challenge to a fundamental alteration in the ecclesiastical and secular order. Instead of the church dominated by priests the Taborites wanted to establish a charismatic church, that is, a church of believers, controlled by the Spirit. But they also called for the removal of the theocratic structure of society, that is, a form of state in which religious bodies claim to rule the state in the name of God. That demand was of course completely unacceptable to the Council. Only in the question of the cup were the princes of the church finally willing to make a concession.

The negotiations in Basle and their sequel produced new conflicts in the relations between the Utraquists and the Taborites. This was certainly also the intention of the diplomats of the Council. The agreements of Basle and Prague, where a commission of the Council negotiated further on the Four Articles, the result of which was called the *compactata* or Compromise Agreements, ultimately granted the Czechs only the distribution of the Lord's Supper in both kinds. The conservative party of the Hussites was content with that. The more radical Hussites, led by Rokycana, had objections. They demanded that at the suggestion of the Council the Czech Catholics should also celebrate communion in both kinds. Furthermore they wanted to obtain distribution of the Lord's Supper to small children too. The radical Taborites and the "Orphanites" (Žižka's party after his death) saw in the *compactata* a betrayal of their life's struggle. They had the vision of a free church shaped in accordance with Holy Scripture and the Spirit of Christ.

At the moment when the external danger and threat to the Hussite movement were no longer acute, tensions within the two main tendencies of the movement came to a head. In the end the conflict between Prague and Tábor was decided by war. This took place in the battle of Lipany on May 30, 1434 from which Prague conservatives emerged as victors.

Jan Rokycana and the Taborites

Jan Rokycana was the archbishop of the Hussites. He took the middle ground position which was close to the opinions of the city of Prague. He was present at the Council of Basle and defended the broad principles of the Hussites. At the Council he spoke as the first and explained why it was necessary

to receive the Eucharist in both kinds. His opponent on the Catholic side was Jan of Dubrovník (Stojkovič). However, Jan Rokycana was never accepted and approved as the head of the Hussite Church by the Roman Curia.

Jan Rokycana dealt with the errors of the Taborites in a manuscript which was aptly entitled by Antonín Podlaha *"De septem culpis Taboritarum"* (On the Seven Acts of Guilt of the Taborites). He argues as follows:

1. The Taborites do not recognize some sacraments. They argue that they were not sanctioned by Christ nor by the apostles.
2. The Taborites do harm to the living and to the dead because they do not pray for the souls of the dead.
3. The Taborites forbid prayers of intercession to the saints and to the Virgin Mary.
4. The Taborites reject ecclesiastical fasting. They are at fault when people succumb to gluttony.
5. Biskupec and his followers reject the Mass. Rokycana criticizes the custom of celebrating Holy Supper without a liturgical robe. He quotes many authorities against the objections of the Taborites that the Mass is not biblical.
6. Rokycana objects to the fact that the Taborite priests do not condemn the conduct of wars and armed conflicts. They are even said to praise war as being creditable.
7. Rokycana attacks the fact that the Taborite priests participate in the political administration of the communities. One article among the Articles of Prague explicitly states that priests may not take political office in government. The task of priests is to pray for both sides in a conflict.

In the *Confessio Taboritarum* the Taborites' reply to Rokycana's accusations and state the Taborite principles:

1. Christ is the foundation of every judgement pertaining to a Christian.
2. His Law is sufficient unto itself for the administration of the Church. No one on a pilgrimage to the heavenly motherland needs to add a new law. This Law claims to be the highest degree of authority, usefulness and respect. It is necessary that the body of the church accept the teachings coming from the head and that one member may communicate it to another.
3. God gave a law to this flock and this law is sufficient for each step in the church's ranking system.
4. The statements of the saintly teachers who came after the apostles do not have the authority of the ecclesiastical dogmas - except if Christ speaks through them.
5. If someone pretends to eloquence as a saint he should not act in an authoritative and obligatory manner.
6. We must refer to the witness of the Holy Scripture. The Holy Scripture is the rule of faith. We should not believe the words or customs of any saint unless they are in accordance with Christ.
7. Any proof that is formulated without regard to the Scriptures and which is based only on the witness of the Councils and on the witness of the teachers is not sufficient.

Petr Chelčický

When Rokycana saw that his followers needed a further support for their spiritual growth he directed them to Petr Chelčický. Chelčický represents a bridge between Taborite thought and the Unity of Brethren which found itself in the process of creation. The further development of the Czech Reformation was very strongly influenced by Petr Chelčický. It is important to see his close connection with early

Taborite ideas. Although he opposed the Taborites, fundamentally he remained close to his Taborite starting point. According to A. Molnár, Chelčický combined the central Waldensian motifs with Reformation thinking as this appeared in the works of Matěj of Janov, Wycliffe, Hus Jakoubek, and by Tomáš Štítný.

Chelčický was born around 1380. As early as the beginning of the Hussite movement Chelčický was already looking for an answer to the question of the admissibility of using violence in defence of the gospel. On this issue he diverged from Jakoubek and rejected the use of force for advancing the gospel. Referring to chapter 6 of the letter to the Ephesians, he stressed that the struggle was spiritual. His resistance to the use of force brought him into conflict with Tábor.

Nor did he agree with the Taborites regarding the Lord's Supper. In this matter he rather followed Jakoubek. Chelčický's biblicism was typical of him. For him only the authority of Holy Scripture, which points to Christ, was binding. His critical relation to the dogma of the church and the teaching of the Early Fathers made it possible for him to have an independent understanding of the Bible. Faith for him meant obedience to the inmost recesses of the human being. Faith did not need to be defended by worldly might. With his criticism of the institutionalized church and the sacraments (cf. *Zprdvy o svdtostech)* Chelčický opened the way to a new understanding of the church. He longed for a return to the authentic significance and spiritual content of the sacraments. Although he accepted a distinction between priests and laity, he cooperated in the creation of the principle of the universal priesthood.

Chelčický rejected chiliasm, the doctrine of the coming of a thousand years' rule of God. The church was to live in hope and give up everything for Christ's sake - even the external "guarantee" of its existence. To follow the path of discipleship meant a life under the cross of Christ and in suffering. In this he remained faithful to the Waldensian tradition, which greatly appealed to him. The law of Christ was sufficient to guide the people of God. State laws and the coercive power of the state were for him a necessary evil in a pagan world. But he saw the greatest evil in a Christian state, that is, in the linking of the power of the state with the power of the church.

Chelčický with his sharp criticism turned not only against the church and its orders but also against culture, civilization and the secular laws. Usually his rejection of war and violence are stressed, but perhaps even more radical was his frontal attack on the whole structure of feudal society and its division into three estates (nobles, priests and subjects). Chelčický stood by the views of the early peasant-plebeian Taborite movement even when Tábor began to abandon its original programme. He took the view that there are no direct relations between the people of God, who are and remain a minority, and the world, which administers itself by its own laws and ordinances.

Chelčický's great merit lies in the fact that he asserted his thinking, which was oriented solely to Christ, into the sphere of the social structure also. The medieval idea of *corpus Christianum*, a Christian state, was an attempt to link church and world, Christian faith and the sphere of culture. Chelčický rejected this radically and drew a sharp distinction, separating the two levels. It was his merit that the Hussite revolution not only effected an upheaval in medieval thinking and in ecclesiastical structures, but that the social order then existing was subjected to an acute analysis and critique which was unparalleled in its radical nature.

Those who wanted to obey the law of Christ must break with the world. It was not possible to remain on the path of Christian discipleship and at the same time to practice "the law of the State". A group of brothers and sisters - the Unity - who revered him as their spiritual leader - drew the logical conclusions from this thinking after Chelčický's death around 1450. The Unity of Brethren, which was a combination of various groups and individuals primarily guided by the ideas of Chelčický, was founded in the year 1457.

REFORMING AND PROPHETIC MOVEMENTS IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY: SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORIC PEACE CHURCH WITNESS -

Donald F. Durnbaugh

Introduction

Though popularized as late as 1935, the term "Historic Peace Churches" represents a reality that has long existed. It customarily is applied to three church bodies with varied doctrinal bases and historical origins. These are the Anabaptists/Mennonites (emerging from the Radical Reformation of the 16th century), the Religious Society of Friends (emerging from Radical Puritanism of the 17th century), and the Church of the Brethren (emerging from Radical Pietism in the 18th century).

Despite these divergent historical inceptions, they have had numerous relationships over the years and have been seen by outsiders as belonging together, as those sharing sufficient common identities and stances vis-à-vis the broader society to be thought as one entity.[1]

In fact, they have for several centuries found themselves linked in many common causes for one basic reason: all three hold an official and consistent peace witness (nonresistance), commonly evidenced in conscientious objection to involvement in militaristic and coercive agencies and actions. This nonconformist belief has often brought with it, from the 16th century to the present, varying degrees of repression from governmental authorities and the general society, ranging from agonizing forms of execution, to expulsion, to imprisonment, to financial exaction, to societal pressure and exclusion.[2]

This stance is still strictly held as a test of membership by smaller divisions of each tradition, as was historically the case for all in the past, but is no longer uniformly demanded by most Mennonite, Quaker, or Brethren bodies. Impatient peace advocates within these groups occasionally question whether the appellation as "Peace Churches" may still be held with integrity, given the diversity within the membership. However, the identification is still tenable both as historical fact and also because even in the case of members who are no longer able in conscience to follow the tradition personally, there is strong conviction that the official testimony of the body must remain stable.[3]

The neatness of the tripartite origin - Anabaptists/Mennonites as Radical Reformers of the sixteenth, Friends as Radical Puritans of the seventeenth, and Brethren as Radical Pietists of the 18th century - is basically accurate but must be qualified. Scholars have observed strong affiliation of Mennonites with Pietism, have seen Friends as the logical outgrowth of Anabaptism, and Brethren as an amalgam of Pietism and Anabaptism. For that matter, Anabaptism and Pietism as ideal types have considerable overlay and in some ways reinforce each other in their essential appeal for liberty of conscience in religious matters, for integration of belief and conduct, and for separation of church and state.[4]

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[1] Brief historical sketches of these bodies are found in Donald F. Durnbaugh, *The Believers Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1985), originally published (New York/London: Macmillan Co. 1968). Concise description is also found in: Donald F. Durnbaugh and Sara Speicher, "Historic Peace Churches", *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, revised edition (Geneva: WCC Publications 2002), pp 521-522; Donald F. Durnbaugh, "Why They Call Them the Peace Churches", *One World* (December, 1977): pp 18-20; Dale W. Brown, "Peace and the Peace Churches: Re-Examining a Heritage", in *Where the Spirit Leads: American Denominations Today*, ed. Martin E. Marty (Atlanta: John Knox Press 1980), pp 57-67.

[2] Introductions to the histories are: Cornelius J. Dyck, *An Introduction to Mennonite History*, third edition (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1993); John Punshon, *Portrait in Grey: A Short History of the Quakers* (London: Quaker Home Service 1984); Donald F. Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine: A History of the Brethren, 1708-1995* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 1997).

[3] Among the wealth of literature about the peace positions of the Mennonites, Friends, and Brethren, see: Peter Brock, *Freedom from Violence: Sectarian Nonresistance from the Middle Ages to the Great War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991); Albert N. Keim and Grant M. Stoltzfus, *The Politics of Conscience: The Historic Peace Churches and America at War, 1917-1955* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988); Dale W. Brown, *Biblical Pacifism*, second edition (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press / Nappanee, IN: Evangel Press 2003), a revision of *Biblical Pacifism: A Peace Church Perspective* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 1986).

[4] Much has been written about the connection between the two movements. Mennonite writers often see Pietism as an individualistic movement that weakens the strong disciple covenant of original Anabaptism. For a summary statement, consult Carl F. Bowman,

Another qualification of the identification of the term "Historic Peace Churches" with Mennonites, Friends, and Brethren is that other communions besides these three may with justification consider themselves to be "historic peace churches." This would be the case, for example, of the Waldensians for at least major parts of their history, of the Unitas Fratrum in its early years (as well as in its later form as the Renewed Moravian Church well into the 18th century), of Apostolic Christians or Nazarenes into modern times, and of communitarian associations of Anabaptist or Radical Pietist orientation such as the Hutterian Brethren, the Bruderhof, the Harmony Society and the Separatist Society of Zoar.

Comparable assessment could also be made, at least in part, of any number of dissenting bodies, such as the Christian or Plymouth Brethren, the Disciples of Christ, and many Pentecostal groups, all of which maintain strong commitment as New Testament churches. Although most Christian bodies through most centuries have held to the classic Just War ethic, there have been persistent minorities within these larger established churches contending for the validity of the peace position, based upon the teachings and witness of Jesus and of the early church.[5]

Because of the sweeping nature of the assigned topic, it is impossible here to do justice to it in any comprehensive way. Rather, what will be presented is a sampling of incidents or events intended to illustrate the ways in which the Historic Peace Churches separately or together have demonstrated prophetic and reforming tendencies. The method will be of recounting vignettes thought to portray characteristic stances and convictions. Following a selective interpretation in turn of salient approaches of Anabaptists / Mennonites, Friends and Brethren, attention will be directed to cooperative action deemed relevant to the topic; the paper will then be concluded by some suggestions of specific ways in which the Historic Peace Churches have impacted both church and society.

The Historic Peace Church Contributions

The Anabaptist/Mennonite Movement

Because of the great upsurge of research and publication about the Radical Reformers, beginning some two generations ago by friendly outsiders such as Roland H. Bainton and George Huntston Williams in the USA and Ernest A. Payne, Fritz Blanke and the editors of the *Täuferakten* in Europe, there is little need to sketch again the ways in which the once-condemned "Bolsheviks of the Reformation" have been rehabilitated and positively re-assessed. No longer customarily written off in the discussions of mainstream Protestant histories as *Schwärmer* (fanatics) who introduced the "Deformation" of the 16th century in stark contrast to the main-line Reformation, the Anabaptist movement has become a respected and accepted branch of the broader Reformation era. A number of high-ranking ecumenical symposia between Mennonites, as the direct descendants of the Anabaptists, and major Christian communions – Roman Catholic, Reformed, and Lutheran – document this shift in reputation.

A major reason for this change in perception arises from the different context in which once proud communions find themselves in a post-modern world. The assessment made some forty years ago in one typically long sentence by George Huntston Williams is today even more cogent:

> "Again in our own times, when, in a new context at once secular and ecumenical, the European state churches are being disestablished, the large churchlike American denominations are being reorganized, and the younger churches of Asia and Africa are being challenged by renascent ethnic religions and the international religion of the proletariat [for which we could now substitute resurgent Islam], when, in short, the mission of the churches everywhere is being reconceived in a basically hostile or alienated environment, Christians of many denominations are finding themselves

Brethren Society: The Cultural Transformation of a "Peculiar People" (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press 1995), pp 46-50.

[5] See the essays in Theron F. Schlabach and Richard T. Hughes, eds., *Proclaim Peace: Christian Pacifism from Unexpected Quarters* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press 1997).

> constitutionally and in certain other ways closer to the descendants of the despised sectaries of the Reformation Era than to the classical defenders of a reformed *corpus christianum*."[6]

Mennonites, as did the Friends and Brethren after them, emphasized church discipline; this flowed naturally from the covenants made freely by those joining their congregations, in the expectation that brotherly/sisterly admonition would be forthcoming and welcomed. Because of their rejection of coercion in religious affairs, they understood that the farthest reach of their discipline was exclusion from church life and public acknowledgment of this distancing.[7]

The Religious Society of Friends

After the Anabaptist movement, often identified as the beginning of the Free Church or Believers Church, came the Religious Society of Friends, members of which took the concept of religious liberty so far that they proscribed in large measure or down-sized customary liturgies, church practices, doctrines, systems of polity and ministerial status. In their places they created unstructured meetings for worship, led often turbulent public meetings for open discussions to identify "seekers", and sent representatives widely to preach and convict. They developed informal means of authority with persons tested by experience sometimes known as "weighty Friends".

If one hallmark of Anabaptism/Mennonitism was the concept and practice of the Believers Church, one orientation that may be isolated as a characteristic of the Friends' movement was social outreach and reform. After pacifism, the out-workings of Quaker "concerns" in ameliorating social problems and generating societal reforms is that aspect of Quaker life and practice most generally attributed to the movement by observers.

Whether it was in the area of reform of the outrageous conditions in London's Newgate Prison under Elizabeth Fry's ministrations in 1813, of the creation of mental hospitals with William Tukes in York, England in 1796, of pressure for the abolition of slavery under Anthony Benezet and John Woolman in colonial North America, of the model towns for industrial workers in England created by the Quaker Fry, Cadbury, and Rowntree families in the later 19th century, to long-standing concern for Native Americans in the USA, the ameliorative contributions of Friends has been noteworthy and widely recognized. Some believe that this outstanding record flows from a basic Quaker tenet, the understanding that there is that of God in every person. That being the case, then concern and care for the downtrodden follows naturally.[8]

This was well expressed in 1947 when the American Friends Service Committee, along with the Friends Service Council (UK), were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The Norwegian chairman of the award committee expressed this sentiment in these words (again reflecting the masculine language of the era):

> "The fact that the Quakers have refused to take part in war has led many people to believe that this is the essential part of their religion… [Rather] it is the silent help from the nameless to the nameless which is their contribution to the promotion of brotherhood among nations... This is the message of good deeds, the message that men can come into contact with one another in spite of war and in spite of difference or race."9
>
> He continued:

[6] George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press 1962), p 31.
[7] See on this topic, Marlin Jeschke, *Discipling in the Church: Recovering a Ministry of the Gospel* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1988).
[8] Bacon, *Quiet Rebels* (1985), pp 122-150; Howard Brinton, *Friends for 300 Years: The History and Beliefs of the Society of Friends Since George Fox Started the Quaker Movement* (New York: Harper & Bros. 1952), pp 144-174.
[9] Quoted in Margaret Hope Bacon, *The Quiet Rebels: The Story of the Quakers in America* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers 1985), 190-191; Clarence E. Pickett, *For More Than Bread: An Autobiographical Account of Twenty-Two Years' Work with the American Friends Service Committee* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1953), pp 305-307; Irwin Abrams, "Clarence Pickett, the AFSC, and the Society of Friends", *Friends Journal* (April, 1991), pp 24-25.

> "Even if the statesmen succeed in constructing a better international order, it will not have a firm foundation if man has not imbibed the true spirit of fellowship. How to achieve that, is the great question. We know that it can be done. We have seen that a small group of people [i.e., Quakers] has demonstrated in a practical way the spirit which does away with the occasion of war and shown that unselfishness and goodness exist..."[10]

The Church of the Brethren

Much the same can be said of the early Brethren, who rejected all creeds but the New Testament as their guide for faith and practice, held informal gatherings for prayer, spiritual songs, and teachings. In this process they discerned among their number those who held gifts of pastoral ability; having discerned such aptitude, they laid hands on them as self-supporting leaders to guide the flock and conduct what they called ordinances, including especially a three-fold immersion baptism of those considered to be truly converted. This practice earned for them the nickname of "Dunkers".

A characteristic feature of Brethren life and practice has been mutual aid in its broadest understandings. In the first instance, mutual aid was understood as communal care for the spiritual health of co-members, through admonition and the practice of church discipline for the purpose of restoration of those found to be erring in doctrine or behavior.

Mutual aid was then extended to the realm of the physical. A basic concept was that material goods were to be held by each member only on a provisional manner, with each believer always ready to share or give them to whoever had more need of them. A Brethren leader in colonial Pennsylvania phrased it this way:

> "To this extent, 'mine' and 'yours' may be spoken on this basis, that this is mine and that is yours to administer and keep until a time of need for the poor and suffering in and outside of the congregation. To love one's neighbor as one's self shows clearly what communion is. Thus it behooves him who has two coats to give to him who has none, and he who has food, let him do the same (Luke 3)."[11]

With this concept of stewardship of material goods, it is not surprising that Brethren history is replete with stories of assistance to needy members, neighbors, and finally to those suffering in distant locations. Examples from Civil War times in the USA may illustrate. In the irony often presented by history, two of the bloodiest battles of the fratricidal conflict of the 1860s were fought largely on land owned by non-resistant Brethren farmers, at Antietam, MD, and Gettysburg, PA. In both cases, concerted informal actions took place among Brethren congregations, after the guns were stilled, to tend wounded soldiers and to raise funds to aid civilians suffering from the two battles. Directions given to those Brethren administering these supplies mandated that recipients should be aided regardless of religious affiliation.[12]

A remarkable burst of creativity in aid transpired among Brethren in the post-World War II era. Sparked by leaders such as M. R. Zigler, Dan West, Martha Rupel (Gilbert), Helena Kruger, and others, the Brethren (who numbered about 200,000 adult members in North America at that time) mounted a surprisingly large and effective series of programs of relief and rehabilitation on a world-wide basis. Among these creations were CROP, the Heifer Project, high-school youth exchange (ICYE), and others, programs still active and growing after more than fifty years.[13]

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[10] Quoted in Donald F. Durnbaugh, "War and Patriotism from Historic Peace Church Perspective", in *Nonviolent America: History Through the Eyes of Peace*, eds., Louise Hawkley and James C. Juhnke (North Newton, KS: Bethel College 1993), p 186.
[11] Quoted in Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren in Colonial America* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 1967), p 453. On the broader topic, see Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *Every Need Supplied: Mutual Aid and Christian Community in the Free Churches, 1525-1675* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1974).
[12] Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine* (1997), pp 287-290.
[13] See J. Kenneth Kreider, *A Cup of Cold Water: The Story of Brethren Service* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 2001) and M. R. Zigler and others, *To Serve the Present Age: The Brethren Service Story*, ed. Donald F. Durnbaugh (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 1975).

The Quaker writer and philosopher, D. Elton Trueblood remarked about the record of the Brethren as reported in a survey of the work of the umbrella church agency, Church World Service (itself partially initiated by Brethren). The latter had both proportionally and in actuality contributed more material supplies and funds than even much larger communions. According to Trueblood: "When I talked to my wife about the tremendous record of the Brethren… she replied that they didn't have to spend money on cathedrals… Christ is not reported to have said anything about the duty of erecting fine structures, but he is reported as saying, 'As you did it to the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.'"[14]

Cooperative Actions

It was at first in colonial North America that all three groups – Mennonites, Quakers, Brethren – came into close encounter. There had, however, been a previous brief interlude in the German town of Krefeld on the Lower Rhine River. In the late 17th century, because of its relative tolerance, Krefeld became an asylum for Mennonite refugees. Through their skills in the textile industry, they brought prosperity to the town. Traveling Quaker missionary leaders sought with considerable success to win converts among these like-minded people. In fact, it was largely among former Mennonites who had become Friends that the much-heralded migration to Pennsylvania took place in 1683, the first mass migration (but not the first movement of Germans *per se*) of Germans to North America. In the early 18th century, Brethren driven from the Wetterau region, found asylum among the Mennonites in Krefeld. They were often called *Neu-Täufer* or "New Baptists", to distinguish them from the Mennonites, whom they closely resembled.

A curious quatrain written in Latin in 1724-25 by the principal of the local *Gymnasium* commented on the diversity of religious belief; it read: "Papa, Moses, Pennus / Calvinus, Menno, Lutherus / una in Crefyfelda / varium cantant alleluja". This was translated into Dutch by a Reformed pastor as: "Reformeerden en Papisten / Lutheranen en Mennisten / Dompelaars en Abrams Soonen / t'samen nu in Kreyfeld woonen." An English translation might be: "Lutheran and Mennonite / Catholic and Israelite / Calvinist and New Baptist / All in Krefeld now exist."[15]

Nevertheless, it was especially in colonial Pennsylvania that the three groups had their first intensive interaction. Over time many Mennonites and Brethren were specifically invited by William Penn and his agents to settle in Penn's Woods; they were known as solid and industrious workers who would add economic benefits to the young colony. Having lived under various forms and degrees of repression in the Old World, by emigrating they could live their faith better in Pennsylvania and also contribute to Pennsylvania's welfare. After the 1683 departure from Krefeld, further shiploads of dissenters sought religious refuge and economic opportunity in the colony and to some extent in the neighboring Quaker-led colony of New Jersey.

Even after mass migration of settlers other than Quakers made the latter a numerical minority in Pennsylvania, Friends retained for many decades their control of government. Mennonites and Brethren departed from their usual reluctance to be involved in politics by voting to uphold the Quaker bloc in the Pennsylvania assembly. They were strengthened in this determination by the published advice of Johann Christoph Sauer I, the influential printer in Germantown, north of Philadelphia. Although as a strict separatist he never actually joined the Brethren ranks, Sauer was very close to them in many ways, attended their meetings for worship, and defended their cause in his newspapers.[16]

Opposing politicians recognized this reality of sectarian support for the Quaker bloc and violently opposed it. A witness to the election of 1742 reported that "on the Day of election a great number of Dutch [i.e. Germans] appeared for the Quakers,… […U]pon this a number of Sailors… came

[14] Quoted in Zigler, *Present Age* (1975), p 10.
[15] Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *European Origins of the Brethren* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 1958), p 216.

up to the market street[,] clubbs in their hands[,] knocked down all that stood in their way or did not fly before them and blood flew plentifully[,] the sailors crying out "Down with the plain Coats and Broad Brims." Similarly, in 1755 an opponent of the Quaker party reported that "the Germans, who had hitherto continued peaceful, without meddling in elections, came down in Shoals, and carried all before them. Near 1800 voted in the county of Philadelphia, which threw the balance on the side of the Quakers..." Somewhat later the same faction threatened to thrash "Quakers and Mennonists to Jelly", asking poll-watchers to be especially careful that no Mennonite or German be admitted who had not been naturalized: "If you discover any persons attempting to vote without being naturalized or voting twice, you would at that moment deliver him up to the mob to chastize him."[17]

In 1756, after war was declared and the Quaker assemblymen could no longer legislate in good faith on military issues (or became tired of the hypocrisy of voting money "for the Queen's use") most Quaker assembly-men walked out en masse. Nevertheless, cooperation among the peace churches did not flag; if anything, it increased in intensity. Considering that legitimate Native American grievances lay at the heart of the frontier disturbances then troubling the commonwealth, the Quakers founded the (rather typically named) "Friendly Association for Gaining and Preserving Peace with the Indians by Pacific Measures", the program for which agency was provided in the title. Quakers explained that they were willing to expend "a much larger part of our estate than the heaviest taxes of a war can be expected to require."[18]

They gave funds to aggrieved Indians and arranged a series of conferences of colonials and Indians seeking to allay military action. Quakers were stalwartly aided in this enterprise by substantial donations especially from Mennonites but also from Brethren.

In its beginning the conflict was called the "French and Indian War", but was in fact just the North American phase of an international imperial conflict involving most of the European powers and their overseas colonies; it was generally known as the Seven Years War (1756-1763).

Cooperation continued as the border conflicts eventually segued into the American Revolution. Members of all three bodies tried to remain neutral, but the inevitable dynamic of American insurgency and attempted British suppression drew them into the struggle. As Pennsylvania Friends sought to introduce their peace witness among German settlers, they contracted with the press of Christopher Sauer III and his brother Peter (the third generation of printers in Germantown).

In another publishing effort, Samuel Smith, who was writing a history of Friends in Pennsylvania, was encouraged to describe religious entities with peace testimonies; this should include Mennonites, he was advised, who were thought to have fifty places of worship in the colony, as well as the "several smaller sects [such] as Dumplers [i.e., Dunkers] and Pietists", understood to be "a People coming mostly from Germany, who have many meetings for Worship both in Germany and here, besides a great part of the Moravians."[19]

Documentary evidence of cooperation was provided by the combined Mennonite/Brethren petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly of 1775, which was published then both in English and German and in modern times often republished. After expressing appreciation for rights enjoyed in the past, the signers (again using what readers now reject as sexist language) asserted that they had

> "dedicated [themselves] to serve Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men's Lives, but we find no Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men's Lives are destroyed or hurt… We are always ready,

[16] On Sauer and the Brethren, see Durnbaugh, *Colonial America* (1967), pp 377-423.
[17] Citations to the original sources are provided in Donald F. Durnbaugh, "Relationships of the Brethren with the Mennonites and Quakers", *Church History* 35 (March, 1966), pp 35-59.
[18] Among the many descriptions of these events, see Richard Bauman, *For the Reputation of Truth: Politics, Religion, and Conflict among the Pennsylvania Quakers, 1750-1800* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 1971) and Hermann Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik in Pennsylvania 1681-1776: Die Wandlungen der Obrigkeitsdoktrin und des* Peace Testimony *der Quäker* (Köln: Bohlau Verlag 1972).
[19] Durnbaugh, "Relationships" (1966), p 16.

> according to Christ's Command to Peter, to pay the Tribute, that we may offend no Man, and so we are willing to pay Taxes... We are also willing to be subject to the Higher Powers, and to give in the manner Paul directs us, For He [meaning the officer of the state] beareth the Sword not in vain. This Testimony we lay down before our Worthy Assembly... letting them know that… we are not at liberty in Conscience to take up Arms to conquer our Enemies, but rather to pray to God, who has power in Heaven and on Earth, for Us and Them."[20]

This drawing together of leaders of the Historic Peace Churches is an early example of a pattern often seen later; in wartime, the peace groups coalesce and cooperate, whereas during peace times, they are often satisfied to go their own ways, with infrequent meeting and fellowship, and even occasional friction.

Such amicable contacts and assistance were not limited to North America. During the 19th century British Friends repeatedly visited Mennonite colonies in Russia and the Ukraine. They intervened on the highest level of Russian government when the Czarist regime threatened to renege on the earlier promises made to Mennonite settlers that they would be freed forever from military training and service. The British businessman and philanthropist William Allen (a partner in the reform movement of Robert Owen) was particularly active in this regard in 1819 and 1832. When in 1870 the Russian government insisted on military service, other Quakers helped many Mennonites to emigrate to North America.[21]

Another striking example of peace church cooperation took place toward the end and following the Great War (1914-1918) in France and Germany. The newly-organized American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) created a "Reconstruction Unit" to restore housing in devastated France at the invitation of the American Red Cross. (Earlier the Friends Ambulance Service and the War Victims Relief Committee sponsored by British Friends had done extensive work in the war-torn country.) In 1918 the Red Cross asked the AFSC to supply another large contingent of workers, no less than three hundred persons. Faced with this challenge, the American Friends asked the Mennonites and Brethren to help. Both groups replied positively. Cooperation was such that by the fall of 1918 it was felt appropriate and necessary to add Mennonite and Brethren representatives on the Executive Board of the AFSC.[22]

Yet another example of cooperation took place in Spain during the Civil War of the mid-1930s. English and American Friends working on both sides of the front in Spain called for aid. Brethren volunteers in the USA responded. One of them was Dan West, who there had the vision of what later became the oddly-named but very effective program, Heifer Project International, a highly respected non-governmental agency (NGO) with a world-wide outreach.[23] By 1994, more than one million families in 110 nations and 35 states in the USA had been assisted, by that time involving not only cattle but rather a large range of animals, from bees to water-buffalo, always relevant to local needs.[24]

Impact upon the Church

The argument could be made that the Historic Peace Churches, although very modest in size compared to such communions as the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Churches, or even the Southern Baptist denomination, have had an impact far beyond their numbers. In the broadest sense, there

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[20] On these issues, see especially Richard K. MacMaster and others, eds., *Conscience in Crisis: Mennonites and Other Peace Churches in America, 1739-1789: Interpretation and Documents* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1979), esp. pp 266-267. See also Durnbaugh, *Colonial America* (1967), pp 362-365.

[21] John Ormerod Greenwood, *Quaker Encounters: Volume 1, Friends and Relief: A Study of Two Centuries of Quaker Activity in the Relief of Suffering Caused by War or Natural Calamity* (York, UK: William Sessions Limited 1975), pp 98-99; Owen Gingerich, "Relations Between the Russian Mennonites and the Friends During the Nineteenth Century", *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 25 (October, 1951), pp 283-295.

[22] J. William Frost, "'Our Deeds Carry Our Message': The Early History of the American Friends Service Committee", *Quaker History* 81 (Spring 1992): 1-51; see also J. William Frost and Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press 1988), pp 257-260.

[23] Glee Yoder, *Passing on the Gift: The Story of Dan West* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 1978); Dan West, "Cooperation with the AFSC in Spain", in Zigler, *Present Age* (1975), 107-110; Kermit Eby, *The God in You* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1954), pp 43-54.

[24] Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine* (1997), pp 463-465; Bill Beck and Mel West, eds., *Cowboy Memories: Published in Honor of the Seagoing Cowboys, Air Attendants, and Truckers of HPI Animals – On the Fiftieth Anniversary of Heifer Project International* (Little Rock, AR: Heifer Project International 1944).

is currently evidence of widespread respect for the divergent ecclesiology of the groups, so often in the past relegated to the rubric of sects and troublesome dissenters. There is a story of a dignified Anglican bishop speaking to a member of one of the Historic Peace Churches in an early ecumenical setting. "How glorious it is", remarked the prelate, "that we can all worship God, you in your way and we in God's."

In the sake of brevity, we will focus the discussion of impact upon the church on one example, the persistent effort of the Historic Peace Churches on behalf of peace within the ecumenical movement, and specifically within the World Council of Churches (WCC). This was not always easy, because only the American Friends, the Church of the Brethren, and Dutch and German Mennonites joined the council, with many of their co-religionists outside the fold.

One of the most thoughtful representatives of the Historic Peace Churches, although his own church was not a member, participated actively in the WCC, often as an invited consultant. This was the late Mennonite theologian and ethicist John Howard Yoder (1927-1997), who himself wrote a chronicle of these interchanges from 1948 through 1986, published as an appendix to a recent HPC statement, *A Declaration on Peace: In God's People the World's Renewal Has Begun* (1991). Many of the relevant documents are found for the period 1948 through 1975 in the source book *On Earth Peace: Discussions on War/Peace Issues Between Friends, Mennonites, Brethren and European Churches, 1935-1975* (1978).[25]

It would take too long to trace all of the stages in this process. The Historic Peace Churches took the initial step by responding to the appeal of the founding Amsterdam Assembly of the WCC (1948) to theologians to resolve the "trilemma" of three contrasting answers by churches to the problem of Christians and war. They first submitted a booklet with their individual statements on peace, using as its title the Assembly's phrase, *War Is Contrary to the Will of God* (1951). When admonished that a unified statement was needed, they came back with *Peace Is the Will of God* (1953), further elaborated in the publication, *God Establishes Both Peace and Justice* (1955).[26]

The next stage was a most interesting one. Seeking to sharpen their presentation in order to engage European theologians more directly, the Historic Peace Churches convened a study conference in the Swiss church retreat at Puidoux in the late summer of 1955. To help in the process, they invited some noted European theologians, some with a peace orientation and some critics, to participate. As the call for the meeting at Puidoux stated, the intent was "to attain a greater degree of unity in theological viewpoint among Christians who hold or sympathize closely with the Christian pacifist position, and to do this in the context of an ecumenical conversation on a broader scale."[27]

To the surprise of the participants, this original objective for the meeting was largely set aside, in favor of a robust theological encounter; this has been called both by the Lutheran church official, *Oberkirchenrat* Heinz Kloppenburg, who chaired the meeting, and Mennonite conference planner, Albert J. Meyer, as the first extended theological discussions between the Historic Peace Churches and the official churches of Central Europe since the 16th century. Several of the German discussants reported that the intensity of discussion rivaled those they had encountered in the debates within the Confessing Church.

Participants agreed on a final statement which asserted, among other points: "With thankfulness and rejoicing we report that we have discovered again in a concrete way that the unity of the Church of

[25] John Howard Yoder, "40 Years of Ecumenical Theological Dialogue Efforts on Justice and Peace Issues by the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the "Historic Peace Churches", Appendix C in Douglas Gwyn and others, *A Declaration of Peace: In God's People the World's Renewal Has Begun* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1991), pp 93-105, and Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *On Earth Peace: Discussions on War/Peace Issues Between Friends, Mennonites, Brethren, and European Churches, 1935-1975* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 1978). See also H. Lamar Gibble, "Ecumenical Engagements for Peace and Non-Violence", unpublished paper (2003), 45pp, and Melanie A. May and Lauree Hersch Meyer, "Anabaptist Contribution to U.S. Culture", unpublished MS (1986).
[26] Durnbaugh, *On Earth Peace* (1978), pp 38-90.
[27] Durnbaugh, *On Earth Peace* (1978), pp 122-145.

our Lord Jesus Christ takes form, as we listen together to Scripture, in a fresh realization of our common responsibility for faithful witness to our Lord and for service in His name in the world."[28]

Enthusiasm for continuation was such that three more high-level symposia took place, in 1957, 1960, and 1962 in the German Federal Republic, France, and The Netherlands; the series was formally called "The Lordship of Christ Over Church and State." These ecumenical discussions then shifted through 1969 to another venue, the Lutheran church's study institute at the University of Heidelberg (FEST).[29]

Members of the Historic Peace Churches continued after this to engage the staff, Central Committee, and the world assemblies of the World Council on peace issues. Among the highlights: promotion and implementation of the Martin Luther King Memorial Resolution, adopted in 1968 by the Fourth WCC Assembly at Uppsala, Sweden, shortly after King's assassination. It called for the creation of a program to study non-violent methods of social change. This led to several international consultations and a statement entitled "Violence, Nonviolence, and the Struggle for Social Justice", commended by the WCC Central Committee in 1973 to constituent denominations for "study, comment, and action."[30]

Further consultations with active HPC participation followed on militarism and disarmament issues. A major breakthrough came about at the 1994 meeting of the Central Committee in South Africa. During the opening worship service, a South African bishop from the Methodist Church challenged those assembled to initiate a program to combat violence, modeling it along the lines of the controversial WCC Programme to Combat Racism. A Church of the Brethren committee member, Donald E. Miller, combined efforts with Elizabeth Salter, a British Quaker serving on the WCC staff, to take up the suggestion. Working against strong negative pressure from staff members and bureaucratic procedures, he was able, with the timely help of Dr. Konrad Raiser, WCC general secretary, to raise the issue successfully, leading to the adoption of a program, with a name change from Programme to Combat Violence to the more biblical Programme to Overcome Violence.[31]

Building on this success, toward the end of the WCC Eighth Assembly, held at Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1998, a German Mennonite, Fernando Enns, also a member of the Central Committee, asked to speak. He introduced a motion, against the formal procedures for assembly business, to continue and enlarge the work of the Programme to Overcome Violence by the establishment of the Decade to Overcome Violence, to run from 2001 to 2010. Surprisingly, because several initiatives to continue the Programme had been defeated during the Assembly, this unusual motion was accepted and approved by a large majority vote.

In a WCC publication describing the Programme to Overcome Violence (1995) the authors stated:

> "The modern-day ecumenical movement has its roots deep in the church peace union movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Though that movement was comprised of a fairly broad spectrum of Protestant churches, the theological option for pacifism, non-violence, and/or active non-violent action for justice has been advocated most consistently and persistently by the 'Historic Peace Churches' (Quakers, Brethren, or Mennonites) of the Anabaptist tradition."[32]

A more complete accounting of HPC influence upon other churches would report on the specific references to their witness and participation, in particular with American denominations. This would include the Presbyterian Church (USA) as they enunciated "Peacemaking: The Believer's Calling", with

[28] Durnbaugh, *On Earth Peace* (1978), p 123.
[29] Durnbaugh, *On Earth Peace* (1978), pp 146-184, 196-222, 229-271, 319-328.
[30] Yoder, "40 Years" (1991), pp 101-105.
[31] Margot Käßmann, *Overcoming Violence* (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications 1998); Fernando Enns, *Friedenskirche in der Ökumene: Mennonitische Wurzeln einer Ethik der Gewaltfreiheit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2001), p 205; Sara Speicher, "The Program to Overcome Violence", *Messenger* (December, 1998), pp 11-16; Donald E. Miller, "The Historic Peace Churches and the Decade to Overcome Violence", unpublished MS (2002), 13pp.

the United Church of Christ as they developed their "Just Peace" policy, with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with their statement on "Seeking God's Peace in a Nuclear Age", and especially in the "Pastoral Letter on War and Peace", issued by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.[33]

Impact upon Society

Once again, it can be proposed that despite the relatively small numbers of adherents of the Historic Peace Churches, their influence upon the broader society has been large. Mention has already been made of the societal impact of the Society of Friends in the areas of prison reform, abolition of slavery, creation of mental hospitals, and in education. For our purposes here, two other examples may be given, spanning in time the 20th century.

The Boer War of 1899-1902, was the last outright imperial war of the United Kingdom. The Unionist Party, which then held the government reins, was able to maneuver the Afrikaners to declare war; these were ethnic Dutch who had settled in Southern Africa since the 17th century, called by the British "Boers". Through painstaking effort, they had created prosperous settlements, organized into two free republics, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. For their part the Boers sought to bar the ever-encroaching British policy of annexation, still inspired by the "Cape-to-Cairo" dream of Cecil Rhodes. The British cloaked their expansionism by criticism of the Boer suppression of native peoples. An orgy of patriotic spirit in the United Kingdom, agitated by a fiery press, rallied behind the overwhelming force of British military might to crush the rebellious Dutch peasants.

A writer on Quaker reaction to the conflict stated: "The small minority of Britishers who opposed the coming and conduct of the war and pleaded the cause of the Boers were faced with a degree of popular, press, and political harassment [virtually] unequalled... Among the most consistent and intrepid opponents of the war were many Quakers who formed part of an outspoken small minority labeled derisively 'Pro-Boers'". Some Quakers, however, including prominent members either favored the war or took a neutral position. This protest was heightened when the doughty defense of the Boers' guerilla campaign (fought by virtually the entire male Boer population) led the British high command to embark on a brutal scorched earth policy and forcible relocation of displaced women and children into concentration camps, the first usage of this tragic term. The intent was to deprive the roving and highly effective guerilla forces of the possibility of re-supply. The camps were set up on vacant Veldt, with no shelter, no equipment, no medical care, and almost no food. Mass death by starvation and epidemics was the inevitable result, with at least 22,000 Boer women and children dying within the first year, of the some 63,000 left homeless by military action during this period. The number of displaced would rise to over 100,000.[34]

Quakers sent fact-finders to South Africa to ascertain the true nature of the war, to counter the highly successful propaganda of the government spread through the friendly media, and to assess possibilities for relief shipments. When their reports of the staggering rate of mortality were received in the homeland, even staunch supporters of the war began to have second thoughts. The callous contention of government spokesmen that the mortality rates in the camps would lessen, because the weakest of the internees would soon be dead, was seen through as contemptuous casuistry. Government leaders let it be known that any criticism of their policies in South Africa were treasonous and would only serve to encourage the Boer opposition. The security of the global British Empire was at stake. "The government's line was to treat all... protests as accusations against the chivalrous British army, and to point out that they were based on ignorance of local conditions..." Quakers mounted massive relief shipments to assuage the needs of the Boer civilians.[35]

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[32] Quoted in Miller, "Decade to Overcome Violence), (2002), p 7.
[33] Gibble, "Ecumenical Engagement", (2002), p 39.
[34] Richard A. Rempel, "British Quakers and the South African War", *Quaker History*, 64, (Autumn, 1975), pp 75-95 (75).
[35] Greenword, *Friends and Relief*, (1975), pp 149-164 (153).

Finally, the role of members of the Historic Peace Churches in reforming the mental US health system can be reported as evidence of societal impact. During World War II, men recognized as conscientious objectors were assigned to unpaid "alternative service", in a program known as Civilian Public Service (CPS). It was an arrangement based on government assignment, with support and local administration arranged by the Historic Peace Churches. This service was mandated for the duration of the war, but, in fact, many in CPS had actually to serve much longer. Some 3,000 of these men were assigned to fill the war-depleted ranks of attendants at mental hospitals. Although often meeting with resentment from other attendants, the COs brought a new spirit of kindness to the difficult tasks of coping with mentally-disturbed patients.

Of lasting importance was the role played by these men in revealing deplorable conditions of patient care, and of misconduct and corruption among hospital staffs. Major US publications published exposés based on their testimonies, gathered on a large scale by investigative reporters. Added to these contributions was the decision of a large number of COs, after completing their CPS service, to devote their lives to this cause. The Mennonites, in particular, developed a number of church-sponsored mental-health agencies and institutions as a result of their war-time experiences. The title and sub-title of the most complete study of the CPS impact on mental health in the US sums up the achievement – *The Turning Point: How Men of Conscience Brought About Major Change in the Care of America's Mentally Ill* (1994).[36]

Conclusion

Having looked briefly at the early history and character of each of the Historic Peace Churches, we portrayed some instances of their cooperation. We finally saw that, somewhat ironically, given their disposition to keep church and state separate, that they made substantial impact upon the broader societies in which they lived, both upon the church and the state, even providing from their numbers a few highly-placed individuals in international government.

A well-known Quaker phrase following World War II was "Speak Truth to Power". In some form, it could be said, that is what representatives of each of the Historic Peace Churches have been trying to do over the ages, and what, on occasion, they attempted to do together. It remains to be seen to what extent contemporary and future members of the Historic Peace Churches will persist in this often frustrating but, at times, exhilarating attempt.

[36] Albert N. Keim, *The CPS Story: An Illustrated History of Civilian Public Service*. (Intercourse, PA: Good Books 1990); Keim and Stoltzfus, *Politics of Conscience* (1988), pp 103-126; Alex Sareyan, *The Turning Point: How Men of Conscience brought About Major Change in the Care of America's Mentally Ill*. (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press 1994).

THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION AS A PROPHETIC MOVEMENT OF THE WESTERN CHURCH? -

Reinhard Böttcher

Let me begin my brief presentation by sharing with you my personal approach to the topic I was asked to speak on. Before I came to Geneva in April this year I had been teaching in the Deacons' School of Rummelsberg in Bavaria for more than ten years. Whenever I referred to the topic of (Lutheran) Reformation - be it in Church History or in Dogmatics (which was my main field) - the more I would deliberately abandon the term "the" Reformation, rather referring to the Reformations (plural), identifying the movement around Luther and Melanchthon and Wittenberg as only one, even though, powerful variant of a much broader movement, reaching as far back as the 12th century and expressly giving credit to similar movements of the 16th century alongside the events emanating from Wittenberg. Moreover, I am aware that quite a number of the sister Reformation movements had suffered from the hands not only of the Roman Catholic Church but of the Lutheran Church, which had succeeded in ascending to power, as well. Therefore, I am well aware of speaking as a representative of the Lutheran tradition to sisters and brothers from churches who - in terms of power - might have shared in paying the price for Lutheran ascendancy.

Working with an ecumenical organization I will keep in mind the question how the Lutheran Reformation related to the unity of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. Finally, having been strongly influenced by the students' movement of 1968 and having enthusiastically dealt with Liberation and Feminist Theologies, I am excited about probing how far my own tradition - in light of its ambiguities - can legitimately be called a prophetic movement. Throughout all this my perspective will inevitably be shaped by my German background.

I would like to proceed as follows:

First of all I will set out the term "Reformation" in the sense in which I will use it henceforth. Then I will sketch out what I mean when I refer to a "prophetic movement". On this basis I will tentatively and briefly probe how far the Lutheran Reformation could be considered a prophetic movement. I will also glance at an outstanding model of contextualizing Lutheran spirituality and theology in a prophetic sense in the more recent history. I will conclude with a brief evaluation. With regard to the limited time I have, many questions will certainly remain open.

1. What does "Reformation" mean?

This is one of the key questions we are wrestling with and I definitely do not claim to come up with a clear-cut solution. But since I am supposed to deal with the Lutheran Reformation, I feel a need to at least indicate the basic understanding I am going to work with. Very briefly and tentatively I would say: Reformation is the gift and resolve to contribute to the renewal of the Church by calling it back - and forth! - to its apostolic origins as borne witness to in the scriptures of the First and Second Testament, by calling upon it to unreservedly trust in God's covenant of unconditional grace and faithfulness, culminating in the person and history of Jesus Christ, articulated in God's promise – and to live out the freedom, given by the Holy Spirit, in orienting its life at God's commandment which is aiming to further love and life within "its own ranks", as well as within humankind and creation as a whole, being aware that only God him/herself will lead humankind and creation to eschatological fulfillment. All this under the condition that the actual life and witness of the Church seems to be fundamentally compromised and marred and the truth of the gospel eclipsed. I am tempted to add that this call to renewal radically

reorients the existing spiritual and theological "paradigm". But this raises the highly complicated and controversial question of continuity and discontinuity which needs to be taken up with regard to any Reformation movement at issue.

Applied specifically to the Lutheran Reformation, one could certainly say that it has acquired distinctive features by way of assigning the message of justification by grace through faith alone the pivotal role, modeled in particular along the Pauline scriptures.

2. What is a "Prophetic Movement"?

Having failed so far to find a conclusive definition in contemporary theological literature, even in the latest edition of the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, let me make an attempt on my own. In light of the multifaceted phenomenon of prophecy in the First Testament, its continuation and modification, in particular its "democratization" in the Second Testament, as well as with regard to the fact that time and again prophetic phenomena have reemerged in the history of the Church, I would dare suggest:

A prophetic movement within the Christian Church is a community of believers who venture to pronounce the will of the God of Israel, as self-disclosed in Jesus of Nazareth, as witnessed to in the biblical scriptures, doing so resolutely yet also with fear and trembling. Such a community speaks into their given present time of profound crisis, often in opposition to an established ecclesial system, trusting that the Holy Spirit will authenticate their message.

I need to add some comments: This will of God referred to is both grace and judgement, gospel and law, promise and commandment, opening up future and hope and calling to conversion. The basic perspective of the prophetic message is a reorientation of our relation to God as well as a reconfiguration of our relationship to each other in terms of structures and patterns that promote life, justice, dignity and peace - as well as the integrity and unity of the Church. The message is directed at the Church itself or/and particular groups of society or at society as a whole, critiquing and often being opposed by those who have a vested interest in upholding and enforcing an ecclesial or societal system which the prophetic movement considers to be in contravention to God's will. The authority of the prophetic movement is inescapably ambiguous: since its actual interpretation of the biblically testified gospel is often under debate, let alone the interpretation of the signs of the time, as well as the relation of the truth of the gospel, as perceived by the prophetic community, to the actual situation, any prophetic movement sees itself pushed out into an ultimate insecurity, unless it triumphalistically identifies its perception of the gospel with the gospel itself. Therefore a prophetic movement - despite its resolve, zeal and passion - can only exist and operate with a sense of self-relativization and a consciousness of profound self-critique that Paul Tillich denoted by the term "protestant principle", which immunizes the prophetic subject against the tendency towards demonization, i.e. against construing themselves as the absolute rather than a fallible pointer to the absolute.[1] Therefore a prophetic movement can exercise its responsibility ultimately only under God's justifying verdict. In sum: a prophetic movement will carry out its commitment boldly and courageously, but at the same time in meekness, humility and vulnerability. As Paul heard God say: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9).

3. The Lutheran Reformation: a Prophetic Movement?

I am not going to teach you Lutheran theology and the history of Lutheran Reformation. Many of you are much better versed in this than I am. Let me briefly highlight a few - dogmatic and historical – elements that might be relevant for our topic.

[1] "The Protestant principle is the restatement of the prophetic principle as an attack against a self-absolutising and, consequently, demonically distorted church. Both prophets and reformers announced the radical implications of exclusive monotheism", P. Tillich: *Systematic Theology* I, James Nisbet & Co ltd, London 1968, p 242.

As far as its "Sitz im Leben" and its intention is concerned the (Lutheran) Reformation movement understood itself as a force of critical reexamination and renewal *within* the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church calling the latter back to its origin in the gospel of what God had done for the salvation of humankind in Jesus Christ, expecting the Holy Spirit to authenticate the Church's witness to God's saving acts and waiting for Christ's second coming for final judgement and grace. Thus Lutheran Reformation was a movement with an unswerving ecumenical orientation deeply committed to serve the unity of the Church. As we all know, the fact that it increasingly found itself outside the boundary of the Roman Catholic Church and developed into a church of its own came about against its declared will. In so far as the Lutheran Reformation grew out of the Church and consistently comprehended itself as being in service of the Church, it would match one of my criteria for a prophetic movement.

Using a contemporary key term we could say, again oversimplifying: the Lutheran Reformation constituted a sort of contextualization of the gospel under the specific conditions of Central Europe in the 16th century. The gospel rediscovered as God's saving power was articulated as God's will which aims to redeem all human beings from the power of sin, to justify and renew them, to call them together to the community of believers who are committed to each other and to their fellow-human beings in mutual support and diaconal service, to sustain their hope in times of despair - not on their own merits, not on the basis of ecclesial-hierarchical mediation, but solely for the sake of God's sovereign mercy, acted out and manifested in Christ's cross and resurrection and communicated effectively in word and sacrament. One can duly question if this theological agenda did not, in fact, restrict the fullness of the biblical message, rather focusing on Paul's letters and the issue of justification, underestimating e.g. the concept of the kingdom of God so prominent in the synoptic gospels. On the other hand, by way of this concentration on relatively few theological key figures out of which the ensemble of "Lutheran theology" was – in a way - systematically developed, the Lutheran Reformation succeeded in relating the gospel very accurately and meaningfully to the crucial issues at stake: people's anxiety and insecurity about salvation, the notion of human cooperation in the process of salvation, the hierarchy's claim to a mediating role in it etc. In the course of its history the Roman Catholic Church had proved to be able to absorb quite a number of critical reform movements. But this one, evidently, it saw itself unprepared to accommodate. Too radical – in the narrow sense of the term – and too fundamental was the critique it found itself exposed to. If a prophetic movement articulates God's word as law and gospel relevantly and meaningfully and critically into a particular given situation in a time of profound crisis over against persistent opposition the Lutheran Reformation, in my understanding, does measure up to this criterion. In so far as it had to do so over against an ecclesial system which tended to absolutize itself this applies all the more.

By virtue of the controversiality of the interpretation of the gospel, of the assessment of the situation as well as of the appropriate correlation between both of them, any prophetic movement is inevitably pushed into ambiguity it cannot dissolve itself. I see two teachings which are central to Lutheran theology and which seem to point in this direction. The one is the principle *sola scriptura*, the other one the notion of the self-sufficient work of the Holy Spirit, the latter featuring prominently in particular in the Calvinist tradition but reflecting a deep Lutheran conviction as well. It places any preaching, any doctrinal decision, any spiritual and ecclesial practice under the proviso that truthful Christian witness is contingent on its conformity with the gospel as testified by the biblical scriptures. And that the subjective salvific reception of this truthful witness hinges on the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit. Notwithstanding questions that remain open in light of modern hermeneutics these two notions, if taken seriously, are powerful antidotes against triumphalism. On the other hand, once the Lutheran Reformers had accessed an element of the truth, unshakable in their sight, such as the core concept of justification by faith through grace alone, they would find it hard to compromise. As far as their - as we would call it today - self-critical consciousness is concerned, that varied. Luther himself, as we know, could be rash and impetuous. On the other hand he was acutely aware that we are spiritual beggars before God, being constantly in need of having our empty hands filled by God. Many Lutheran churches, in

particular in Germany and the USA, just recently came to discover that there is at least one area in which the Lutheran Reformation and Luther in particular clearly and tragically failed to live up to the prophetic spirit of self-relativization and despite the zeal and passion that are called for in a prophetic constellation: in his later references to the Jews, where he - at times extremely aggressively and triumphalistically - perpetuated and coined anti-judaistic stereotypes which contributed to paving the way for antisemitism and eventually the Holocaust.

In terms of the development of the Lutheran Reformation one could identify two specific events which characteristically changed its course in a way relevant for our topic. One is the peasants' war in 1524/25, the other is the juridical and administrative establishment of territorial churches in Germany between 1527 and 1530. Even though the territorial rulers who were sympathetic to the Reformation ideas played a significant role from an early stage, the Lutheran Reformation was basically a movement from below. Evidently it struck a chord in the hearts of ordinary people, so that they could make these liberating ideas their own. That dramatically changed in the wake of 1525. I need to leave aside Luther's theologically carefully calibrated statements and comments on the tumultuous events of the failed peasants' revolt in spring of 1525. But the result was disastrous: Apart from the thousands dead on the battle fields there was another casualty: the Lutheran Reformation as a powerful people's movement. From now on it was time and again suspiciously eyed as being in cahoots with the ruling powers - definitely not an ingredient for a prophetic movement.

The problem with the establishment of territorial churches were its actual agents, and, of course, the result of the whole process. Since there were no bishops around to implement the necessary reforms and the congregations were not prepared either, the Reformers had to resort to the territorial princes who were sympathetic to the Reformation ideas and willing to have them implemented in their area of jurisdiction. Thus it became a reform from above resulting in the *Landesherrliche Kirchenregiment*, a system in which the juridical church governance became a part of the political administration.

Summing up I would say: as far as its resolve is concerned to confront the Church with the gospel as God's saving and liberating and challenging power in very concrete terms, its deep concern for the integrity and unity of the Church, its conviction that Christian spirituality as well as its theological self-reflection are subject to God's own word as the sole criterion for any pious productivity, including the confessions of the Church - all that allows, with due caution, to identify the Lutheran Reformation as a prophetic movement. This utter dependency on God's power, though, was counteracted to the extent it increasingly aligned itself with the territorial princes. And it might not be a coincidence that in the Augsburg Confession there is a tendency to play down the doctrinal differences from the Roman Catholic Church but at the same time to anathematize vigorously the so called *Schwärmer*.

4. Prophetic Vestiges in Lutheran Church History?

In general, I dare say, the Lutheran Church - at least in Germany - has no longer operated as a prophetic movement. Indeed, that would be too much of an expectation of a well established mainline church at times relentlessly battling for supremacy in "orthodoxy" and a share in power. One could at least ask if not in one or the other awakening movement prophetic elements reemerged. I would single out the movement around Johann Heinrich Wichern in the 19th century in Germany, who in a time of crisis tried to inculcate on the Church its diaconal responsibility and to profoundly transform the mission and ministry of the Church.

But as Wichern ultimately did not succeed with his concern, so another prominent figure who might legitimately be called a prophetic representative was relegated to the fringes of his Church. During the Nazi era the Confessing Church in Germany remained an iridescent entity. But at least according to its famous Theological Declaration of Barmen from 1934 it was intended to bear witness to the Triune God in faithfulness to the gospel and the Reformation heritage in the midst of a totalitarian regime. But

commitment and support was much stronger on the part of the Reformed and United congregations and churches than from the Lutheran side. Quite a number of weighty Lutheran church leaders and theologians remained - to say the least - hesitant about "Barthian influence". But a few courageous and articulate Lutheran theologians took a different stand, the most prominent among them Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He left a kind of heritage of interpreting Lutheran tradition that his own church has had difficulty coming to terms with. Pathetically I would say: he developed a sort of prophetic theology his own church has seen itself unable to absorb and digest. It was not a coincidence that Bonhoeffer was denied a place on the Confessing Church's intercession list. And had he survived the war he certainly would have become one of the leading theologians, but definitely not a bishop or an *Oberkirchenrat.* And the other way round, the fact that he has enthusiastically been received in theologies around the world that have been developed under conditions of oppression echoes his prophetic significance. But again: ultimately Bonhoeffer has remained a stranger within the Lutheran Church.

5. Summary and Future Prospects

It might be a pretty crude judgement in need of refining. But my suspicion is that at least one decisive determinant is the relation to power. The Lutheran Reformation, in my understanding, started off as a sort of critical prophetic movement - with some hesitancy I would say – "from below". But to the extent it came to side with secular power, in particular with the state authorities, at the same time fiercely turning against those brothers and sisters who, such as the "Anabaptists", shared at least a differentiated consensus on basic elements of Reformation faith but in their own distinctive ways, it gradually lost its prophetic thrust. The misunderstandings, in particular in the 19th and 20th centuries, around the doctrine of the two rules of God have certainly contributed to this process. A teaching, originally intended among others to liberate the worldly authorities from the choking grip of ecclesial supremacy, turned into an instrument of immunizing societal structures, especially political authorities against critique, thus paralyzing Lutheran Church and theology under totalitarian regimes. There are attempts to rediscover the critical, liberating, challenging prophetic potential of the Lutheran tradition, e.g. in Brazil, highlighted in Walter Altmann's book *Luther and Liberation.* And as far as the Lutheran Church in my own country is concerned: the processes of erosion regarding its standing and influence in civil society might - if comprehended not only as a problem to be fixed but also as a chance to be grasped and shaped - open up new opportunities. Stripped from power the Lutheran Church might one day regain some of its prophetic *exousia*, as it is evidently underway already in some parts of the South. And in the long run this might have consequences for the position of the Lutheran Church within the ecumenical movement in general and for the relations to its sister Reformation churches in particular.

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THE PROPHETICAL LEGACY OF THE WALDENSIAN MOVEMENT -

Carlo Papini

Foreword

The Waldenses of the Middle Ages are not a uniform movement: different forms of Waldensianism have been identified in Europe. It would therefore be necessary to differentiate and to specify each time to which fraction or region we are referring to; but this is impossible in a short paper. Generally speaking with some exceptions as indicated, I shall refer to the so called "Poor of Lyons" or *ultramontani* (beyond the mountains) that were present from the late 12th to the 14th century in Southern France (Provence and Languedoc) and in Lombardy, and from the 14th to the 16th century in the Alpine region and in Southern Italy. That is, I will refer to the central stream of the movement, and will leave out of the picture the more extreme radical wings, for example the so-called "Poor Lombards".

What was Really the Movement of the "Poor of Lyons"?

It was not a counter-church, or a new church, or a sect as, for example, the Cathars. It was a lay "revival" movement aiming at the awakening of the people, working within the one and only Christian Church, that is the Roman Church, though it was unjustly condemned by the Roman Curia as a schismatic and heretic sect. Its aim was to make up for the deficiency and infidelity of the clergy, particularly on what concerned public preaching to the people and confession.

Initially it was therefore a free and poor fraternity of itinerant preachers - unmarried, living on charity, men and women called *fratres* (brothers) and *sorores* (sisters) - sustained by groups of "friends" or *credentes* (believers) who worked, married and lived in the world. They founded "Waldensian houses", called *schole* or *hospitia*, where they took care of the sick and organized Bible-study courses for the laity. They were the first to translate a great part of the Bible in the spoken ("vulgar") language of the country.

The first theologian of the Waldenses, the Catalan Durandus de Osca, who had received minor orders, used the term: *via nostra* (our Way) to denote his movement. This was to indicate the commitment to a consecrated life, a term very similar to that used by Francis of Assisi some decades later: *vita nostra* (our Life).

In the following years, during the 13th century, the Waldenses or "Poor of Lyons" organized themselves as a real religious mendicant and clandestine Order (they spoke of *"our Ordo"*). The Order instructed the candidates to ministry**,** gathered the itinerant preachers annually in a *concilium*, or *capitulum generale*, in Lombardy or in Provence. It distributed the various tasks and charges, divided the collected money and elected a chief called *majoralis.*

According to the Lombard inquisitor Moneta of Cremona (writing in 1241) the Waldenses were convinced that:

> "the Roman Church and their own community are both part of the One, Holy and Catholic Church, though there are two parts: the malignant one that is called Roman Church (*ecclesia malignantium*) and the other, the benign one, that is their community."[1]

Nevertheless the Waldenses maintained - according to Rainerio Sacconi, another Italian inquisitor - that "there has always been someone in the Church that feared God and will be saved,"[2] and they said: "we do not believe at all that the Church went entirely astray from the path of truth."[3]

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[1] Moneta Da Cremona, *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, ed. Th. A. Ricchini, Rome, 1743, vol. V, p 407.
[2] Rainerius Sacconi, *Summa de Catharis et Leonistis* (1250), in *Enchiridion Fontium Valdensium*, aux soins de G. Gonnet, Turin, Claudiana, 1998, II, p 111.
[3] Strasbourg Document edited by Ch. Schmidt 1852, quoted in C. Papini, "*Valdo di Lione e i 'Poveri nello spirito'*", Turin,

At least in their official texts the Waldenses have never claimed that only their members will be saved: also in the Roman Church there have always been some "saints" and will always be.

According to Moneta of Cremona the *ultramontani*

> "admit that the Roman Church has the seven sacraments that would like to receive from us if we wished to give them, and they believe that we are consecrating the real body of Christ [in the eucharist]."[4]

The *Liber electorum* (a Waldensian text of the first decades of the 14th century) declares:

> "The Church of God - the One and Holy universal Church – since the time in which it was founded until the end of the world will never defect entirely; it follows that in the whole world, or sometimes only in some regions of the world, there might be some saints."[5]

The Waldensian "dean", Raymond de la Côte, examined in Pamiers by the bishop Jacques Fournier in 1320, refused to acknowledge being a member of a counter-church or a sect, as the inquisitor would compel him to do. Pierrette Paravy writes:

> "The Waldensianism put in practice here is therefore a critical and reforming branch of the plurisecular building [of the Church], to which it remains fundamentally faithful. It is a form of 'revival'. And its deep essence – at the beginning of the 14th century as also at the time of Valdès [in the 12th] – consisted in choosing a life according to the evangelical model, committed to an appeal to conversion in view of the Kingdom."[6]

> "The essence of Waldensianism is essentially the evangelical life, the announcement of the Good News and the exaltation of penitence as the harbour of salvation. In one word, it is daily actualization of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount."[7]

Waldenses and Prophecy

For the first Waldenses there was no difference at all among prophecy, preaching and announcing the Gospel.

In fact, to justify the ministry of women-preachers at the dispute of Narbonne (1190), the Waldenses report the example of the prophetess Anna, who "came and began to praise God and to speak about the child [Jesus] to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem" (Luke 2, 38). According to Moneta they referred also to the example of Mary Magdalene that "Christ sent to preach" when he ordered her to announce to the disciples that she had seen the Lord (John 20, 17). It is clear that, for them, prophesying means preaching and announcing.[8]

At the Narbonne dispute, as an argument in their favour, they also quoted the example of Moses who "was not envious of those who prophesied in the camp, on the contrary he expressed the desire that 'all the Lord's people were prophets' (Numbers 11, 29)."[9]

For these Waldenses, to prophesy meant "to expose the mysteries of the Word of God". And here we also get a good definition of prophecy – that is for the Waldenses: "the preannouncement of future realities, or the revelation of concealed things, or the exposition of occult mysteries."[10]

For these Waldenses, the Old Testament prophecies may be applied to the "holy Church" and referred to the present situation.

The Waldensian *Liber electorum* (14th century) quotes a prophecy from Jeremiah 33, 18 and then adds: "This God's promise must be referred to the Holy Church; as a matter of fact the sayings of the prophets were related to Christ and to the Holy Church."[11]

Claudiana, 2002, p 439, note 703.
[4] Moneta, ed. Ricchini cit., vol. V, p 434.
[5] Cfr. P. Biller, *Aspects of the Waldenses in the Fourteenth Century*, Oxford, 1974 (unpublished dissertation), p 267.
[6] P. Paravy, *De la chrétienté romaine à la Réforme en Dauphiné*, Rome, 1993, vol. II, p 942.
[7] P. Paravy, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p 935.
[8] Bernard De Fontcaude, *Contra Vallenses et contra Arianos* (1191), in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 204, col. 826 D quoted in C. Papini, *Valdo* cit., p 183. Moneta, *op. cit.*, ed. Ricchini, vol. V, p 442, quoted in C. Papini, *Valdo* cit., p 183, note 96.
[9] Bernard De Fontcaude *op. cit.*, in Migne, *PL* 204, col. 808 CD, quoted in C. Papini, *Valdo* cit., pp 178-179.

From this principle follows a particular interest in the Old Testament Prophets, attested to by the Waldensian sermons, for example in Isaiah, Jeremiah and, above all, in the "Elijah who must come first" (Matthew 17,10) whom they identified with Valdès.

For the Waldenses, prophetic preaching to the people had a central significance in the eternal struggle fought by the Lord against Satan in view of mankind's salvation.

The great Czech historian Amadeus Molnár, referring to the Prologue of the *Liber Antiheresis*, written by the Waldensian theologian Durandus de Osca in 1187-98, writes:

> "The tool or main instrument of that struggle [between God and Satan], whose root is metaphysical but that appears in this world through the contingency of the times, is *preaching*. Its function becomes essential since the moment when the Church has lost the living voice of the Apostles who were able to stand up to the many heresies spread by Satan... Today the simoniac and sinner clergy seeks only his well being at such a level that it is impossible to expect from him an efficient renewal of preaching to the people. But God, who has never abandoned completely his flock, decided to elect Valdès in order that he may continue, with his companions, the ministry of preaching against Satan's traps. Universal history is therefore conceived as a continuous battle of God against Satan's attacks, whose stake is man."[12]

The prophetic preaching of the Waldenses has therefore an eschatological meaning, as we shall see.

The Waldensian Theology

May we speak correctly of a Waldensian theology? Amadeus Molnár, who dedicated 70 pages of his fundamental book *Les Vaudois au Moyen Age* to this argument, writes:

> "If you want to understand theology only as a rational and scholastic explanation of the relations between revelation and creation..., then we must admit that medieval Waldenses were lacking in a theological thought of that kind. But if theological thought is defined as the effort to grasp and express the incidences of God's meeting with men in Jesus Christ, and if, at the same time, theology is the concrete and critical perception of the ecclesiastical situation in the present world in view of risking a new obedience of the faith, then surely also the Waldenses had their theology and made theology."[13]

It is interesting to note that not only the Waldensian brothers (or *magistri*), but also the *credentes* (the simple faithful) had a very clear knowledge of prophetic preaching's particular function inside the Roman Church.

An old woman from Beauregard (Isère) called Peironeta (put on trial by the inquisitor Antoine Fabre at Valence, Drôme, in 1494) said that the Waldensian preachers "had been sent by God *to reform the catholic faith*, going around in the world to preach to simple and good persons about the way and form to serve God and to live according to his commandments."[14] And she also said that we must thank that small fist of persons because it is their merit that the world has not yet come to an end. They feed God's patience and convince Him to postpone the Universal Judgement, in order to wait for the conversion of the sinners. She had heard her catholic priest saying that "if those persons should not exist, all the world would have already come to an end." And the Waldenses from Paesana (Po Valley) in 1510 said that "the world will last as long as they [the Waldenses] last and no longer."[15]

"The small *Ordo* of the elected", writes Molnár, "has an eschatological function: owing to the simple fact of existing, it preserves the world from final ruin."[16]

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[10] Idem, quoted by C. Papinii, *Valdo* cit., pp 178-179.
[11] P. Biller, *Aspects* cit., p 268.
[12] A. Molnár, *Les Vaudois au Moyen Age*, Turin, Claudiana, 1974, p 405.
[13] A. Molnár, *op. cit.*, p 371.
[14] Marina Benedetti, *Peironeta di Beauregard, l'inquisitore e i Valdesi*, in AA.VV., *Vite di eretici e storie di frati*, Milano, Ed. Bibl. Francescana, 1998, p 307.
[15] Quoted by A. Molnár, *op cit.*, p 274, note 290.
[16] *Idem*, p 272.

It is clear then that Waldensian preaching aimed at a reformation of the Church. But how? The answer was: by submitting the whole of the catholic tradition to a severe examination. All that cannot be justified by the Holy Scriptures must be abandoned. The evangelical Word and Christ's mercifulness must regain the first place in the life of the Church and in society.

"Sola Scriptura"

The principle that would be called "Sola Scriptura" by the Protestant Reformers in the 16th century was already clearly affirmed in full accord by *ultramontani* and "Poor Lombards" at Bergamo in 1218. This principle inspired the Waldensian protest against the corruption of the Roman Church for three centuries. According to Moneta (in 1241), the Waldenses

> "try to demonstrate that the Roman Church is not the Church of God owing to its many customs that are not written in the Gospels or in other books of the New Testament and we cannot prove that they have been accepted by the primitive Church."[17]

The inquisitors also were acquainted with this principle. In 1395 Peter Zwicker said to a Waldensian brother: "Consider well this point, since you accept only what can be found in the Bible."[18]

Valdès' Intuitions and Those of his Followers

Valdès discovered "the incompatibility between the Christian message and the world's logic."[19] He discovered that the authenticity of evangelical preaching is indissolubly connected with *poverty*. Only a poor Church, living on God's grace, can side itself with the poor, the disinherited of the earth and announce the Gospel of the Kingdom and Jesus' beatitudes to them. Amadeus Molnár writes:

> "Waldensianism appears to us as a conscious form of Christian presence in the world directed toward solidarity with those that suffer, those that are afflicted and stricken. The Waldensian Poor undertakes the human condition of being threatened, opposed, and lost, because, in the optic of his faith, he knows that God's mercifulness goes to the 'minor' and not to the powerful persons. Poverty, in the first instance acquired for freedom to evangelize, becomes, for the Waldenses, in a second instance, a choice for the poor in general. The poverty of Christ for them implies the unconditional refusal to secure for Church institutions the task of organizing and directing the world or of imposing political programs."[20]

In fact the Austrian and German Waldenses objected to every form of clerical involvement in the social and political life of the country. They said: "Land and people must not be organized by parishes. All the parochial rights have been invented by men. The parochial priest should work with his hands and the parish should be poor."[21]

Second intuition: only a holy clergy faithfully following the ethics of the Gospel may be considered the successor of the Apostles and administer valid sacraments.

Having accepted the "Donation of Constantine" under pope Sylvester I, which meant power, riches and glory, the Roman Church had lost its spiritual power; the poison has entered the Church. Barbe Martin - a Waldensian brother put on trial in 1492 at Oulx (Dauphiné) - said: "When the members of the clergy live in deadly sins they lose all their power, as when you blow out a candle, you cannot light another one with it."[22]

[17] Moneta, *op. cit*., ed. Ricchini, vol. V, p 391; quoted by C. Papini, *Valdo* cit., p 450, note 743.
[18] Quoted by C. Papini, *Valdo* cit., p 461.
[19] G. Miccoli, *La storia religiosa*, in *Storia d'Italia*, vol. 2/1, Turin, Einaudi, 1974, p 666.
[20] A. Molnár, *op. cit.*, p 178.
[21] Quoted by C. Papini, *Valdo* cit., pp 451-452, notes 764-777.
[22] Cfr. G. Tourn, *Il Barba* - quaderno del XVII febbraio, Turin, Claudiana, 2001, pp 54-55.

The Christian Church must abstain from every coercive power, both at the economic and at the political level. The Church would be able to become the salt of the earth again only if it accepted to be a poor minority community presenting to the world the authentic scandal of Christ's cross.

Attitude of the Waldenses Towards the State

The absolute respect for the Sermon on the Mount – Christ's Law that every Christian is obliged to observe (and not only monks and hermits, as the Roman Church taught) - brought the Waldenses to affirm:

"Do not swear, do not say lies, do not kill".

The "Poor of Lyons" were the first to preach an absolute non-violence against war and, particularly, against crusades in the Near East. There is no "Holy Land" because "every land is equally consecrated to God and blessed." There is nothing to "liberate" in Palestine because "also the gentiles [i.e. the Turks] venerate Christ's Sepulchre and those of the prophets entering with bare feet."[23]

For the Waldenses the secular power had neither the right to kill guilty persons, nor the right to impose corporal or bloody punishments. For them, the trials must impose a "medicinal", curative punishment. They say: "it must be inflicted for the love of correction (*amore correctionis*)", and not according to the law of retaliation.[24]

The noble Catholic layman Salvo Burci, in his *Liber supra Stella* (1235), gives us good examples of this prophetic preaching against Church and State. It concerns mainly the "Poor Lombards" who say:

> "Oh Church, you preach and say that there must be punishments and that princes and powerfu1 persons may inflict them without sin. But this preaching is absolutely false and that is nothing to be surprised at because you too are false! Oh peoples, listen to what we are saying and you shall be able to grasp their foolishness. In fact the glorious Apostle [Paul] says to the Romans: 'Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God...' [12, 19]. Oh wretched Church, the Apostle could not have spoken more clearly! Therefore you can see, oh peoples, that neither princes nor powerful persons, nor anybody else may inflict a punishment, except God himself, as he has said. Be silent then, oh prostitute Church, because you have been found guilty!"[25]

Preaching on Jesus' words in Matthew 20: 25-26: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you...," the Waldenses affirm that among Christians there must not be dictatorial or tyrannical powers, but the secular authorities must serve the people.

Salvo Burci writes again:

> "For the Waldenses those words of Jesus show that in the Church of God there cannot be kings or powerful persons, because these have not been instituted by God and are therefore against God, and whenever they inflict a punishment they commit a mortal sin because they have been instituted by the world, by that world that is against God, that is by worldly men."[26]

In the Christian Church nobody should be greater than the other because in the Gospel of Matthew it is written that "you are all brothers" (Matthew 23, 8).[27]

In fact, the medieval Church had consecrated the free will of the feudal lords, which is born from the most pagan selfishness; it had consecrated the princes' powers, owing to a literal understanding of the famous words of Paul: "there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God" (Romans 13,1). For the Waldenses here the Apostle Paul does not want to present a divine doctrine of the Christian State, but uses a purely human notion of power: "this - they say - is a

[23] Quoted by C. Papini *Valdo* cit., pp 436-437, notes 687-692.
[24] Quoted by C. Papini, *Valdo* cit., p 427, note 644.
[25] Salvo Burci, *Liber supra Stella* (1235), ed. Ilarino da Milano, Rome, 1945, p 326.
[26] *Idem*. p 329.

worldly praise, not a divine one (*hoc est ad laudem mundanam non divinam*)."[28] That means, it is an example taken from the historical reality of the time, from the pagan world.

The Waldensian movement has always given a very prudent, and often negative, judgement of secular powers. Their beautiful poem *"Lo Novel Sermon"* (The New Sermon) says:

> Very great is the foolishness of avid men
> who make war against God to serve this world...
> The first [of these] are the rulers, who govern the world,
> who covet villages and towns, pleasures and great honours,
> and declare wars and fight battles where many are killed.[29]

And in 1530 the Waldensian barber Georges Morel, from the Valley of Fressinières in the Alps, writing to the Reformer Oecolampadius, asks: "whether the civil laws invented by men are valid according to God, since it is written: 'The laws of the peoples are false' (Jeremiah 10,3)."[30]

The Universal Priesthood of the Laymen

The Waldenses were certain that they had received a divine mission to preach the Gospel to the people. According to Durandus de Osca their mission was legitimized by God's grace and by the voice of the Gospel saying: "Blessed are the poor in Spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5, 3). So they actualized the universal prophetic ministry, according to Acts 2, 17.

In the first period, at Narbonne in 1190, they said that "only he who knows (*qui scit*) may preach" (quoting James 4, 17), that is he who has received the gift from the Holy Spirit. But in the following years they came to say that: "Every good layman is a priest as the Apostles that were all laymen."[31] Every authentic Christian has been called to give a personal witness to his fellows.

Translating and adapting a Latin text written by Nicholas of Dresden (or of the Black Rose), *De quadruplici missione*, a Waldensian *magister* writes:

> "Confessing the truth, giving to everybody his due, despising the world, refuting glory, suffering injuries, are a sufficient witness admitting him who knows God's Law to preach freely the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because for that he has been sent by God."[32]

Eschatology

Up to the end of the 13th century references to eschatology in Waldensian texts were very rare, even if the Universal or Final Judgement is always present in the background of Waldensian preaching.

Only the abbot Joachim of Fiore (about 1200) affirms that the Waldensian preachers refuse to work "as if they had already seen the signs of the end of the world (*quasi videntes signa de fine mundi*)."[33]

But in the 14th century

> "the Waldenses", writes Molnár, "could not remain insensitive to the eschatological crisis that characterized that century, when the pope installed his seat in Avignon. The crisis found followers particularly among the 'Fraticelli' (Little Brothers), that is among the left wing of the Franciscans, some of whom entered into the Waldensian movement... The eschatological reflections, always present at the horizon of Waldensian piety, were reinforced in this century and modified the consciousness they had of their mission."[34]

We know that in 1320 the Waldensian "dean" Raymond de la Côte in Pamiers owned a copy of Esdra's *Apocalypse*. Pierrette Paravy writes:

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[27] *Articuli hereticorum*, ed. Nickson, 1967, quoted in C. Papini, *Valdo* op cit., p 429 and note 652.
[28] Moneta, *op. cit.*, ed. Ricchini, vol. V, p 527; quoted in C. Papini, *Valdo* cit., p 426, note 641.
[29] Cfr. *Six Vaudois Poems*, edited by H. J. Chaytor, Cambridge, U.P., 1930, p 20, vv. 98-104.
[30] 30 Cfr. Valdo Vinay, *Le confessioni di fede dei Valdesi riformati*, Turin, Claudiana, 1975, pp 44-45.
[31] Quoted by C. Papini. *Valdo* cit., p 451, note 755.
[32] Ms. Cambridge Dd.XV.29 fol. 14r. Quoted by A. Molnár, *op. cit*. p 384 and note 62.
[33] *Tractatus super quattuor Evangelia*, ed. Buonaiuti, Rome, 1930, pp 151-152; also in *Enchiridion Fontium Valdensium*, aux soins de G. Gonnet, Torre Pellice (Turin), Claudiana, 1958, I, p 97.
[34] A. Molnár, *op. cit*., p 386.

> "The flaming visions of this first century Apochriphon, which obtained a great audience within medieval Christianity, could, together with the acute consciousness of the faults and transgressions of the present time, feed in him the hope that, beyond the present afflictions that are their punishment, a liberation will be assured by Him who emerges from the sea to open a New triumphant Jerusalem for his elect."[35]

In the 14th century, because of severe persecutions, the Waldensian preachers were obliged to give up public preaching and limit themselves to preaching by night in secret to small groups of already converted faithful. It was counseling or pastoral work towards believers more than prophetic preaching. For this reason they were sharply criticized by inquisitors and also by apostates who abandoned the movement.

To justify their prudent attitude towards public preaching and their "nicodemism", Italian Waldenses appealed to the prophet Elijah's example, underlining his clandestine action during the time of the cruel Jezebel. They justified the silence of their preaching with the example of the prophet. So, emphasizing the "historical" conditions of the persecuted prophet in his country, they found comfort for their difficult situation. Did they not represent within Christianity the seven thousand whose knees had never been bent before Baal, the idol? Were they not the "rest" put aside through God's election awaiting the moment in which their preaching might be openly reanimated by the spirit of the eschatological Elijah?

Awaiting the Final Judgement. The Antichrist

Many Waldensian sermons describe in detail how the Final Judgement will take place and the two ways marking the soul's destiny: Paradise or Hell. There is no Purgatory. Hoping to modify this destiny after death through masses, suffrages, indulgences and good works or alms is useless. The eternal destiny of the human soul depends entirely on one's life's behavior; there is no right of appeal. The Roman teaching on this matter is illusory and deceives the faithful. A Waldensian sermon says:

> "Weep and cry as long as time has been given to you, as long as your soul is united to the body..., as long as you are alive, make sure to get the remedy for the future..., before the deepness of the abyss will submerge you."[36]

In the well-known poem *La nobla Leyczon* (*The noble Lesson*) (1420-30), the apocalyptic theme is much developed: the end of the world is near and we must prepare ourselves for the coming of the Antichrist. It says:

> From this time on we must have no other Law
> than following Christ and doing what he ordered,
> to be alert considering the Antichrist's time,
> and to believe neither his deeds nor his words.
> In fact, according to the Scriptures, there are many Antichrists now,
> because Antichrists are all those who oppose Christ.[37]

For the Waldenses Antichrist may be the inquisitor, the pope, the emperor, the clergy, monasticism, the sacramental security of the Church etc.

A text written by Luke of Prague at the beginning of the 16th century, translated by a Waldensian *magister*, asks in the title: *What is Antichrist?* And the answer is:

> "Antichrist is falsity of eternal damnation, covered with the appearance of truth and justice of Christ and his spouse, set against the way of truth, justice, faith, hope and love. Antichrist is [the appearance] of the moral life and ministerial truth of the Church, administered by false apostles and arbitrarily defended by one and the other arm [secular and ecclesial]."[38]

[35] P. Paravy, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p 943.
[36] *Idem*, II, p 1139.
[37] Cfr. C. Papini, *La Nobla Leyczon*, Turin, Claudiana, 2003, pp 98-101, vv. 465-471.
[38] Quoted by A. Molnár, *op. cit.*, p 419 and note 242.

All the pedagogical effort of the sermons consists in showing that the world will not last, that it is a deceit that passes away. Four things will die with it: health, youth, reason and memory. The world condemns and ruins men.

But the final vision of human destiny is never pessimistic. Man may reach salvation because Christ has shown him the Way: "the ship of penance guides you through the sea of this world to the safe harbour of Paradise among the perils of Satan, of the flesh, of the world and of our present blindness", says a sermon. "The life of the pilgrims, that is the present life, must be a continuous watch and at the end they will come to the feast and all cries and tears will have an end." The Christian fight is hard and severe but fought in optimism. Pierrette Paravy writes:

> "It is a voluntaristic concept, very far both from a vulgar pelagianism and from a mystic oppressive agostinism, that brings to the shining hope that - with God's help - following the Way of Christ who has ransomed him through his Passion, man may live in this world in a way that will permit him to face up serenely to the Judgment, relying on his Creator's mercy."[39]

I shall conclude by quoting the end of another beautiful Waldensian poem: "*Lo Novel Confort*" (*The new comfort*):

> Dearest friends wake up, don't sleep,
> because you don't know in which hour Christ shall come.
> Serve always God with open heart
> in order to enter in the glory without end.
>
> Now come to the glimmer of the day and be not negligent,
> knock at the door and make it virtuously,
> and the Holy Spirit will open gently to you
> and will lead you truly to the glory of Heaven.
>
> Come and do not await the dark night,
> that is very obscure, horrible and dreadful,
> to whom comes by night the bridegroom or the spouse
> will not open the precious door.[40]

Now let me repeat the last four verses in the original language. The splendid, musical, alpine Provençal spoken by the Waldenses:

> Vene, non atenda a la noit tenebrosa,
> lacal es mot escura, orribla e spavantosa;
> aquel que ven de noit, ja l'espos ni l'esposa
> non ubriran a lui la porta preciosa.

[39] P. Paravy, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p 1142.
[40] Cfr. *Six Vaudois Poems*, ed. by H.J. Chaytor cit., p 48, vv. 289-300.

PROPHETIC AND RENEWAL MOVEMENTS IN THE CHURCH - SOME REFLECTIONS FROM A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE -

John A. Radano

Introduction

Often, when in Geneva, I walk through the old city and visit the "Holy Places" of that city's Reformation and I see concrete expressions of Reforming and Prophetic Movements of the Reformation, which reflect the theme of this conference. I visit St. Peter's Cathedral in Geneva – since the 16th century a Reformed Cathedral, and Calvin's auditorium next to it, and the street on which Calvin lived. I visit the Reformation Wall in the park nearby. There one sees at the center of the wall, the four imposing figures of Geneva's great Reformers – Farel, Calvin, Beza and Knox. And along the wall there are vignettes of other Reformers of that period in other European countries and in the fledgling New World. Two other large monuments, one on each side of the Reformation Wall, but in front of it, honor Zwingli and Luther. And carved recently on these latter monuments, and perhaps this is a tribute to those who have conducted these "Prague Conferences" for close to 20 years, are additional names, of pre-magisterial Reformation figures such as Peter Waldo, John Hus, John Wyclif. And then, carved in large letters across the Reformation Wall, the message which sums up the vision of the Reform: POST TENEBRAS LUX.

I am fascinated by this scene for a number of reasons: especially because it captures a sense of the Reformed heritage of Geneva which interests me especially since I have close contacts with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

At the same time another thing is clear: all of this is fashioned in stone. The message of these Reformers is fashioned in stone. And so my question is, how do the descendants of the Reformers understand the situation today, after decades of the ecumenical movement. Does *Post tenebras lux* represent their conviction even today vis-à-vis the descendants of the established Church which the Reformers confronted? Even though not all theological differences have been resolved between Reformed and Catholics, years of dialogue have brought about significant levels of new understanding. In my imagination I wonder whether we are coming to the time when, all of us represented at this meeting can build a new monument, somewhere, on which another message might be carved in stone, representing the steps toward unity that we have taken and saying something like "Learning to share together again the *light* of the Gospel"?

This conference gives us an opportunity to reflect together on questions of prophecy and renewal movements in the church, today and in history. I hope it helps us to reflect on and interpret these in the context of the current ecumenical situation.

I. Prophecy and Renewal: Permanent Functions within the Church

I would suggest a working description of prophecy within the Church as follows. Prophecy means being inspired by the Holy Spirit to speak and/or act in a way that reflects God's will, addressing the concrete situation and environment, particularly those forces within it which go contrary to God's will, and often calling people to conversion.[1]

In Catholic understanding, the prophetic function is a permanent function in the Church,[2] and it is related first of all to Christ's prophetic office. Sometimes particular individuals might be called "prophets" because of the significant positive impact their witness to the Gospel is seen to have in Church

[1] Cf. Rahner and Vogrimler, *Theological Dictionary*, (1963); Gerald O'Collins S.J. and Edward G. Farrugia S.J., *A Concise Dictionary of Theology* (1981), *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement (2nd Edition)* (2003).
[2] Yves Congar, *Vraie et Fausse Réforme Dans l'Eglise*, Paris, Les Editions du Cerf, 1969, pp 179-206.

or society. Nonetheless, in Catholic teaching all the baptized share in Christ's prophetic office. According to the Second Vatican Council, "Christ, the great Prophet, who proclaimed the Kingdom of His Father by the testimony of His life and the power of His words, continually fulfills His prophetic office until his full glory is revealed. He does this not only through the hierarchy who teach in His name and with His authority, but also through the laity" (*Lumen gentium 35)*. The laity and others are called "to be strong in faith and hope…make the most of the present time" (cf. Eph. 5; Col. 4:5). There is an eschatological aspect as they are asked "with patience (to) await the glory that is to come" (cf. Rom. 8:25). In "the present time" they must not hide this hope, "but even in the framework of secular life…express it by a continual turning toward God… and wrestling… 'against the spiritual forces of wickedness' (Eph. 6:12)" (*Ibid.)*. In this spirit of *Lumen gentium*, John Paul II's recent Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Gregis*, (October, 2003), resulting from the Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome 2001 which reflected precisely on the role of the bishop, says that "The Bishop is called in a particular way to be a prophet, witness and servant of hope. He has the duty of instilling confidence and proclaiming before all people the basis of Christian hope (cf. I Pet. 3:15). The Bishop is the prophet, witness and servant of this hope, especially where a culture of 'the here and now' leaves no room for openness to transcendence" (#3). This prophetic function of "speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15) is often intimately related to renewal in the Church.

Yves Congar cites Saint Thomas Aquinas' view of the difference between prophecy as it functioned in the Old Testament, and as it functions in the Church. The ancient prophets, Aquinas said, were sent for two purposes: to establish the faith and to rectify behavior. But now, in regard to the first purpose, the faith has been founded since things promised of old have been fulfilled in Christ. Congar would add that prophetism since the time of Christ must now be inscribed within the framework of apostolicity.[3] But that second purpose of prophecy, which has as its goal to rectify behavior, according to Aquinas, will never cease.[4]

The Second Vatican Council: "a Reforming Council"

The Second Vatican Council was, for the Catholic Church, a prophetic event. Pope John XXIII wanted the Church to address the present age, and to bring the Gospel to the world with renewed strength. He therefore wanted an *aggiornamento* in the Church. In the words of *Gaudium et Spes*, "the Council yearns to explain to everyone how it conceives of the presence and activity of the Church in the world of today" (n.2). "The Council brings to mankind light kindled from the Gospel and puts at its disposal those saving resources which the Church herself, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, receives from her founder" (n.3). Karl Barth described the Council as a "Reforming Council."[5]

II. Some Perspectives on Renewal According to Vatican II

The Second Vatican Council spoke of the permanent need of renewal. "The Church", said *Lumen Gentium*, "embracing sinners in her bosom is at the same time holy and always in need of being purified and incessantly pursues the path of penance and renewal" (*Lg* 8). The Church calls its members "to purify and renew themselves so that the sign of Christ may shine more brightly over the face of the Church" (*Lg* 15).

The Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio* spoke of both personal reform (cf.n.7) and institutional reform (n.6). It spoke of what renewal is aimed at:

[3] *Vraie Et Fausse Réforme Dans L'Eglise*, pp 199-200. Congar's presentation on this is recalled by Avery Cardinal Dulles "True and False Reform", *First Things*, August/September 2003, p 17.
[4] *Vraie Et Fausse Réforme Dans L'Eglise, p 199.*
[5] Karl Barth, *Ad Limina Apostolorum.*(1967), p 69, cited in Johannes Feiner, "Commentary on the Decree" (on Ecumenism), in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, Herbert Vorgrimler General Editor, Vol. II, p 96.

> "Every renewal of the Church essentially consists in an increase of fidelity to her own calling. Undoubtedly this explains the dynamism of the movement toward unity" (n.6).

The Council used the word "reformation".

> "Christ summons the Church, as she goes her pilgrim way, to that continual reformation of which she is always in need insofar as she is an institution of men here on earth; therefore, if the influence of events or of the times has led to deficiencies of doctrine (which must be carefully distinguished from the deposit itself of faith), these should be appropriately rectified at the proper moment" (n.6).

Number 6 of the Decree does not distinguish renewal and reformation, but commentators note the difference.[6] The renewal or "increase of fidelity toward the churches own calling" means nothing less than an effort to fulfil more faithfully the demands of the gospel, which is what the Reformation churches have always professed in the principle "*Ecclesia semper Reformanda*."[7] The notion of *reformatio* (reformation) sounds unfamiliar to many Catholics, but it derives from ancient Catholic tradition. Popes, Councils and churchmen of the Middle Ages and the Reformation period used the term quite naturally for the Catholic Church (Council of Trent – *Decreta et Canones super reformatione*).[8]

Also, the need for reform applies to the Church, as the Decree says, "in so far as she is an institution of men here on earth." Thus, it applies to the historical form of the Church, to that which is determined by the thought and action of the members of the Church. This is in contrast to, or distinguished from, that which is the essential nature of the Church, desired and effected by God. (For example Pope John Paul II in the encyclical *Ut unum sint* invited ecumenical dialogue on "the *forms* in which this ministry may accomplish a service of love recognized by all concerned" [n.95, emphasis added]. He did not put aside that ministry because in a Catholic understanding, it is part of God's will for the Church). Nonetheless, the Church as determined by God always exists in a particular historical form "determined by the thought, action and behavior of men in the Church" which in turn are at least influenced by innumerable historical factors, some of which can be bad. Therefore the Church must constantly discern how far the historical form is in accord with the spirit and demands of the Gospel, and make constantly renewed efforts to ensure that it is.[9] Such discernment needs to be done for the health of the Church itself, and also for the sake of ecumenism.[10]

In light of such passages from Vatican II, the characteristics of proper reform from a Catholic perspective might be summarized in this way.[11] To reform means to give a new and better form to a preexistent reality while preserving the essentials. Reform implies organic continuity and does not add something foreign. Unlike revolution, reform respects and retains the substance that was previously there; unlike development, which is good, it implies that something has gone wrong and needs to be corrected. The point of departure for reform is always an idea or institution that is affirmed, but thought to have been in some way imperfectly or defectively realized. The goal is to make persons in institutions more faithful to an ideal and understanding already accepted. Thus, true reform would not undermine the essentials of Catholic Christianity. To propose, for example, that the Church should deny the divinity of Christ, or try to substitute a form of religious democracy for the hierarchical structure of the Church, is to misunderstand the nature of Catholicism and the nature of reform. Anyone seeking to reform the Church must share the Church's faith. Reform in a Catholic sense, will also respect the Church's worship and pastoral life. Thus it is not only the sheer logic of an intellectual system, which governs reform, but

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[6] E. Stakemeier, cited by Feiner, *Ibid.*, p 95, note 23. According to E. Stakemeier, "Reformatio" (Reformation) means a restoration of the pattern of a previous age which has been deformed through human weakness and sin. This is the sense in which the Catholic reform of the 16th century used the word, and the pattern to which it referred was that of the Church of the patristic age, though it did not thereby call into question the legitimate development since that period. In contrast, "renovatio" (renewal) means a more faithful and more profound attitude to all areas of Christian life, based on the spirit of the gospel.
[7] Feiner, *ibid.*, p 95.
[8] *Ibid.*, pp 95-96.
[9] Cf. *Ibid.*, p 96.
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] Much of the next paragraph is based on Avery Cardinal Dulles, *op. cit.*

concrete, pastoral possibilities need to be taken into account. Thus, according to Yves Congar from his own experience, reformers have to exercise the virtue of patience, often accepting delays. Reformers will recognize that they themselves stand under correction and their proposals, even if valid, may be premature. Congar thought Luther was lacking in patience. But, Luther himself, "cautioned his disciple Andreas Karlstadt on the importance of proceeding slowly, so as not to offend simple believers who were unprepared for changes that were objectively warranted."[12] Reform must respect the divinely given structure of the Church. For example, it is the responsibility of the hierarchical magisterium (consulting with theologians and others) to assess the compatibility of proposals for reform with the Church's faith. Reform in a Catholic spirit will seek to maintain communion with the whole Church, and avoid schism or factionalism.

III. Interpreting the Reformation

In the letter that I received indicating my task at this meeting, it was suggested that "it would be valuable if we could consider also some of the prophetic movements (of the Reformers) that were eventually accepted by the Catholic Church and not only the ones that were not." In fact, one of the values of our ecumenical dialogues over these last several decades is that they have shed light on precisely this question among others.

In responding to this request, I want to comment, first, on Catholic perception of the Reformers in the 16th century; second, on concerns of the Reformers which have now been accepted by the Catholic Church; and third, to raise a question about the Reformation, from the perspective of the contemporary ecumenical movement.

Catholic Perceptions of the Reformers in the 16th Century

Surely in the 16th century, the need for reform was clear to many. The international dialogues between the Catholic Church and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches on the one hand, and with the Mennonite World Conference on the other, have also called attention to the fact that there were important Catholic reform movements at that time, as well as those movements led by Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and, on a more radical basis, the Anabaptists. Reform was called for. It obviously went in different directions.

If reform was called for, why then did the established Church resist the proposals of the Reformers? This question was taken up by the 1990 report of the second phase of international dialogue between the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Catholic Church, entitled *Towards a Common Understanding of the Church* (TCUC). Its first chapter called "Toward a Reconciliation of Memories" addressed the 16th century and the ecclesiological concerns of both the Reformers and of the Roman Catholics at the time of the Reformation. I will take up only the latter and recall here only three of the various reasons for Catholic resistance to the Reformers. First the established church perceived in the proposals of the Reformers a discontinuity with previous efforts of reform. While previous reform efforts had usually concentrated on discipline, education, pastoral practice and similar matters, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin addressed themselves "first and foremost (if not only) to doctrine." Many people were taken by surprise and unwilling to accept this sudden shift to reform of doctrine and especially Luther's emphasis on the doctrine of justification. "They were shocked by the implication that the Church had for centuries been in error about the true meaning of the Gospel." Also Luther's case became embroiled in a thicket of personal and theological rivalries and of imperial-papal politics, so that fair procedures and the calmness required for listening to the Spirit were almost irretrievably compromised, and "vituperative rhetoric from both sides dominated theological exchanges" (n. 36).

[12] *Ibid.*

Secondly in this atmosphere, the demands and proposals of the Reformers were often also misunderstood by Catholics, and just as often distorted into caricatures. Direct access to their writings was piecemeal. The centrality and evangelical nature of the issue of justification for the Reformers was not grasped. Few Catholics understood that for the Reformers "what was at stake was not simply this or that doctrine, practice or institution, but the very Gospel itself" (n. 37). Many considered "reform", as stated above, as relating to discipline, education etc.

Thirdly, the Reformers were also seen as attacking various theological assumptions held by the Church. To give an example, it was assumed that Christ founded the Church, establishing it on the Apostles who are the basis of the episcopal order of ministry and authority in the Church, with the Bishop of Rome having more than a primacy of honor. The Reformers' proposals on Church order therefore "appeared to be an attack on the apostolic foundation of the Church" (n. 39). It was also assumed that although the Church lived under Scripture, the Church was chronologically prior to the writings of the New Testament and had recognized from earlier times that "it itself as a community, especially when assembled in Council, was the authoritative interpreter of the divine Word." A perception was that the "Reformers seemed to arrogate to themselves the right to interpret Scripture in a way at variance with the continuing tradition of the community and they did not seem to provide any warrant for their interpretation that was necessarily grounded in the community" (n. 39). Thus there was resistance to the Reformers.

But today, in the calmer ecumenical context of our time, we can see more clearly the convergences between Catholic doctrine and that of the Reformers. We can accept one another better today.

Catholic Acceptance of the Views of the Reformers

One of the prevailing images today of the dynamic of the ecumenical movement is that of the "sharing of gifts." Each of the Christian families, though separated from one another, has gifts to share. In light of this we ask, how has the Catholic Church accepted some of the views of the Reformers? We cannot say that all of the theological divergences between Catholics and churches stemming from the Reformation have been resolved. But in fact, dialogue has shown many ways in which the views of the Catholic Church today coincide with concerns expressed by the Reformers, and that some conflicts have been virtually resolved. This is especially clear in Lutheran-Catholic dialogues, but we can see this in other relationships as well.

The Lutheran-Catholic International Dialogue published in 1983 a statement on the occasion of Martin Luther's 500th birthday, entitled "Martin Luther – Witness to Jesus Christ". It pointed to the celebration three years earlier, in 1980, of the 450th Anniversary of the Augsburg Confession, the confession of faith which was inconceivable without the theology of Luther. Although the Catholic Church has not fully endorsed the Augsburg Confession, since some aspects of it are problematical for us, *Witness* quotes the Pope's statement in Germany (November 17, 1980) that the Confession reflects "a full accord on fundamental and central truths" between Catholics and Lutherans.[13] "This insight" says *Witness*, "facilitates the common affirmation of fundamental perceptions of Luther" (n.5).

Witness lists furthermore (n.24) some of "the insights of the Second Vatican Council which reflected elements of Luther's concerns", including:

- "an emphasis on the decisive importance of Holy Scripture for the life and teaching of the Church" (*Constitution on Divine Revelation*);
- the description of the Church as "the people of God" (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, chapter II);

[13] It is interesting to note that in 1980 Pope John Paul II referred to the Augsburg Confession in a positive way on a number of occasions.

- the affirmation of the need for continued renewal of the Church in its historical existence (*Dogmatic Constitution of the Church*, 8; *Decree on Ecumenism*, 6);
- the stress on the confession of faith in the cross of Jesus Christ and of its importance for the life of the individual Christian and of the Church as a whole (*Dogmatic Constitution of the Church*, 8; *Decree on Ecumenism*, 4; *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, 37);
- the understanding of Church ministries as service (*Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church*, 16; *Decree on the Ministry of Priests*);
- the emphasis on the priesthood of all believers (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, 10 and 11; *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, 2-4);
- commitment to the right of the individual to liberty in religious matters (*Declaration on Religious Freedom*).

Other requests of Luther, it says, were fulfilled in light of contemporary Catholic theology and practice regarding the use of the vernacular in the liturgy, the possibility of communion in both kinds, and the renewal of the theology and celebration of the Eucharist.

More recently, in the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* signed by the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church in 1999, we believe we have virtually resolved the disagreements on the central theological issue at the heart of the struggle between Luther and the Church authorities of his time. The *Joint Declaration* states that the mutual condemnations on this question toward each other, of the Council of Trent and of the Lutheran Confessions in the 16th century, do not apply today to those who hold the understanding of justification explained in the *Joint Declaration*.

The reports from each of the other dialogues in which the Catholic Church has been involved indicate convergences with the partner on a variety of points or an appreciation of their heritage. I will mention just a few points from dialogues or other contacts with the co-sponsors of this conference. The 1990 report of the Reformed-Catholic International Dialogue showed important convergence on a significant matter, saying that the Reformed understanding of the church as *creatura verbi* and a Catholic understanding of the church as *sacramentum gratiae*, "can in fact be seen as expressing the same instrumental reality under different aspects, as complementary to each other or as two sides of the same coin" (TCUC n.113). From another perspective, in 1986, as part of the year-long commemoration of the 450th anniversary of Calvin's coming to Geneva, Bishop Pierre Duprey, former Secretary of the Pontifical Council For Promoting Christian Unity, was invited by the University of Geneva to lecture at Calvin's Auditorium. Addressing himself to the question of what the Reformed churches can bring to the ecumenical movement, he focused on a preeminent Reformed emphasis: "speak even more clearly and unambiguously", he said, "of the love and grace of God. Or to put it slightly differently, to proclaim in all things the *soli Deo gloria."* He urged the Reformed churches to "bring to the ecumenical movement their sense of God's transcendence, of His infinitely free purpose, of the total gratuitousness of his good will (and) deepen still further their contemplation of that transcendence." He went on to suggest different ways in which this emphasis is important within ecumenism.[14] Here was deep appreciation by a Catholic of one of the theological positions that motivated the Geneva Reformers.

In the report of the Mennonite-Catholic International Dialogue (1998-2003) entitled "Called Together To be Peacemakers", in the treatment of the Church, we found differences but also important convergences. Concerning the relationship of the Church to peace, we could say together that "The Church is called to be a peace church, a peacemaking church. This is based on a conviction that we hold in common. We hold that the Church, founded by Christ, is called to be a living sign and an effective

[14] Pierre Duprey, "What the Ecumenical Movement Expects from the Reformed Churches: Catholic Perspectives", The Secretariat For Promoting Christian Unity Vatican City, *Information Service* 64 (1987), p 91.

instrument of peace, overcoming every form of enmity and reconciling all peoples in the peace of Christ (Eph. 4:13c)."[15]

Here in Prague, where we especially meet the heritage of Jan Hus, we recall the challenge of Pope John Paul II on his visit here April, 1990, "to define more precisely the place which John Hus occupies among the Reformers of the Church."[16] The process which followed over the decade has not found complete agreement by all on some of the theological views of Hus. But addressing an International Symposium on Hus held in Rome in 1999, Pope John Paul II described Hus as "a memorable figure for many reasons" but in particular, it is "his moral courage in the face of adversity and death that has made him a *figure of special significance to the Czech people,* who have themselves suffered much through the centuries" (emphasis original). The Pope expressed "deep regret for the cruel death inflicted on Jan Hus, and for the consequent wound of conflict and division which was thus imposed on the minds and hearts of the Bohemian people."[17] But the Pope went further in suggesting the larger significance of this study today "when many are working to create a new kind of unity in Europe." Studies such as yours, he said, "can help to inspire people to go beyond narrow ethnic and national confines to genuine openness and solidarity. It can help Europeans to understand that the continent will advance more assuredly to a new and enduring unity if it draws in fresh and creative ways upon its shared Christian roots and upon the specific identity which derived from them."[18]

An Ecumenical Question: What was the Intention of the Reformers?

The official international dialogues which have taken place since Vatican II have been valuable, ecumenical processes. They have brought to light theological convergence and, in some cases, consensus on some important issues, while clarifying the divergences which remain. This has fostered reconciliation. But, in a sense, these issues are only symptomatic of a larger problem, namely the very complex situation from which divergences in faith between us have emerged.

In light of this conference's focus on prophetic movements and reform, a question for me is this: do we not need to face together now, more directly, not just particular controversial theological issues, but the broader history of the 16th century Reformation and Catholic (or Counter) Reformation. Is it not important to sort out more clearly the variety of motivations - theological, political, social - which were at the heart of these events or influenced expressions of these events. And do we not need to do this precisely in order to *determine together*, what, during those times, was truly *prophetic* and what was *authentic renewal*?

Results of some of the international dialogues suggest several possibilities. For example it might be good to look again at Catholic reform efforts in the 16th century in relationship to the Reformers and the extent to which concerns about reform were similar. In the Reformed-Catholic report, TCUC, Catholics admit that on the eve of the Reformation there was much to criticize and reform was necessary. There were reform efforts but these were sporadic, and reform within the Catholic Church was undertaken in an urgent and more systematic way only after the Council of Trent (1545-63) began to address it.[19] At the same time, the vehemence with which abuses were denounced suggests that "the great leaders of both the Reformation and the Catholic reform must be seen as products of the concerns of the age …and to that extent, in continuity with those concerns and, indeed, with each other."[20] The Council of Trent (at Session XXIV) gave "the greatest importance" to the responsibility of bishops to proclaim the

[15] The sources supporting this statement from each side, referred to in a note, are *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective,* 22, and *Gaudium et Spes,* pp 42, 78.
[16] The Pope's address is found in *Information Service* 75 (1990), p 139.
[17] "Pope's Address to International Symposium on John Hus", December 17, 1999, *Information Service* 103 (2000), p 36.
[18] *Ibid.,* p 37.
[19] *Towards A Common Understanding of the Church,* "Ecclesiological and Reforming Concerns of Roman Catholics at the time of the Reformation". Nos. 33-35.
[20] *Ibid.,* p 35.

Word of God,[21] but this was somewhat obscured because the doctrine of the sacrament of order, promulgated a few months earlier, did not provide any place for the ministry of the Word, "so much was the Council worried about defending the doctrine of sacraments.[22] Nonetheless, this latter fact "masks what was actually happening in Catholicism at that time and for several centuries thereafter." In suggesting again the common roots of Protestant and Catholic reform, the Catholic analysis in TCUC indicates that "…the ministry of the Word was vigorously pursued, not so much because of the criticism of the Reformers as because in this regard the same reforming ideals impelled both Protestants and Catholics…"[23] This development in the ministry of the Word illustrates that Catholic reform in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "was much broader than the Council of Trent and cannot be simply equated with it" and also promoted many other important developments in Catholic life.[24] The Church had resources "for bringing renewal from within."[25] While the Council of Trent came too late to avoid divisions, it clarified Catholic doctrine and "introduced reforms which have had lasting effects in the Church", and eventually "paved the way for the significant reform and renewal brought… through the second Vatican Council…"[26] As impressive as the Catholic reform was in many ways, it was also "not without its failures and false steps."[27] And, of course, in the continuing conflicts with Protestants in the centuries that followed, until the twentieth, relations with Protestants were characterized by partisanship and one-sided argumentation.

Besides the Catholic intention for renewal in the 16th century, a second consideration concerns the actual life of the church on the eve of the reformation. The recent report of the Mennonite-Catholic International dialogue, entitled "Called Together to be Peacemakers"[28], notes that for a long time both Catholic and Protestant historians described religious life at the end of the middle ages in terms of crisis and decline. But today, even though they would clearly acknowledge that there were serious problems and abuses and therefore the need for reform, "There is a growing tendency, both among Catholic and Protestant historians, to give a more positive evaluation of religious life around the year 1500." There was a religious vitality, and "they perceive the Reformation and the Catholic Reform not only as a reaction against late medieval religious life, but also and principally as a result and the fruit of this religious vitality" (n.34). Even if the historical picture is mixed, there are ecumenical efforts today by Christians who have usually had very different readings of that period, to look again at that history, and even to re-read church history together.[29]

A third consideration is this. Cardinal Walter Kasper has recently raised the question, in different contexts, of the intention of the Reformers. In his address to the recent General Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation (July 2003) he stated: "As I understand it, the Reformers did not want to build a new Church; they wanted to preserve the continuity of the Church of all centuries, they wanted to renew the one universal, the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. But the communion was broken in the 16th century for many reasons, reasons both theological and non-theological, with fault on both sides and to the detriment of both sides. In different ways, we are both wounded by our divisions." But then he asked whether what failed in the 16th century could not be healed today in a new context and in view of new common challenges?[30]

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[21] *Ibid.*, 46, refers to Session XXIV, Nov. 11, 1563, can IV *de Reformatione.*
[22] *Ibid.*, refers to session XXIII, July 15, 1563 *De Ordine.*
[23] *Ibid., 46.* The analysis states this while adding immediately: "even though much Catholic preaching may not have been biblical in a sense that the Reformed could recognize."
[24] Such as "a great flowering of spiritualities and cultivation of religious experience, a vast program of catechesis,extensive systems of schools for laity and clergy, as well as other new forms of ministry and evangelisation". *Ibid.*, p 47.
[25] *Ibid.*, p 53.
[26] *Ibid.*, p 53.
[27] *Ibid.*, p 47. A number of failures and false steps are described in 47.
[28] Called Together To Be Peacemakers. Report of the International Dialogue between the Catholic Church and Mennonite World Conference 1998-2003, *Information Service* 113 (2003), pp 111-148.
[29] *Ibid.*, Chapter I, "Considering History Together".
[30] Found in *Information Service* 113 (2003), pp 73-74, here 74. In his opening address to the recent Plenary meeting (November 3-8, 2003) of our Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Kasper came back to this question again. More sharply, he

Perhaps, in today's ecumenical atmosphere, with a common reading of the history of their separations, Christians can sort out together the various motivations and factors – theological, political, cultural, etc. – influencing each side in the conflicts of the 16th century (as well as before and after). Perhaps they can determine together now, more clearly, where prophetic vision could be found, and identify together that which was authentic renewal in the Church, and discern together, concerning the conflicts among Christians during those times, the extent to which the positive intentions of each side for the well being of the Church carried the day, or whether those intentions gave way to other motivations such as political expediency, to the eventual detriment of all.

IV. Prophecy, Renewal and Ecumenism

What can we say about prophecy and renewal in reference to the ecumenical movement today?

Is the Ecumenical Movement Prophetic?

The article on "Prophecy" by Geiko Müller Fahrenholz, in the revised *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* (Second Edition) notes that some of the leading persons in the ecumenical movement have been acknowledged as prophetic, such as John R. Mott, Robert Gardiner, Oldham, Söderblom, Brent, Bonhoeffer, Oscar Romero. But then he states that "whether the ecumenical movement as such should be called prophetic is open to debate", adding quickly that certainly it has the role of reminding the Church of shortcomings such as lack of unity, sharing, solidarity.

I would like to take that side of the debate that suggests that the ecumenical movement is prophetic. It has done more than remind the churches of their shortcomings on unity, etc. Reflecting Christ's prayer for his disciples "that they may all be one… so that the world may believe" (John 17:21), it has been an instrument for fostering the reconciliation of Christians long divided from one another. It calls separated Christians together to find a common understanding, for the sake of mission, of the truth of God's revelation in Christ for our salvation, as expressed in the scriptures, confessed in the major Creeds and handed down over the ages since the time of the Apostles. The ecumenical movement has resulted in the development of new relationships between Christians who had been separated for centuries. There are many examples of church union completed, and other efforts of church union in process now. Agreements such as the Leuenberg agreement, the Porvoo agreement and others have brought degrees of reconciliation among the followers of Christ. We know that there are weaknesses in these agreements, and questions are raised concerning whether they are being implemented and even whether they work. But they are achievements that have fostered unity.

The Catholic Church has experienced levels of reconciliation with other Christians in a variety of ways, – through the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, the Christological agreements with Oriental Orthodox Churches, the new mutual understanding brought about with many churches and communities by a variety of dialogues including dialogues involving those communities represented in this room, and with many other partners: these are all a blessing to us. While there are tensions still remaining, and much work still to be done, these achievements are moments of grace and of reconciliation. In these efforts, Christians have been responding to Christ's will for the unity of His disciples (cf. John 17:21) and therefore, in ecumenism, Christians are engaged in prophetic work.

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stated that "Luther scholars, both Protestants and Catholic, have demonstrated that Luther's intention – and that of other reformers – was not to establish a separate Confessional Church, but to reform, on the basis of the Gospel, the existing universal Church." But "this intention failed for both theological and political reasons. Given that currently the ecumenical movement embraces the legitimate request of all involved as "an exchange of gifts" (*Uus* 28), the legitimacy of every separation is called into question". This view of the intention of the Reformers contrasts with the view of those who speak of a *basic difference* between the Reformers and the established church, such that the establishment of a separate church was inevitable.

The World in Revolution: A Major Test for Prophetic Ecumenism

But what is the will of God for the Churches today? The world today is in the midst of a variety of continuing, unprecedented, interrelated revolutions. Among these we experience the revolution in communications and media and the availability of information. We see the continuing revolution described as globalization, which, in a positive sense, represents progress, an acknowledgement of the unity of humanity, although in its negative effects, has widened the divisions between rich and poor, fostered injustice, bringing devastation to many. In Europe we see another revolution, one that emerged after World War II and continues to bring nations of Europe from the earlier *independence* as nation states in which the seeds of war were easily planted, to an economic and political *interdependence* binding European nations together in a new way. One also sees today the revolution in ethics and morals reflected in secular society. How can Christians, still separated from one another, deal with these events going on all around them?

In fact, the ecumenical movement that took hold in the 20th century in Europe and throughout the world is another revolution, of a religious kind, which has come about at the same time as those just mentioned. It has brought Christian Churches out of centuries of mutual isolation or conflict, into new relationships, into "a real though imperfect communion", having impact on churches even on the global level. Perhaps the continued efforts of Christians to overcome their own separation could assist the churches in offering Gospel values to the nations as they face problems of globalization and the other enormous challenges of today.

Dulles makes a point concerning reform in the Church which is important for the churches and for ecumenical relations today, as the world goes through these revolutions. We must be on guard, he says, against proposed reforms in the Church that are aligned with prevailing tendencies in secular society and culture. Thus, enormous harm was done in early modern times by the influence of nationalism in religion; it was a major factor contributing to the divisions of the Reformation era.[31] Today we might ask, for example, how compatible with Christian norms are aspects of the revolution in society concerning sexual ethics and morality, and marriage, which is having an impact on the Churches and even creating conditions that could lead to schism within some Christian communions?

The Christian norms and criteria for assessing such reforms are not those of secular society and the contemporary culture, with which, however, Christians need to be in dialogue. Rather the ultimate criterion is always the Gospel which is often counter cultural. It is from reflection on the Gospel that we learn of God's saving act in Jesus Christ with all its implications for the way Christians live in society.

A major test lies ahead. Within the ecumenical movement, can Christians cooperate in assessing, in the light of the Gospel, the revolutions represented in secular and cultural developments today, rather than being drawn into those revolutions simply on their terms? Since the ecumenical movement is aimed at reconciliation and unity, it can foster a particular Christian culture which might offer an alternative to aspects of secular thought and culture which may be in sharp contrast to the Gospel. Above all, it can help Christians to face these revolutions together. The ecumenical movement can be effective and prophetic if the separated churches are truly committed to it.

Concluding Comment

It is my hope that these Prague conferences bring into the service of the ecumenical movement all of the best convictions of the various families represented here: those of the magisterial reformation, those of the first reformation, and those of the radical reformation. It is my hope that these conferences clarify the relationships, and deepen the bonds of communion between these various churches.

[31] Dulles, *op. cit.*

While the main purpose of the conferences is to show the relationship between these reformation families, the fact that efforts have been made to invite Orthodox and Catholics into this process reflects the deep ecumenical convictions of those who have sponsored these meetings.

20th CENTURY ANABAPTIST-MENNONITES RE-SHAPED BY CONTEXT – FIRST, SECOND and THIRD WORLDS -

Walter Sawatsky

The Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition needs no introduction to a group of scholars today.[1] That it is and was fully Christian, not heretical as charged back in the 16th century, is widely assumed. There still are evangelists for Anabaptism, seeking to convince the listener about the superiority of the Anabaptist reformist agenda, many themselves converts from another tradition. Indeed elements of such defensiveness about one's Reformation tradition are still widespread, yet much has changed in that regard, mostly over the past century. We now teach our students to appreciate a broader and fuller Reformation agenda.[2] Yet in my experience, prevailing assumptions about the Anabaptists are sufficiently contradictory that one must state certain parameters before proceeding. That task is also necessarily autobiographical.

Anabaptist or Mennonite Nomenclature as Implicit Ideology

The *Wiedertäufer* (rendered *Anabaptist* in Latin) was a false and pejorative term. Those "Brethren in Christ" who began practicing believer's baptism of adults understood that act to be a true baptism. Their previous baptism as children was the false one. How is it that no Germanic Mennonites accept the *Wiedertäufer* label whereas its equivalent - *Anabaptist* - has become widespread as preferred label in America?

It is striking that the two originating national communities of Anabaptist-Mennonites are still officially known as *Alt-Taufgesinnte Mennoniten* (Swiss) and *Doopsgezinde* (Dutch). Indeed much of the subsequent literature on their movement relied on the *Täufer* or *Täuferbewegung* as short hand designation. Eventually the primary church tradition that traced direct lines to the Täufer came to be known by the posters announcing a reward for capturing their Dutch bishop Menno Simons. That is, some variation on Mennist, now Mennonite in English, came to be the self-designation that was least problematic. Menno clearly was a serious, respected reformer, who helped gather the communities that were under duress. His many writings did have an impact, above all his desire to make 1 Cor. 5:11 foundational: i.e. "no other foundation than Jesus Christ." Within the English speaking world, now unusually large since English has become the lingua franca of gatherings of the global Anabaptist-Mennonite community, there is a shift in nomenclature taking place, a preference for *Anabaptist*.

Thus far, the Mennonite World Conference, that includes numerous church conferences that do not have "Mennonite" in their title - the Brethren in Christ, for example - retains its name, but its spokespersons are following an American trend of using "Anabaptist".[3] I lack time and space to elucidate the reasons for this, but usually the advocates of "Anabaptist" no longer are bothered by its pejorative history, some indeed are separatist enough to prefer that, but argue that Anabaptist is more inclusive of its membership and more accurately draws attention to a desired theology. Implicit is also a devaluation of "Mennonite", whether the contemporary churches are meant or the historic tradition, as a lesser quality. Others, including me as historian, have grown increasingly suspicious of the ideological ring in

[1] The most widely used general history is C.J. Dyck, *An Introduction to Mennonite History*. (Scottdale: Herald Press, 3rd ed. 1993.) Extensive detail, as well as interpretive essays can be found in *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1-5. (Herald Press). This writer is currently preparing a one volume Mennonite History from a Global Perspective.

[2] In my case, I have found helpful the papers from Prague 3, "Towards a Renewed Dialogue", in particular I ask students to react to Lukas Vischer's "The Reformation Heritage and the Ecumenical Movement", pp 161-169.

[3] The report on the MWC General Council meeting in August 2003 indicates an action to use as sub-title: "a community of Anabaptist-related churches", *MWC Courier*, Vol. 18, Nos. 3&4, p 24.

"Anabaptist" speech, and see the primary emphases of the advocates for Anabaptist labeling as privileging one particular variant of the historic Radical Reformation movement.

That variant became known as the "recovery of the Anabaptist vision".[4] Three of the most active (all from Elkhart county Indiana where I now live) were engaged in helping the old Mennonite Church (meaning Swiss origin immigrants present in USA since 1683) adapt to society and form a denomination. Instead of splitting their community between modernists/liberals and fundamentalists, their appeal to 16th century European origins was intended to produce a self-identity suited for sustaining authentic witness in America.[5] Harold S. Bender's 1944 speech "The Anabaptist Vision", initially presented to the American Society of Church History, became the programmatic statement. Widely circulated in pamphlet form, it has remained in print to the present and circulates globally in translation. Best remembered is its three part emphasis on a concept of the church as committed community, a discipleship emphasis, and non-resistance (now usually translated as peace or nonviolence). The Anabaptists that Bender had in mind were the Evangelical Anabaptists, a group that fit an acceptable doctrinal standard, and did not include Anabaptists once acknowledged by other Anabaptists as part of a *Bruderschaft*. For example, neither Balthasar Hubmeier nor Hans Denck met Bender's criteria, the one not pacifist, the other too mystical.

At the time of the 450th anniversary of Anabaptism (1975) several scholarly conferences and published papers achieved a revisionist orthodoxy now referred to as the "polygenesis" of Anabaptism.[6] There were at least three near simultaneous beginnings - all reactions to what the Reformation as a whole was becoming in their region - whose leaders recognized a family resemblance in each other. As the Radical Reformation developed, those differences served as grounds for the separatist movements that followed. Resistance to the polygenesis thesis, or of valuing persistent Anabaptist diversity, has been most obvious in Mennonite Church leadership circles.[7] Many who advocate the "Anabaptist" label prefer the tri-partite simplicity of the Anabaptist Vision statement for popular church program articulation.

The capacity for common discourse across the geographic divides in Europe was always difficult, and soon the desire for common fellowship disappeared. When Mennonite World Conference (MWC) was first formed in 1925 at a small gathering in Switzerland to mark the 400th anniversary of Anabaptism, the distrust between the participating Mennonite communities in Europe alone was so great that a joint service of the Lord's Supper was not thinkable.[8] As late as 1975, such deep rejection of each other at the Lord's table was still evident, a point easily forgotten when observing the much more diverse MWC gathering of Mennonites and Brethren in Christ taking communion together in Bulawayo in August of 2003. Also too easily forgotten is the fact that at least half as many Mennonites as were officially included in the Mennonite World Conference family, have opted to stay out of that organization, so as not to compromise their faith and doctrine. As a free church community, they too have the right to declare their particular version of faithfulness to the tradition as the authentic one.

Such excessive and persistent diversity may surprise those who thought that by reading Bender's *Anabaptist Vision* they had caught the essence of the Anabaptist-Movement over the centuries. But it should also remind spokespersons from other Reformation traditions, including the Roman Catholic, that the essentials of each tradition were and remain in dispute. As we seek to converse out of our Reformation traditions, we are now more sensitized to the competing visions and strategies for renewal

[4] Guy F. Hershberger, ed. *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*. Scottdale: Herald Press. A Festschrift to Harold S. Bender.
[5] Albert N. Keim, *Harold S. Bender. 1897-1962.* Scottdale: Herald Press, 1998. On alternate understandings of the vision, compare the chapter in C.J. Dyck cited above "This they Believerd", or the essay by Mary Sprunger, Conrad Grebel Review, 1994.
[6] Some essays appeared in Hans Jürgen Goertz, ed. *Umstrittenes Täufertum, 1525-1975.* Neue Forschungen. 2. Aufl. Göttingen 1977; James Stayer, Werner Packull, & Klaus Depperman, "From Monogenesis to Polygenesis: The Historical Discussion of Anabaptist Origins", *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 49 (April, 1975).
[7] See also C. Arnold Snyder, "Beyond Polygenesis: Recovering the Unity and Diversity of Anabaptist Theology", in H. Wayne Pipkin, ed. *Essays in Anabaptist Theology*. Elkhart: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1994, pp 1-33.
[8] The best short history of MWC is John A. Lapp & Ed van Straten, "Mennonite World Conference 1925-2000: From Euro-American Conference to Worldwide Communion", *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 77 (Jan. 2003), pp 7-45.

and reform within our own ranks. That has tended to make us more appreciative of the common dilemma of how to utilize that larger Reformation project beneficially in our global life and witness as Christians.

My purpose here, as a modern historian/theologian, is to take seriously the many contextual influences that have changed us over time. Both within my Mennonite world and beyond, it remains a challenge to think of the Christian Tradition and of our smaller traditions as having a history of development, where neither some rediscovery of an elusive pristine beginning, nor a celebration of our present reality as the result of unending progress can serve. For me, the most persistent challenge, and at the same time the most elusive one, over the course of six or seven Prague consultations, has been to engage in a constructively critical assessment of how we have lived with our history.

So autobiographically speaking, I was raised within the Russian Mennonite community settled in Canada, yet shaped deeply by the now two centuries of Russian Mennonite experience. It was at college in USA that I first learned of the Schleitheim confession, of the Benderian Anabaptist vision, and of the forms of social protest that even a Mennonite should engage in during that Vietnam war era. My time in Europe (1973-85) was preceded, however, by doctoral studies in Russian history, eventually causing me to take the Russian Orthodox story much more seriously, theologically so, than I had expected. Living in Europe involved a gradual shift away from the self-confidence of coming to teach the Europeans peacemaking, toward finding a more penitential stance of seeking the way of reconciliation and justice together with a wide ecumenical sweep of Christians who had come to recognize that Cold War thinking was a *cul de sac*. Returning to North America in 1985 to teach church history at a major seminary of the Mennonites, learning to fit into that culture and even become an American citizen, at the time when America drifted into global isolationism, forced me to notice legacies and problems in ways that leave me more troubled today. As Mennonite representative I need to inform you of what appear to be central emphases of contemporary Anabaptists, yet also to present a Mennonite theology that is at least as deeply rooted in that 475 year story of change.

Prophetic and Reforming Movements in 16th Century Anabaptism

When First and Radical Reformation representatives first met in Prague in 1985, we seemed to think that our movements were often viewed as the most prophetic, as the ones seeking the most thorough going reform of Christianity. So we had been viewed as a threat to the established order, more so even than Luther, Zwingli and Calvin were a threat, and we merited concerted attack to eradicate such radicalism. Since we were still here representing the radical traditions, either the eradication policies had not succeeded, or we had capitulated. In point of fact, though such sentiments were surely in the air, our consultations involved reading that history with much more nuance. Here I must limit myself to highlighting a few developments in scholarship to show the current status of thinking.[9]

How radical were the Anabaptists really? Broadly speaking, two moments of extreme radicalism always come to mind when thinking of the Anabaptist-Mennonite legacy. There was the radical realization of the kingdom community in Münster (1533) that included resort to arms, to polygamy, and which was brutally destroyed in the name of the conquering bishop and prince. A chastened nonviolent, nearly social avoidance community, lead by Menno Simons and others survived in the low countries. It became the largest and most active manifestation of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition throughout the following centuries. Until recent decades, Mennonites went out of their way to distance themselves from the Münsterites, whereas Münster served as byword for extremism. The fuller picture of recent research is more complex and nuanced.[10]

[9] See for example the epilogue in C. Arnold Snyder, *Anabaptist history and Theology. An Introduction*. Waterloo: Pandora Press, 1995, pp 379-408 on historiography and bibliography, as well as his entire volume; Hans-Jürgen Goertz, *Das Schwierige Erbe der Mennoniten. Aufsätze und Reden*. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2002.
[10] Walter Klaassen, *Living at the End of the Ages*. (Lanham MD: University Press of America, 1992).

There emerged, second, from its Russian Mennonite extension, a radically millenarian group that undertook a costly trek in 1880 across the desert to modern Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in the hope of meeting the returning Lord.[11] As we now know, a more lasting motive for a majority of the group was not so much the eschatology of Klaas Epp, but the vision to find territory outside empires and commonwealths, where they might live out their non-resistant principles. Within a short time the expanding Russian Empire had overtaken them anyway. Both these movements are generally seen by Mennonites as crossing a line of radicality, so have not served as models to emulate.

The third notable radical movement was the attempt of the Hutterian Brethren around 1600, when settled in Moravia, to make community of goods the central tenet. As recent scholarship has shown, this focus on community of goods served to separate Hutterians from Mennonites, and over the course of the re-catholicization in the next fifty years, the Hutterian community dwindled.[12]

At the zenith of Anabaptist studies (between 1950 and 1970) it was possible to claim statistical significance for Anabaptists in specific regions of Europe, and, above all, to see them as forerunners of values now taken for granted in modernity. The modern assumptions of freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, voluntarism in religion, that Bender in his Anabaptist Vision statement had described as "basic in American Protestantism and so essential to democracy", he then claimed were "derived from the Anabaptists of the Reformation period, who for the first time clearly enunciated them and challenged the Christian world to follow them in practice." (p.4). More recent scholarship, both on Anabaptism and a broader comparative study of modern European and global history no longer make such claims meaningful, though they can still be encountered in popular Mennonite writing. For example, theologian James Reimer cited Mennonite Islamic scholar David Shenk restating Bender's comments in more glowing terms, the Anabaptists "blazing the way forward for the global commitments today to human rights, religious freedom and pluralistic culture."[13] Reimer was less certain the links to the modern democratic state should be celebrated so freely, having in mind Hauerwas' claim that such a state "is intrinsically dependent on violence to sustain itself", so Reimer sensed a dilemma for Mennonites in modernity.

One of the most recent collections of essays devoted to Anabaptist studies provides a handy introduction to the sobriety now characteristic of Anabaptist studies.[14] Although statistical record keeping was a later development, present research allows us to draw a more accurate picture of the Anabaptist communities. Common to most studies is the finding that until 1618 the majority of Anabaptists were artisans, that is, were from the "middle elements of the population". The men were dominant, more so in the more Biblicist groups, less so in the spiritualist groups. But among Anabaptist martyrs, women constituted about one third, a higher percentage than in most other martyr traditions. In light of various broad generalizations, the more sober estimate now is that 2000-2500 Anabaptists suffered martyrdom in the Reformation era. This represented 40-50% of all Reformation era martyrs, a sobering fact in another way. Recent research has also established that Protestant authorities more often spared the lives of dissenters than did Catholic authorities. Seen through yet another angle, the relatively low numbers of martyrs caused Dutch scholar Zijlstra to assert that Dutch Mennonite survival was due "to the stubborn resistance of local authorities to enforcement of the laws against heresy", the Dutch Republic protecting *Doopsgezinde* after 1570.[15]

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[11] For a handy reinterpretation, see Edmund Pries, "Revisiting the Russian Mennonite Trek to Central Asia", *Conrad Grebel Review*, 9 (Fall 1991), pp 259-275, as well as Dallas Wiebe "A Mennonite Apocalypse: Claas Epp's Timetable for the Second Coming", in Loren L. Johns, ed. *Apocalypticism and Millennialism: Shaping a Believers Church Eschatology for the Twenty-first Century*. Waterloo: Pandora Press, 2000.

[12] I am relying here on Astrid von Schlachta, "Against Selfishness': Community of Goods as Life Choice", in C. Arnold Snyder, *Commoners and Community. Essays in Honour of Werner O. Packull*. Waterloo: Pandora Press, 2003, pp 217-232.

[13] A. James Reimer, "Law, Conscience and Civil Responsibility: Marpeck, Mennonites and Contemporary Social Ethics", in Snyder, *Commoner and Community*, p 122.

[14] James M. Stayer, "Numbers in Anabaptist Research", in Snyder, *Commoner and Community*, pp 51-74. Many of the essays, some cited here, offer such an assessment of Anabaptist research.

[15] *Ibid*. p 59. James Stayer relied on the authoritative work by Brad S. Gregory, *Salvaton at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early*

Indeed, as we learn more about the survival and development story of the Dutch Mennonites during the Enlightenment era, more questions from the legacy have emerged to ponder.[16] Whereas one had relied on the claim of 160,000 Dutch Mennonites around 1700, with a steady loss of membership thereafter to the present, it now seems clear that between 1570 and 1670 Dutch *Doopsgezinde* membership remained constant around 60-65,000, though the general population was growing in numbers. During the 18th century Dutch Mennonites were active as leaders and publicists for learned societies, for social agencies and for reform groups. A seminary (though with only one professor teaching) had been sponsored by the Lamist wing of the church since 1735, which became the seminary of the united ADS in 1811 and continues to the present. Dutch Mennonites were active in the Enlightenment, editing journals, some active in Free Mason societies, while others were leaders in Pietism, as preachers, poets, etc. An interesting finding was the number of Mennonites politically active, supportive of the Batavian Republic set up under Napoleon, many of whom were seminary students. Yet, "unlike many Dutch Mennonites, north German Mennonites [also participating in the Enlightenment and Pietism] remained politically obedient to the established powers."[17] Why this is so is not easily answered, except for the obvious difference of political context for Dutch and north Germans.

Even the conventional picture of the Swiss and south German Anabaptists moving toward greater isolation from society and settling for apoliticism requires adjustment when one pursues the subsequent developments. The unearthing of manuscripts from the end of the 16th century reveals an active "Marpeck group" among the Swiss Brethren, Marpeck's irenic and flexible style not having died out after all. In theologian Reimer's reading of the material, they show less of the strict dualism of Schleitheim,

> "a more comprehensive reading of the Bible as a whole, using figurative and spiritualist hermeneutics; respect for individual conscience and opposition to coercive measures in matters of faith... support of the ban but with toleration of diversity within the church; greater flexibility in relating to government officials; and less readiness to damn those outside the perfection of Christ."[18]

These remarks can only be illustrative of current trends in research, but they do provide more indicators of adapting creatively to new settings, without losing core beliefs. The current standard overview of *Anabaptist History and Theology* by Arnold Snyder, though still much more reliant on south German and Swiss materials than the northern ones, does stress that the central ethical concern of the early Anabaptists was social and economic justice for the oppressed, the related concern for nonresistance and pacifism developed into a core belief somewhat later.[19] When we review the subsequent history, it becomes evident that concern for justice and peace persisted, though its forms of expression varied widely.

Modern Europe. (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press 1999) for comparative statistics. It is worth noting in light of my argument about comparing legacies, as Marjan Blok, "Anabaptism in Flanders: An Introduction", *Preservings*, No. 26, 2006, pp 8-10, has pointed out, that in Van Braght's Martyrs' Mirror (1660), two thirds of the 16th century martyrs are of Flemish descent. Flemish Anabaptists were a popular movement, that entirely disappeared from Flanders by century's end, but the impact of Flemish Anabaptist refugees on Frisians, on the longer confessional tradition extending to Russia and the Americas, has been major, though it remains less well studied.

[16] One helpful set of essays is Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, Piet Visser, eds. *From Martyrs to Muppy: A Historical Introduction to Cultural Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in The Netherlands: The Mennonites*. Kinderhook NY: International Book Distributors, 1994; see also Lies Brussee-van der Zee, Annelies Verbeek, Piet Visser & Ruth Winsemous, eds. *Balanceren op de smalle weg*. Festschrift to Kees van Duin, Sjouke Voolstra & Alle Hoekema, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum 2002).

[17] Michael Driedger, "An Article Missing from the Mennonite Encyclopedia: "The Enlightenment in The Netherlands", in Synder, *Commoner and Community*, pp 101-120, see fn 46, p 120; see also Michael Driedger, *Obedient Heretics: Mennonite Identities in Lutheran Hamburg and Altona during the Confessional Age*. (Aldershot UK: Ashgate Publishing 2002).

[18] Reimer, "Law, Conscience...", p 136. Reimer was arguing for historic precedents on behalf of a public or political theology, less suspicious of state totalizing and more flexibly engaged.

[19] See his chapter 17, "Anabaptism and Economics", pp 237-252. For the current most comprehensive and judicious summary of scholarship on Swiss and South German Anabaptism, see C. Arnold Snyder, "The Birth and Evolution of Swiss Anabaptism, 1520-1530", *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, LXXX, 4 (October 2006), pp 501-645.

Prophetic and Reforming Elements in the 20th Century Anabaptist-Mennonite World

The 20th century is widely regarded as the North American Mennonite era, where its organized and professionalized church structures (usually along business models) began to develop ministries with global impact.[20] By end of century, it was common to read the writings of the Mennonite theologians who took the world of American Mennonites as the norm, who referred to virtually no Mennonite scholar from Europe or other parts of the world (unless the latter wrote in English). Hence the dominant issues perceived flowed out of the American context, and even the ecumenical discourse that developed necessarily through exposure to ideas in universities, tended to pay increased attention to the world of American theological discourse. In what follows I will contrast this intellectual dominance by Americans, with alternative Mennonite experiences, where the latter have remained at a disadvantage in terms of access to doctoral level scholarship but not necessarily to thinking out the theological legacy in their settings.

Russian and American Worlds Compared

Mennonites were shaped profoundly by several major events of the 20th century, but it was not a common shaping. The Russian Revolution of 1917 came to be seen after 1930 as having caused the end of Mennonite life in Russia. But in 1900 the Russian Mennonites with about 120,000 members were the largest best organized Mennonite church communities (following a colony structure). They had developed an extensive infrastructure for social service (largely to members, through schools and hospitals, but also reaching out to nationals by the 1880s). They organized mission to Siberia, Indonesia and India, were active in Bible societies, an evangelical publishing house, and were becoming politically engaged. In developmental terms, they had needed a fifty year phase of adaptation to the new frontier settings (and for many the frontier setting remained as they moved eastward to Siberia and Central Asia) before taking on the character of a church community seeking to fit into its society. Then, with the end of formal Mennonite life in Russia by 1929, and with the stories of violence and atrocities that 22,000 immigrants brought to Canada and USA in the 1920s, one particular interpretation of the story came to dominate. Something had gone wrong within the Russian Mennonite community, so the interpretation, communism and anarchism were a judgement on the wealth and accommodation to society that such Mennonites had drifted into.

Hence American Mennonites developed a self-righteous notion of sustaining greater purity of living, a self-understanding that was reinforced by the second great event, World War II. There were no German Mennonite COs, the churches having adopted a statement of loyalty to National Socialism that merely requested the right not to swear the oath, but military service could be done with a good conscience to help the rise of nationhood. Nor did any German Mennonites become known for their protection of the Jews. So after World War II, Mennonite Central Committee as joint relief and service agency of North American Mennonites, sent peace missioners to Europe. In hindsight, the self-righteous presuppositions of the participants are evident, in particular because in both USA and Canada, Mennonites had successfully organized for alternative non-military service, and now extended that to rebuilding and reconciliation projects, initially in Western Europe. Yet the North Americans experienced very little of the war in their communities.

Reacting to the perceived Russian Mennonite failure and to the German Mennonite failure, it was activist churchmen and scholars, largely from the Swiss American tradition who now gained dominance in Euro-American relations. If the mature H.S. Bender and his vision statement energized post

[20] The most extensive general treatments, both completed in 1999, are a 4 volume *Mennonite Experience in America* (Scottdale: Herald Press) (the four writers were Richard McMaster, Theron Schlabach (also general editor), James Juhnke and Paul Toews; and Frank H. Epp, Ted Regehr, *Mennonites in Canada.* 3 Vols. (Toronto: McMillan).

World War II peace programs, his best known protégé was John Howard Yoder. Both men had intimate family connections to south German and Swiss/French Mennonite communities, and found themselves speaking differing languages (literally and figuratively) with the more educated Dutch and North German Mennonites.[21]

It is therefore very striking to observe how Mennonite notions of faithfulness over against the challenges of Communism and World War II were understood. Take the writings of John Howard Yoder as best known today, for example. His most common points of reference for constructing a social ethic, as in his well-known *Politics of Jesus*, were to advance a Biblical hermeneutic that was fully conversant with current Biblical scholarship, and secondly, to challenge the dominant American ethicist Reinhold Niebuhr, the one whose writings on *Moral Man and Immoral Society* permitted Christians within the American state department to pursue aggressive brinkmanship, including readiness to seriously contemplate launching a nuclear device. With that Niebuhrian realism, Yoder contrasted Biblical realism. For a historian, Yoder's accomplishments remain a mystery because his use of lived Mennonite history is so consistently missing. What he relied on was the claim for an early Apostolic church faithfully living out a pacifist witness, until the church went apostate under Constantine. There was a brief recovery of such faithfulness in the 16th century, where apparently some Anabaptists did indeed live out that same witness, so that Yoder could claim that it was realistically possible. Whenever he referred to Mennonite developments, it was invariably a story of declension from Anabaptist ideals.[22]

The tone of my presentation signals that I no longer share such an interpretation. That is because those two cataclysmic events were read in a way that served American exceptionalist mentality, were not really an entering into a more comprehensive Mennonite experience. The Russian Mennonite experience was complex, and did not end with those who immigrated to America by 1929, as the usual mythology implies. Instead, what all Mennonites who stayed in the USSR for the next 60 years had in common, was the traumatic experience of the most extensive martyrdom in Anabaptist-Mennonite history, and the sustained antipathy of an unfriendly state. In contrast to the Reformation era martyrdoms at the hands of zealots also claiming Christian conviction, now their faith was tested to the limits by outright enemies of all Christian faith. It produced a richness of prison meditation, of lives of service in ministry at ultimate personal cost, of discovery of fellowship with other believers that have remained beyond the comprehension of Americanized Mennonites. It also resulted in many cases of betrayal from within, of surrendering of faith in the face of rampant godlessness, and the death of a culture once so deeply shaped by faith. Yet by century's end, the Mennonite survivors joined other believers in a resurrection of faith and vision for mission and service to society.[23]

Most of the separate Mennonite faith communities that had eventually been permitted to exist were abandoned in the massive immigration of 100,000 to Germany between 1987 and 1993. It was perceived by some as sign of loss of mission and service vision after all, especially at the moment of greatest opportunity. But from the vantage point of 2003, those emigrants have formed a network of thriving churches in Germany. Still suspicious of too much organization through which state authorities might try to interfere, they managed to sustain the most extensive program of missionary and social services inside the former Soviet Union, compared to their more affluent counterparts in Canada and USA. At the same time they organized Bible training institutions for their own communities, regularized the teaching of a peace theology that soon enabled them to support a corps of volunteers in civilian

[21] Cf. Keim, H.S. Bender, chaps. 17 & 21.
[22] See John D. Roth, "Living Between the Times: 'The Anabaptist Vision and Mennonite Reality' Revisited", in John D. Roth, ed. *Refocusing a Vision: Shaping Anabaptist Character in the 20st Century*. Goshen: Mennonite Historical Society, 1995, p 56. I developed this point at greater length in my (unpublished) paper at the Believers church conference: Assessing the Legacy of John Howard Yoder, entitled "Taking Church History Seriously When Weighted Down by Yoder's Dismissal of Constantinianism".
[23] See my "Historical Roots of a Post-Gulag Theology for Russian Mennonites", *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, April 2002, and also "Dying for What Faith: When do Martyrologies Inspire and Heal or When Do They Foster Christian Division?", *The Conrad Grebel Review*, Spring 2000, pp 31-53.

service projects. Most recently too, some of their number were elected to city and other local offices, hence a new interest in reflecting on a political theology.

Disturbingly absent from most North American scholarship on ethics and theology, is a wrestling with what happened within the expanding world of Mennonites throughout that 20th century, an inability to draw useful lessons from the rise and fall and rise again of a faithful church in Russia, for example. The related disturbing element that has inhibited serious wrestling with the major global transformations in recent years, is the assumption many Mennonites have taken - known to us in voting patterns - that in the face of Communist and Nazi evil, ultimately the weapons of an army are what keeps us safe. Such thinking makes sense, when one considers the radical disjuncture between the two kingdoms, as articulated in the Schleitheim confession of faith, which circulated widely among American Mennonites following John H. Yoder's translation into English.[24] Given that incipient mindset, it is understandable how much the Yoderian body of ethics has contributed to a critique of apoliticism by Mennonites in American society, by considering the politics of Jesus, yet at the same time warning against getting caught up in the temptation to power through the democratic process.

In recent years as the Bush Administration began to assert and to act on its doctrine of pre-emptive security, critical voices have drawn attention to the national myth of redemptive violence. This is the notion that there is a life and death battle to be fought between the forces of good and evil, where in the end the good wins by eradicating the evil. When this mythology sets the tone for most popular literature, for the television programs that most Mennonites also watch to a degree unthinkable 40 years ago, it is worth asking whether indeed American Mennonites have remained immune to redemptive violence theology.

Let me offer ways of seeing its impact on Mennonite thought and practice in America. The imagery utilized in the *Left Behind* series,[25] now best sellers not only in Christian bookstores where Mennonites and Brethren were already buying, but also in Walmarts and other popular places, that imagery draws extensively from Biblical apocalyptic literature. To what extent have American Mennonites bought into modern dispensationalism as imagined in the *Left Behind* series? That includes a view of the role of the Israeli state in prophetic fulfillment, in which the politics and military behavior of Prime Minister Sharon's government are supported unquestionably. At a relatively recent Believers' Church conference on Apocalypticism and Millenarianism,[26] those developments were addressed, but we can only infer the extent of Mennonite affirmation of pre-Tribulation warmaking, and we can assert that the teaching arm of the church has been critical.[27] The fundamental problem for the Anabaptist-Mennonite legacy is both its consistently strong affirmation of biblicism and its avoidance of serious reading and reflection on historical developments. Hence to mine the rich heritage of Mennonite and general Christian experience for comparing current expectations of the apocalypse with its recurrent history, is to enter an unaccustomed thought paradigm.

In the received wisdom that has also shaped recent American scholarly reflection, the North American public, including the majority of Mennonites, take the view that the arms race succeeded in stopping Communism. Whether one liked it or not, it is generally granted that the collapse of Marxist-Socialist regimes across eastern, central and south-eastern Europe was due to the implicit threat of NATO, and that the Soviets 'blinked', could not stare down Reagan's nuclear threat. So military power defeated the evil one in the Cold War. This is not the way most educated Europeans interpret that story, nor the way American scholars of the Soviet Union have written about the non-violent transformation of

[24] Helpful here is C. Arnold Snyder, "The Influence of the Schleithiem Articles on the Anabaptist movement: An Historical Evaluation", *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 63 (Oct. 1989), pp 323-45.
[25] A series of novels, by Tim LaHaye & Jerry B. Jenkins, Tyndale Publishers dramatizing the rapture and time of tribulation on earth.
[26] Loren L. Johns, ed. *Apocalypticism and Millennialism. Shaping a Believers Church Eschatology for the Twenty-First Century*. Waterloo: Pandora Press, 2000.
[27] For example, Dan Hertzler's review of the novels: "Assessing the 'Left Behind' Phenomenon", or three pastoral assessments by Loren Johns, Ron Guengrich and John Dey. Loren Johns, now dean at Associate Mennonite Biblical Seminary, has maintained an

its society during 1989, etc.[28] These two sharply contrasting world views account for much of the difference in attitude and perception today. It may well be that many years hence, the historians will get a hearing, but my point here is that the American mythology of redemptive violence runs so deep, that even America's pacifist Mennonites have difficulty getting their minds around the longings for civil society, for inner release from living the lie as Havel, Michnik, or East German theologians used to say, of being able to envision a moral revolution with the dimensions that shook up the second world and transformed South Africa - separate but ultimately closely linked developments.[29]

Contrasting Mennonites in Colombia and Paraguay

When dealing with comparative Mennonite history I found myself pondering the contrasts between the relatively small Mennonite community in Colombia and that in Paraguay, both South American countries where non-democratic military rule has framed the problems. In Colombia there has been a guerilla war against the regime over the past several decades. As the US government began to assist or interfere by attempting to halt the drug production and trade, with which the warring sides supported their fight, this ongoing war lost ideological coherence. Though a tiny church community of 1200 members, most of whom are living on or near the poverty line, nevertheless the Colombian Mennonite church has maintained an activist program of justice and peace teaching (called *Justapaz*), that eventually secured the right of conscientious objection to military service, though its leader Esquival encounters periodic threats to his life. That community draws inspiration from the radical discipleship of early Anabaptism, its sense of connection to that 16th century era remains strong because too often the cultural dominance of Roman Catholicism in Colombia is similar in character to that of 16th century Reformation Europe.

Paraguay was also heavily Catholic, though also never quite forgetting the type of mission epitomized by Jesuit settlements three centuries ago. Mennonites came to Paraguay from Russia in 1929, having been preceded by Russian Mennonites who had lived in Canada from 1874 till 1926. The latter group, finding the Canadian government's attempt to standardize school and language systems threatening to their way of life, hoped that in the isolation of the Paraguayan Chaco they would be left alone to live their faith. The beginnings were daunting, but there was support from fellow Mennonites from Europe and North America, and they opted to rely on the colony model and on the cooperatives they had learned in Russia. After several decades life began to improve. Paraguayan Indians began to settle near their colonies. Gradually an extensive program of colony settlement through the purchase of more land, and settlements for Indian tribes was developed, followed by an extensive rural and social development program. These Russian Mennonites were often held in low regard by North American Mennonites who objected to incidents of racist exploitation they heard about, or were upset when pro-Nazi sentiments took hold in the late 1930s, or because the Mennonites retained their own language and structures as a country within a country. Above all, given their experience of the death of the Mennonite colonies in Russia, why were they not more critical of the rule of General Stroessner, or did more to secure rights for Paraguayan citizens. Instead, through their industry the Mennonites as a small statistical minority in Paraguay have produced 90% of the milk and meat products, and maintain an extensive cotton industry. At the same time, though paying their state taxes without receiving civil services, they organized their own road building and electrical power plants, built their own hospitals and schools, by levying additional taxes on themselves.

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ongoing resource of readings, drawing on his expertise in the Apocalypse of John, on his web-site.

[28] See for example, Robert English, *Russia and the Idea of the West. Gorbachev, Intellectuals & the End of the Cold War*, (New York: Columbia University Press 2000).

[29] For a theologically focused comparison, see Walter Wink, *When the Powers Fall. Reconciliation in the Healing of Nations.* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1998).

In 2002 the smaller Mennonite Brethren conference in Paraguay approved a set of guidelines for participation in national politics. It is an indicator of yet another process of maturation in adapting to society, while seeking to apply the Anabaptist Mennonite theological legacy to a Paraguayan context. The most progressive and the quite conservative colonies have undergone a gradual change in relationships, evident in many joint social service projects, regular consultation between church conferences, and encouraging a new group of politically active members to stay close to the church. The recently elected President of Paraguay invited four Mennonites into his cabinet, two of them till then not politically active but respected businessmen. The obvious intent is to draw on the reputation for probity of the Mennonite community to assist in his anti-corruption program.

Which Legacy? What Agenda for Common Reformation Learning?

This review of the shifting understandings of the 16th century Anabaptist legacy and of the diverse expressions of 20th century Mennonite involvement in social reform offer hints of the promise ahead for living out of our shared legacies. It is when the concern for renewal and reform is able to translate itself into the particularity of a culture that the diversity of the original 16th century Reformation in the west of Europe can be appreciated more fully.

The literature that attempts to view Mennonite history from a global perspective is just beginning.[30] We have been looking to other traditions for ways of constructing the story, of establishing categories of importance that were not deemed central at an earlier period. Recent attempts at rethinking history by including more voices from below have also been a stimulus for rethinking church practice today. The dynamics of consulting together across the spectrum of Anabaptist-related churches in 60 countries in at least that many independent church structures have required a flexibility and sensitivity that one wishes might have been more in evidence before the Reformation divisions began. When MWC attempted to collect the confessions of faith of its member churches, the report at an assembly in Calcutta expressed difficulty in finding the common threads in the materials sent in. Some churches had no confession of faith, other's read like a foreign rule book, still others seemed focused on specific problems. At its 2003 gathering, the MWC Faith and Life Committee presented a seven point summary of "core convictions" that about half the member churches had submitted. One particpant in drafting the statement of "Shared Convictions" likened it to the 7-9 points of the Schleitheim Confession, yet in content and style they are different. The seven points address the confessional points of theology, christology, ecclesiology, Scripture, an ethic of love and justice, worship and witness in the world.[31]

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[30] The first volume Africa, has just appeared in a planned 5 volume series *A Global Mennonite History*, John A. Lapp as coordinating editor (Waterloo: Pandora Press, 2003), background articles from third world regions have appeared in journals such as *Mission Focus* and *Mennonite Life*.

[31] Full text in MWC Courier, Vol. 18, No. 3&4, p 24. SHARED CONVICTIONS:

By the grace of God we seek to live and proclaim the good news of reconciliation in Jesus Christ. As part of the one body of Christ at all times and places, we hold the following to be central to our belief and practice:

1. God is known to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Creator who seeks to restore fallen humanity by calling a people to be faithful in fellowship, worship, service and witness.
2. Jesus is the Son of God who showed in his life and teaching how to be faithful, and through his cross and resurrection redeemed the world.
3. The church is a community of those whom God's Spirit calls to turn from sin, acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord, receive baptism upon confession of faith, and follow Christ in life.
4. The faith community, under Holy Spirit guidance, interprets the Bible in the light of Jesus Christ to discern God's will for our obedience.
5. The Spirit of Jesus empowers us to trust God in all areas of life so we become peacemakers who renounce violence, love our enemies, seek justice, and share our possessions with those in need.
6. The faith community gathers regularly to worship, to celebrate the Lord's Supper and to hear the Word of God in a spirit of mutual accountability.
7. We seek to live in the world without conforming to the powers of evil, witnessing to God's grace by serving others, caring for creation and inviting all people to know Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

In these convictions we draw inspiration from Anabaptist forebears of the 16th century, who modeled radical discipleship to Jesus Christ. Walking in his name, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we confidently await Christ's return and the final fulfillment of God's kingdom.

Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, 17 August 2003.

The knowledgeable reader can detect the code words that indicate this confession was written by Anabaptist-Mennonites, though there is only a brief comment in the coda about drawing "inspiration from Anabaptist forebears of the 16th century who modeled radical discipleship to Jesus Christ", and no reference to being part of a lived history that obliges as well as inspires. Yet other Reformation traditions might find its content suitably inclusive for capturing the core convictions that hold within their world communities. When the statement appeared in a MWC publication, its heading read "What does it mean to be Anabaptist?" It might as accurately have asked "What does it mean to be Christian?", which is after all the more vital question. Perhaps that points to the way we could set about preparing our churches for the 500 year anniversaries of the Reformations, where what it means to be Christian does appear to be the central agenda of each of our Reformation churches.

On the other hand, the devil is in the details, or, to put it more specifically, how are we held accountable for the convictions and practices we proclaim? It is by now obvious to most, that the more one converses with persons of other Christian traditions, the better one understands one's own. That may be a way of saying that the inter-Reformation conversations serve to hold us accountable before each other, not just with reference to what founding fathers once said, but how we continue to live and speak in new tongues. Another verity in ecumenical circles has been to expect each tradition to hold high its particular emphasis, for that is its gift to the whole ecumene. The implicit assumptions remain problematic, in my judgement, but the intended goodwill should not be dismissed. If the Anabaptist-Mennonite contribution is the centrality of peace to the Gospel, or if, what was apparently more central to the many Anabaptist groups was a concern for social and economic justice for the oppressed, then the high expectations that fellow Reformation traditions hold of us on these points does indeed constitute a regular admonition to reassess our lived record. Given the record of denominational splintering and other conflicts it often seems easier to demonstrate that the historical record shows that the primary Mennonite conviction was for its truth claims, rather than that of love for the other. As to social and economic justice matters, the majority of Mennonites would also affirm God's "preferential option for the poor", usually seen as a Catholic liberationist statement - but the common problem for all of us is the truly limited degree to which our record of commitment to the poor and oppressed points. The Marxists may not now be heard and listened to, but we dare not forget the aptness of the Marxist critique.

GLOBALIZATION AND THE HOLINESS OF GOD - TOWARDS A REFORMED THEOLOGICAL AND POST-MARXIAN PROPHETIC RESISTANCE -

Peter Winzeler

Prophetic movements of the First and Second Reformation, as understood in this paper, have to account for their emergence and their goals within the framework of reverence for the holy name of God. That means, they have to speak carefully about the God of Israel and maintain respect for the first and second commandments of the Decalogue, in order to resist all temptation toward abusing the holy name of God for the sake of holy war, or for the sake of false prophecies or toward confusing ideological visions of globalization as the coming glory of the Kingdom of God.

Globalization, as understood in this paper, is one of the keywords of idolatry in all aspects of social, economic and cultural life today. It justifies and sanctifies the global terror on war, that is based on the allegation, that no real alternative to war exists that could stop this terror. This paper is written in the context of the Iraq-war and the terrible lies surrounding it, that are contested not only by churches and governments of the "old European" world, but also by the Reformed churches of the NCC in the USA, including the United Methodist Church, the denomination of President George W. Bush. This war was planned and conducted in favor of Globalization, in the vision (utopia) of a coming New World of freedom, justice and peace, but with the hidden agenda of furthering the naked interests of high capitalism, military and oil companies.[1] At the same time it gave occasion within my own Reformed Church, in Canton Bern, Switzerland, for a serious, substantive discussion on the challenges of globalization. That resulted in a new "policy statement" on behalf of the "Globalization of Justice".[2]

I will try to explain my personal views on this issue.

I. Political Questions and Remarks on Economics

My question begins by going a step further toward the roots of globalization, to show how this matter changed from a hopeful truth to a sinful lie. We need to distinguish between three forms or concepts of globalization.

The first concept has its roots in the heritage of old Christianity within the empire of Rome, an empire that united many Jewish and Christian people of all nations under the holy name of God. The Pauline view of justification gave all enslaved people the hope of liberation, justice and social or civil rights.[3] We could not speak about this phenomenon here in Prague today, without an appreciation of the Reformed and western idea of civil rights, that would be hopefully implanted in the former Marxist world of the East on the basis of the great accords from the Helsinki Process about human rights (1971) until the fall of the iron curtain (1989). Since 1968 there existed also an original eastern view of a 'Third Way' between western Capitalism (of free markets) and eastern Socialism (of the state), that was not identical with the social market-economy *(Soziale Marktwirtschaft)* of West Germany.[4] This historical fact seems to be very essential if we want to talk about an original post-Marxian view of prophetic movements within and emerging from the eastern part of the world. But this context has changed. Marxist thought is dead. Karl Barth and his intellectual partnership with Josef Hromadka are forgotten.

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[1] See the attached Open Letter to the NCC from the representatives and members of the German and French speaking Reformed Church in Biel/Bienne, February 5, 2003.

[2] Für die Globalisierung der Gerechtigkeit. Die Reformierten Kirchen Bern-Jura-Solothurn als Teil der weltweiten ökumenischen Bewegung. Policy des Synodalrates, 2003.

[3] See Esa Thames, *Contra todo condenda. La justificación por la fe desde los excluidos*. Costa Rica, 1991; *Gegen die Verurteilung zum Tod*. Luzern, 1998.

[4] See the works of Ota Sik about human-democratic socialism and market economy; cf. Arthur Rich, *Wirtschaftsethik* II. Gütersloh, 1999, 296-308.

Globalization today is totally different to the liberating God-talk of the New Testament scriptures and the evangelization of Saint Paul. Globalization became a slogan, used by anybody, anywhere in the world, robbing it of any useful meanings. It no longer has any analytic quality, no exact content, but is based only on a great feeling of a shrinking world, that now allows everybody to communicate with anyone anywhere in the world.

The second concept of globalization is the neo-liberal doctrine of free markets that should allow everyone in the world to participate in the goods or the social welfare of a capitalistic world-economy.[5] This view of global economic expansion of the free world markets is linked with the school of neo-liberal thought, but is not really different from the great descriptions that the early Karl Marx (in the *Communist Manifesto*) gave. In this point of view, the exportation of western democratic ideology is merely an instrument of capitalistic expansion all over the world. The eastern world was not strong enough to resist against the power of liberalization. The Marxist regimes of the last century indeed had emerged in dependent societies, lacking their own development and successful democratic revolution. Surely East Germany and the former Czechoslovakia had been exceptional cases, where the Marxist regimes were established after the Hitler war and its destruction of former economic power and of the democratic experience.

Yet following the Velvet Revolution (*Die Wende*) of 1989, these countries were unable to resist the ideology of the free market, a market which did not respect the social rights of women and of poor working people. I remember some papers that I wrote at the time of the fall of the Berlin wall, where I talked about the coming Latin-Americanization of the industrial, advanced Marxist world, in the same way as it had happened in Chile, Mexico, and Brazil or currently in Argentina. A friend of mine (Ton Veerkamp) wrote in a light-hearted manner about the increasing debts in hard currency (Dollars), that devoured the socialist systems - in the same *way* as they devour each democratic system in every place of the world. This phenomenon happened not along the lines of classic Marxist thought. Only Rosa Luxemburg had contested the wasteful power of a global reproduction of the progressing capitalistic production.[6] But here the book had been written before the rise of the Henry Ford production assembly line, now relying on oil and the progressive technological substitution of human labor. Luxemburg for the first time had stressed a Marxist ecological point of view, in regard to the fact that a totally liberated economy of free market never could value the limited resources of nature in a just and enduring way. As soon as capitalism devours all other societies of their social reproduction, it would destroy the basis of its own dynamic and come to an end.

There was much critique, namely by women, who stressed the “imperfect competition” as a matter of fact (Joan Robinson, grand lady of Keynesianism) and the idolatry of religious “priesthood” in the financial institutions (Hazel Henderson). Arguing along similar lines were Helmut Gollwitzer (Berlin) and his disciple Franz Hinkelammert, arguments which worked hand in hand with the thinking of the founders of liberation theology.[7] Theoretically it was always clear, that newly liberated free markets never could change the monopolistic structure of high capitalism and never would fulfill Adam Smith’s own utopia of the “invisible hand of God”. The neo-liberal utopia would no more be trusted sincerely by its own creators and actors, but - *en bona fide* - by the disciples and impoverished followers in eastern and southern states. These opened their markets in the belief and hope for more labor and credits. In this point of view, the belief in the false deity of free markets became a good instrument to disarm and force the surrender of the credulous governments in the dependent parts of the world.

The great gift of civil rights seems to appear as a Trojan horse of the globalized civil war, that started on 9/11, 1973, with the bombing of the *Moneda* of Salvador Allende in Chile. In this prophetic

[5] See Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, New York 1999; *Globalisierung verstehen*, München 2000; contested by Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*, New York , Norton, 2002; *Die Schatten der Globalisierung*, Berlin 2002.
[6] Rosa Luxemburg, *Die Akkumulation des Kapitals*, 1912; Joan Robinson, *An Essay on Marxian Economics*, 1942/1966; Hazel Henderson, *Das Ende der Ökonomie*, München 1985.

perception of what really happens in the world, the horrible attack on the Twin Towers appears not as a surprise, not as an incredible attack on all the foundations of modern civilization, but as the bitter result of the idolatry concept of modern globalization. I don't believe in the innocence of the national security doctrine of the Republican government in the USA. I think that this theological contestation is a very painful, very difficult and a very necessary concern of our discussions in Prague.

The third issue resulting from globalization today is the idolatry of security, the security of the conditions and resources for the foregoing reproduction of the living standard of upper and middle class people in the USA as well as the European nations, that seem to be dependent on the growth of the American dominated world economy. No more freedom, no more democratic revolution, but the military security, the social security and the ecological security for surviving in the coming disasters dominate globalization discourse, and its corresponding language of the big war against the terrorism of the insulted hungry, and enslaved people all over the world.

This can be characterized as the (Pauline) language of the *flesh* of globalization in its struggle against the liberating *spirit* of hope in a creative globalization for more humanity, justice, participation, democratic evolution and social-economic revolution as the great hope of all humankind. But I fear that the word globalization as such always includes some ideas of aggression and conquering and surrendering the rest of the world and would not be useful for the signs of the coming Kingdom of God in the Holiness and Glory of God.

II. Theological Remarks

The Holiness of the Name of God is the first condition of and implication for any theological reflection on the global liberation of human kind on this earth. Justification of sinners by faith alone, as seen by Martin Luther, includes the praising of the one God of Israel as the only holy God.[8] Sanctification of sinners by praying, working and living in the hope of the justifying God, as seen by Zwingli and Calvin, includes first the Sanctification of His name.[9] The calling to the Kingdom of God, as proposed by the author (see Prague Consultation VI), must be seen as the first step of the new life in Christ, that includes respect for the Jewish understanding of the holiness of God's name.[10] In other words, the goodness of Jesus Christ (his divine nature) is not to be separated from the Holy Spirit and the praxis of Christ, that sanctifies the holy name of God (see John 14-17). In this Trinitarian view, the holiness of God stands against each 'globalization' of human interests and laws, that would as such deny the coming glory of the Lord.

Globalization is not the coming solution of all problems in the world, but constitutes the main part of the problem we have to resolve when we praise the coming glory of the Lord. Globalization is a widely used and abused hermeneutical key to seek to understand all that is happening in the world - seen in the light of the ever shrinking planet, the imperative of limited resources, the imperative of sharing and of a new ascetic life style. It evokes little hope or no future at all, for the coming generations, but a great fear that all the beauty of this tiny little earth will be brought to a godless end.

Here I say "No" to this fear-driven ecological thinking that denies the abundance of creation. A theologically grounded prophetic movement cannot affirm this terrible fear, but has to affirm the beauty of the creation of God, which could be wasted, but ultimately cannot be destroyed by the idols of death.

The holy name of God stands against the ideas of a unique totality of American lifestyle spreading in all parts of the world. Many secular prophets see globalization as a matter of economic fact, evident in all aspects of cultural change, in political and social life today that can no longer be reversed or

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[7] Franz J. Hinkelammert, *Die ideologischen Waffen des Todes*, Fribourg/Brig/München 1985.
[8] See Magdalene Frettlöh, "'dass er im Brauch and Nutz soll stehen.' Zu Motiven einer Theologie des Namens in Martin Luthers Auslegung der ersten Vaterunser-Bitte and des zweiten Gebotes", in: *Gott wahr nehmen. Festschrift für Christian Link*, Neukirchen 2003, pp 65-96.
[9] See Karl Barth, *Das christliche Leben. Fragmente zur kirchlichen Dogmatik*, IV, 4 Zürich, 1976, § 77.3.
[10] See Berthold Klappert, "Hat das Neue Testament das 1. Gebot übertreten und Christus vergottet? Vorläufige Erwägungen zur

talked away (see Thomas Friedman). In this mainstream ideology - as interpreted by one of the most famous representatives of neo-liberal thought in the *New York Times* - globalization must be accepted first as a hard matter of fact, to be understood. This hard fact must first be accepted before it can be influenced and changed by people. Globalization here has indeed the quality of the First Commandment as a theological axiom.[11] Here arises a new Roman "Empire" without a real alternative.[12] But the First Commandment as such includes and opens a new reality before Israel and before all people, that are searching for a real existing alternative. A theologically grounded prophetic movement must not affirm the terrible view of one singular Goodness, but has to affirm the Name of the one God in Israel, who leads his people out of this idolatry of death. *There will be a real alternative of Liberation, if only you ask.*

The totality of globalization stands against the revelation of the holy name of God. In this revelation the globalization of the free market is no longer an unavoidable matter of fact, but a matter of blinded eyes, which are unable to see, what really happens in the world. This apocalyptic point of view comes out of post-Barthian liberation theology as a "Christian theology in context"[13] and comes close to a new dream of a "final" turning point in world history that would fulfil the dreams of many suffering generations, after the disaster of real-socialism and the terrifying Marxian regimes (1989), a disaster that reaches back to the rise of the French Revolution (1789), which now appears as a terrifying period of "old European" humanism.[14] The new European humanity cannot continue the old line of conquering the whole world. In this eschatological perception of the coming glory of the Lord we have a surprising convergence of post-socialistic and post-Marxian societies with the millenarian hopes of the minority church and the hard fact of secular post-Christian society in most parts of the western (or western influenced) world. To this surprising point of view I respond with both 'Yes' and 'No'. 'Yes' because there can be no compromise with the idolatry of globalization. 'No' in light of the deeply problematic heritage even of the apocalyptic movements, which included the expectation of the coming disaster of the old world in the hope of the coming glory of the Lord.

Jesus is the Son of man, who creates the new world and takes away the veil from our blinded eyes. The poor and poverty-stricken people living in most parts of earth have in fact no experience at all of all the great elements of globalization. They have no cell phone, no terminal, no computer, no electricity, no access to the Internet. They have neither property, nor interest, nor money in the strict sense.[15] They do not participate in the rise and fall of financial speculations. They are no shareholders of capitalistic values. They have no books, no schools, no hospitals, no water to drink, nor do they own land. Globalization appears here as a mere "veil of unconsciousness" (*Schleier des Nichtwissens*) but not in the terms of neoliberal doctrine (s. Friedrich A. von Hayek, John Rawls), but rather as the great vanity of scales, that blind our eyes. This doctrine of globalization is grounded on this veiled order of 'justice and providence', where no participant should ever be able to calculate, manipulate or at last to dominate free competition. The veil of the free market should have the function of the invisible hand of God (Adam Smith).

But this veil in fact hides the world of have-nots, that live in the stone-age today or in medieval societies or religious communities, i.e. that never had a good experience of democratic values of freedom or of civilian rights. And all these people have no place and no human right in the big economic concerns, because their labor is no longer needed, and will never be demanded. Their existence seems not to be provided for by the ideas, concepts and idols we have discussed. My thesis is therefore that the enlightenment of the veil of globalization needs the apocalyptic revelation of God, so that the scales fall from our blinded eyes.

Christologie als Auslegung des 1. Gebotes", in *Festschrift Link*, pp 97-126.
[11] See Karl Barth, *Das erste Gebot als theologisches Axiom*. 1929.
[12] See Michael Hardt/Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Harvard, 2000.
[13] See Timothy Gorringe, *Karl Barth, Against Hegemony*, Oxford 1999; cf. *Theology between East and West. A Radical Heritage (in honor of Jan Milič Lochman*) ed. by Frank D. Macchia & Sueng H.Chung, Oregon, Cascade Books, 2002.
[14] Cf. Karl Barth, *Die protestantische Theologie*, 1946; cf. Peter Winzeler, *Eine Zäsur des Dialoges. Zur Erinnerung an Karl Barth: Neue Dialog-Hefte* Jg. 1, 2001/3, pp 21-38.

ATTACHMENT

Open letter on the Iraq war to the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America (USA) - Biel-Bienne, February 5th, 2003

Dear Sisters and Brothers in the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA,

Be assured of our sympathy with the tradition of freedom your people and their churches have, with which we Christians in Switzerland know ourselves to be closely linked in many ways. Unfortunately no news is reaching us through the official media about your spiritual, ecumenical and public commitment to the resolution and prevention of a needless war by the US government against Iraq and its population, which has been starved and in need for years.

The NCC represents 36 churches and more than 50 million American Christians of different backgrounds, languages, social status and race. A delegation visited Iraq - Abraham's country of origin - to get a picture of the population's misery, in particular of the women and children, and to talk with representatives of all Abrahamic religions.

You called for a day of prayer and fasting on January 27th, 2003, in the belief that powerlessness cannot be an excuse before God, and that we should not give up hope:

"We can still stop this war."

This witness encourages us to raise our voices to support you in your position.

- Your nation feels attacked at its very heart by a terrorist attack that showed no respect for human life. All the more do we share your deep conviction in faith, that a war of vengeance is not a legitimate means of solving conflicts.
- God's mercy does not want human sacrifices, but life for all in solidarity, sister- and brotherhood, equality and justice. The US government is threatening a "sacrificial" isolationism outside international law, blackmailing the organs of the UN into making its "desired" decisions, and potentially also endangering the neutrality of the UN inspectors.

This dynamic is a cause for alarm.

We share your deep concern that this could destroy international law and send US soldiers to a senseless sacrificial death.

- God's love desires the reconciliation of all people, not the profit of a few at the cost of all. It is in contravention of Christ's Way and example to assign the evil in the world solely to our opponents, and to pursue the goal of self-justification in the name of Christianity against the members of another religious community.
- The Holy Scriptures call upon all the Abrahamic religions not to take God's name in vain but to worship it, because only through this can peace and healing be brought to all people. War and the breaching of the law cannot be justified by the Gospel.

We pray for you to hold firmly your position, and we ask for God's blessing on your success. The representatives and members of the German-and French-speaking Reformed Church in Biel-Bienne.

Further signatories

(in commission) Pfr.Peter Winzeler

Ewald Dammann	Valéry Blaser
President of Council (Presbyterium)	President of Council (Presbyterium)
Biel-Madretsch	Biel-City

[15] See Gunnar Heinsohn/Otto Steiger, *Eigentum, Zins und Geld*. Hamburg, Rowohlt, 1996.

FORMS OF VITA APOSTOLICA ET EVANGELICA: AN ESSAY ON MENDICANTS AND METHODISTS -

Charles W. Brockwell, jr.

Introduction

This research belongs as much in the portfolio of Anglican studies as it does in Methodist or Wesley studies. I am interested in Methodism as, and only as, part of the larger Christian story. Our particular 250 year story is a great and stirring one. Nevertheless, standing alone it is also a small one in the context of the two millennia of Christian history. Like all Churches, we are poor in tradition if the only history we know is that which we can claim directly.

This comparative study represents an unexpected convergence of apparently disparate research and teaching interests. In the seminary I am responsible for United Methodist heritage studies in the areas of history, theology, and ecclesiology. In the university I offer a broad range of Western European Medieval, Renaissance, and Reformation work. As I asked two questions - what is the place of Methodism in the church catholic, and how did Christianity evolve in medieval Europe - I began to discern significant and exciting parallels between Wesley's Methodism and the mendicant movements of five centuries earlier.

Methodist Medievalists

From out of the looming centuries between Constantine the Great and Martin Luther, John Wesley admired a few select individuals (for instance, Bernard of Clairvaux) as examplars of "heart religion". Otherwise, he shared the aversion to medieval Christianity that characterized the outlook of both Anglicanism and the Enlightenment. His knowledge of the medieval church was scant because 18th century Anglicans continued to be very negative about medieval Christianity. They took serious account only of the Bible, the eastern ancient church, Augustine, and the Caroline Divines. They knew Calvin and Calvinism, as well, but little else from the 16th century be it Roman Catholic, Protestant or Radical Reformation. The medieval centuries, identified with papacy and corruption, were despised. Wesley accepted the conventional judgement about what were better and worse eras in church history. Also, modern scholarly critical study of medieval history was in its infancy in his time.

So it is natural that only a few Methodist scholars have taken an interest in the medieval church. Methodist Episcopal Bishop John F. Hurst (d. 1903) seems the earliest. Then came Britishers Herbert B. Workman (d. 1951), Henry Bett (d. 1953), and R. Newton Flew (d. 1962). Today there is Principal Rupert E. Davies of Great Britain and United Methodist Bishop William R. Cannon. Of these only Workman and Bett had their main scholarly interest in all things medieval. Even Professor Albert Outler's polymathic interests were rooted in patristic studies.

Workman's brief 1909 essay for the New History of Methodism, "The Place of Methodism in the Catholic Church", appeared separately as well, and remains the classic attempt to speak to the question it raises. Like Hurst and Bett he was more interested in medieval dissenters such as Joachim of Flora (d. 1201/2), John Wycliffe (d. 1384), and John Hus (martyred 1415). No one has made a detailed comparative study of Wesley's Methodism with the powerful Church renewal movements of the High Middle Ages.

Nevertheless, as contemporary Anglican scholarship is happy to acknowledge, there are significant continuities from the Church into the Church of England. The English Church retained more of the medieval heritage than did any of the other movements which broke with Rome in the 16th century. Thus Anglicans, including the Wesleys, were more Catholic than they knew, or than Methodists have

subsequently appreciated. This makes it all the more fascinating, and instructive, to discover similar dynamics and phenomena operating in both the old Catholic Church and in this evangelical movement in the reformed catholic Church of England.

Two New Moments in Western Christian Spirituality

Mendicancy and Methodism arose at historical turning points; times of social crisis brought about by economic, and in the latter case technological, revolutions. Both were more urban than rural in terms of the populations they served. Both sought to be Church responses to eras radically different from those immediately preceding. Francis said, "God raised up the brothers". Wesley said, "God raised up the Methodist preachers."

The vast differences in the technology and scale of production, as well as in the number and concentrations of population, between the medieval Urban Revolution and the modern Industrial Revolution may have caused us to overlook commonalities between these two religious movements. Hugely different phenomena may have obscured our view of underlying shared dynamics, and even phenomena, in the "works of God" called mendicancy and Methodism. The great divide of the 16th century also leads us to assume there is little to be learned from comparing Methodism with the medieval church.

Research shows that both mendicancy and Methodism offered the love of God in Christ Jesus to despised and downtrodden people. The evangelistic thrust of Methodism is well known. It is less well known, at least among Protestants, how the mendicants, like the Methodists, reminted the Pauline model of urban evangelistic outreach. Mendicancy and Methodism sought to "look to the quarry from which the church was digged, and the rock from whence it was hewn" - *vita apostolica et evangelica*, "primitive Christianity". Both aimed to reform society, especially the Church, by renewing the people in the life of holiness (perfection).

The Mendicant and the Methodist Centuries

The opening of the second millennium of the Christian era brought a new day to Western Europe. Beginning in the late tenth/early eleventh centuries, a commercial and urban revival produced a Europe much changed by the time of Dominic and Francis in the 1200s. Some historians go so far as to speak of a medieval industrial revolution between the tenth and thirteenth centuries. One writes, "It is fascinating to see that the social prerequisites for the modern British Industrial Revolution were virtually the same as those for the medieval industrial revolution" (Gimpel, p 229).

I think this claims too much. There certainly was ever increasing production from the turn of the millennium to the Black Death, but the medieval world did not achieve the power technology nor produce the population level requisite to an industrial revolution and mass production. Water mills and windmills were the most sophisticated medieval power technology. The former made a numerical quantum jump from the 11th century. *Domesday Book* (1086) records 5,624 water mills in England, an average of one for every fifty families. This process continued in the 1100s, then stabilized until the 15th century. Windmills were introduced around 1180 from the East (Marcorini, I:99, 105).

Outside Islamic Spain (in the 10th century Cordova probably had 500,000 inhabitants) medieval urban populations before 1000 were puny. End of 13th century Paris may have had 228,000 people, making it by far the largest city in Europe (Christian *reconquista* in Spain was accompanied by precipitous urban decline). Next largest were Venice, which grew from 70,000 to 100,000 during the 1200s, and Genoa from 30,000 to 85,000. Florence went from 15,000 to 60,000 in the 13th century and at its peak in 1500 had only 70,000 inhabitants. Bruges never rose above 35,000-50,000. Cologne's population was 50,000 to 60,000, Mainz and Regensburg about 25,000. Nuremberg with only 10,000 persons was still a large city by medieval standards. Thirteenth century London had between 40,000 and

45,000, and would not be much more than 50,000 even in 1500 (Chandler, pp 107-125, 159, 187-188, 198, 204, 205, 208).

Industrial operations were correspondingly small scale. The chief industries of the Middle Ages were textiles, mining, and construction. Most textile production was done in homes, each part of the process carried out at a different site, and the whole operation held together by agents of the men who provided the raw materials and sold the finished goods. Not until the 1400s in England did a trend develop where rich entrepreneurs collected workers and placed them near their work centers. The state owned shipyard of Genoa, employing perhaps 5,000 men, was altogether exceptional.

Europe's renewed *urbanitas* produced significant distress for those whose labor made it possible. A third phase of guild history was beginning in the 13th century. In addition to merchant guilds (chambers of commerce) and craft or trade guilds (manufacturers associations), and staunchly opposed by them, the workers moved to organize their own guilds (labor unions).Only guilds of their own could win them economic leverage and political participation. Associations of journeymen, apprentices, and manual laborers were not welcomed by city councils whose membership was drawn from the commercial and entrepreneurial elite. The movement was not generally successful. Medieval workers did not create a viable corporate life.

This workers' struggle was a major theme of the century of Dominic and Francis. Clashes over the issues of money and power were carried to the streets. In Bruges the craft guilds literally fought their way to seats on the city council in the early 1300s.

Thus the cities of the 1200s were places of new concentrations of old social problems: exploitation of labor in boom times; unemployment and poverty in the down cycles; high visibility of persons unable to provide or care for themselves, and victims of injury, disease and death.

As early as the mid-1000s concerned monks and clerics generated a number of parallel, uncoordinated responses to this situation. This is called the *vita evangelica* movement. It resonated with the larger reform movement - the Gregorian reform - which claimed to be a renewal of *ecclesia apostolica et evangelica*.

In the late 12th century single, working class women, the beguines, living together in voluntary poverty, practiced *vita apostolica et evangelica* in the cities. Their male counterparts, the beghards, were usually from textile worker families. Originating in The Netherlands, this lay movement spread to France and Germany. The *Humiliati* (or Poor Catholics) were found in the towns of northern Italy. Best known were the Waldenses, originating in Lyons, soon declared heretical, and today a living Church. All of these were lay movements with an apostolate of ministry to the needy.

The *vita apostolica et evangelica* movement of the High Middle Ages found its classical orthodox expression in the mendicant orders of the 13th century. The Order of Friars Minor (Franciscans) and the Order of Preachers (Dominicans) are the famous ones. Carmelites, Hermits of St. Augustine, Williamites, Mercecarians, and Servites were also 13th century mendicant orders.

Added to urban social problems rooted in wages and working conditions, another prominent feature of 13th century European social history was religious dualism. Labeled heresy by the Church, this movement was powerfully influential through its own Albigensian or Cathar ecclesial structure. The Order of Preachers, the Dominicans, emerged to counter Catharism. This large topic of heresy (moderns might say dissent from the Catholic cultural consensus), however, is both tangential to the project we have immediately in hand and too large to be introduced here. The Methodists certainly were an Order of Preachers, but there is greater generic affinity between Franciscans and Methodists.

The revolution occurring in Georgian Britain was an industrial, economic, and urban revolution. Methodist scholars have this history well in mind. Only a few reminders are needed to bring it forward.

The Industrial Revolution may be dated from 1709 at Coalbrookdale, Shropshire when Abraham Darby succeeded in using coke rather than charcoal to melt iron ore. Its symbol Ironbridge, the world's first cast iron bridge, visited by John Wesley a few months before it was thrown across the Severn River

in 1779, is still visible (Works, [Jackson], IV:146). John William Fletcher, "the Methodist parson", and vicar of Madeley from 1760 to 1785, served, among others in his rough, poor parish, the people of Coalbrookdale.

Abraham Darby II further advanced iron production by using pit-coal coke obtained by dry distillation in mid-century. But the invention by Henry Cort in 1784 of the puddling process provided the breakthrough needed to rid raw pig iron of its impurities and render it convertible to forgeable iron in a reverbatory furnace, while still using coke as the fuel. These developments produced England's quantum leap forward in iron production (20,000 tons in 1720; 70,000 in 1788), and proportionate demand for coal production (4,500,000 tons in 1750; 6,000,000 in 1770; 10,000,000 in 1780) [Marcorini, I:223, 268].

The decades of Wesley's adult life also witnessed an explosion of inventions in textile manufacture. Henry Browne's machine for stamping hemp (1721); David Donald's automated cylinders for scutching and beating flax (1727); Basile Bouchon's mechanism for automatically choosing the cords to be drawn through a loom (1725); John Kay's flying shuttle (1733); the first truly mechanical spinning machine by Lewis Paul and John Wyatt (1738); James Hargreaves' hand operated spinning jenny (1764) and Richard Arkwright's water-powered spinning machine (1769).

To these advances in metallurgy there was added the power technology of steam. Thomas Newcomen built the steam engine that was in common use in collieries from 1712. James Watt made fundamental improvements in the efficiency of Newcomen's device in the 1760s. In the final decade of Wesley's life steam engines began to be used to operate machines in the metallurgy (1783) and textile industries (1785) [Marcorini, I: 226, 231, 236, 253-254, 268-269).

England's industrial and commercial cities began to overflow with people in the 18th century. Key representative population changes from 1700 to 1800 are as follows: Birmingham from 15,000 to 71,000; Bristol from 25,000 to 66,000; Liverpool from 5,000 to 76,000; London from 550,000 to 861,000; Manchester from 8,000 to 81,000, Newcastle 25,000 to 36,000 (Chandler, pp 181-189).

Through all these changes in the technology, scale, and speed of work, scores of thousands whose daily labor produced raw material and finished goods from mines, iron works, and textile mills - adults and children - were bent and brutalized under twelve to eighteen hour work days in six day work weeks, for low wages. The Church failed these people. Their new England was Methodism's original world parish.[1]

The pastoral integrity of the Georgian Church of England ought not to be universally condemned. As Anthony Armstrong summarizes, "whenever generalization is attempted, the eighteenth-century clergyman gets the worst of it; and whenever detailed study of individual clergy is made, they emerge with credit." It appears that the Church was, on the whole, "keeping its charge" with workmanlike fidelity; its parish clergy, in the main, conscientious and dutiful, if lacking the fervor and fire of Evangelicals and Methodists (Armstrong, p 28).

The Church, however, did not meet the challenge of its industrial new England because new parishes were not established to serve the booming cities. Before 1818, creating a new parish required Parliamentary approval. Intraparish chapels and proprietary chapels met some of the need. But new parishes in working-class areas, along with pastors drawn from and relating with worker families, were not provided (Armstrong, p 34). An apt analogy employed by Prof. Clifford H. Lawrence to describe the mendicant era Church may be fully applied to the early Methodist period, as well.

> The predicament of the thirteenth-century Church was rather like that of the British Railways in the mid-twentieth century - its layout reflected the economic and social

[1] Colliers were among the most benighted and bestialized segments of society. Until Wesley went among them they were generally unintroduced to religion. "The amazing rapidity with which Wesleyan Methodism was taken to, and spread among, miners was the most striking cultural change they underwent in the eighteenth century... In fact Methodism made far more impact on manufacturing communities in general than it did in agricultural villages. One thing which could with certainty be said about a miner or a manufacturing worker in eighteenth-century England, was that he was far more likely to have been a Methodist or dissenter of some other kind than was a farm labourer or small farmer" (Rule, [1981], pp 207-8).

> needs of an earlier age. In the thirteenth century the majority of the population still resided in the countryside; but the significant growth points were the towns, and thenceforward modes of Christian piety and forms of ascetical life would be determined by the religious experience of townsmen (Lawrence, p 240).

Economically, and thus socially, the European thirteenth and the English eighteenth centuries were radically different from their immediately preceding periods. Mendicancy and Methodism sought to be Church responses to human need arising from the Urban and the Industrial Revolutions. They proposed the practice of *vita apostolica et evangelica*, the reinstitution of primitive Christianity.

Some Mendicant and Methodist Similarities

Franciscans and Dominicans renewed the effort of the New Testament church to make the whole body of the faithful the primary subjects of spiritual direction. These mendicant friars were not cloistered monks. They recruited laity to pursue the path to perfection without leaving the world for the cloister. This was a permanent contribution to the history of Christian spirituality.

The friars itinerated, but not as free lance wanderers. They were accountable to superiors who appointed them to their work, and they lived by a prescribed *regula*. To be sure, the centripetal pull of institutional growth and consolidation moved the friars soon enough closely to resemble the monastic orders.

Dominicans and Franciscans were also connectional movements. The Order was headed by a Superior General or Minister General. Geographic provinces were led by provincial ministers. The local communities of friars and the lay fraternities of the order were under the discipline of a written rule of life. Connectional officers linking the local with the provincial levels had the power to enforce discipline. Decisions for the Order as a whole were taken at periodic General Chapters.

The Dominicans established houses in the towns. As their chief apostolate was preaching in defense of Catholic orthodoxy against the heretics, they built churches to accommodate large crowds. Sometimes they sent brothers to the smaller towns and the villages to conduct evangelistic campaigns of several weeks or months duration. Dominicans were also prominent in the 13th century missions to North Africa, northeast Europe, the Middle [Near] East, India and China.

This Order of Preachers was strongly committed to informed preaching. From their beginning, schools for members of the Order were important. By 1229, only fourteen years after their founding, they established their first chair of theology in the University of Paris, however reluctant the secular masters may have been to have them around. Not only did they produce much practical literature on preaching, but within one generation they gave the Church both Albert the Great and his stellar pupil Thomas Aquinas.

It is, however, the first great mendicant order of the 13th century that is more prominent in the Protestant image of the medieval church, owing to the universal appeal of Francis of Assisi. It turns out that early Methodism had more in common with the first Franciscans than with the Dominicans. Francis and his “little brothers” were helpers of the poor and the sick, especially lepers. They were also itinerant urban, and sometimes rural, evangelists. If anything, the Franciscans were even more active than the Dominicans as missionaries, and they led in the mission to Mongol China.

In the early years, the Friars Minor resisted education and the establishment of permanent houses. The struggle over issues related to institutionalization produced a tragic history even prior to Francis’ death. Before the 13th century was over these two great orders had grown very similar. Not surprisingly, however, their “denominational rivalry” lived on. At all events the Franciscans too produced great theologians in the century of their founding; thinkers like Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, and Duns Scotus. In the 14th century the English Franciscans, preeminently William of Ockham, were among the most creative thinkers in the Church.

The story of the mendicants takes on added interest for Methodists at the point of the development of the First, Second and Third Orders within the general Order; "the threefold army" as Francis put it. The First Order was the friars under vow. Some friars were ordained - Francis was a deacon, Dominic was a priest - while others remained lay. A Second Order of the mendicant organizations was provided for women who took vows, lived under a rule, and often devoted full time to the apostolate of the Order. Social service and the teaching of children were the usual activities of the Second Orders; work associated with the woman's role in that society. The Franciscan "Second Order", however, the Poor Clares (1212) were strictly cloistered. They participated very little in the apostolate of the First Order. The Third Order was for men and women who remained in secular life.

In the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, Benedictines and Premonstratensians began to respond to requests from groups of devout laity for spiritual guidance. At that time such developments were not widespread and cannot be spoken of as a movement across the church. Reference has already been made to the lay societies of the late 1100s, beguines and beghards, *Humiliati* and *Waldenses*.

These latter groups had an aspect of social protest about them. They expressed dissent in the idiom of the accepted Catholic cultural consensus. Some of them called particular attention to the contrast between the economic status of Christ and the apostles and that of contemporary aristocracy - lay, clerical, and religious - and thus created the potential for a popular demand for social change. One group founded in the 1170s, the Poor Men or Poor Catholics of Lyons, better known as the Waldensians, went within a decade from acceptance to proscription (1184). All of the other dissenting groups either dried up, blended with the mendicant phenomenon, or were suppressed. Of the medieval religious movements which fell under ecclesiastical condemnation, only the Waldensians survive.

The Franciscans came very close to being a repeat of the Waldensian story. That they were not speaks of the resilience of the church and her ability to domesticate revolutionary impulses in ecclesial life. Not only were the Franciscans permitted to remain in the church, they and the Dominicans provided a channel for the rising tide of lay piety through the agency of the Third Order.

The Franciscans made the greatest use of the Third Order. Francis, in cooperation with Count Cardinal Ugolino (Pope Gregory IX, 1227-41), wrote the tertiary rule. This 1221 Rule regularized a popular relationship to the Order which was probably practiced as early as 1209. At all events, Pope Benedict XV (1914-22) credited the Franciscan tertiary movement as the first effort by a religious order to open the religious life to everyone (Masseron and Habig, pp 401-07).

The 1221 Rule has eight chapters. It describes the distinctive dress of the men and women. "They are not to go to unseemly parties or to shows or dances." They and their households could not contribute to actors. Fasting and abstinence were required.

Franciscans were to be reconciled with their neighbors, including, if need be, restitution of what belonged to them. They would pay all tithes, past and future. They were to take formal oaths only when legally necessary. Oaths in ordinary conversations were also to be avoided. They were not to use lethal weapons or carry them on their persons.

Applicants for membership had to meet the conditions regarding debts, tithes and reconciliation. These novitiates were in probationary status for a year before being eligible for full membership. A married woman had to have her husband's consent before joining. The only ways out of Third Order membership were to enter a religious Order full-time or be expelled. Expulsion from the Order did not carry with it excommunication from the Church. Expelled members could be reinstated.

Each local unit (fraternity) was led by two persons called ministers and a treasurer, all three (s)elected annually. There was also a connectional officer, the Visitor, who had disciplinary power over all tertiaries and who related the fraternity with the provincial minister.

They said the seven canonical Hours daily. They were required to make confession and receive Communion at Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. (The 1215 Lateran Council's stipulation of minimal obligation for all the faithful was the Easter confession and Communion.)

Once a month all Franciscan tertiaries of a city would meet in a church designated by the ministers and assist at services.

There was a regular collection for the sick, poor and members of families of deceased Franciscan sisters and brothers. Detailed guidance was given for ministry to the sick.

It was acknowledged that some mayors and governors might be ill-disposed toward the Order (Habig, ed. [1983], pp 165-75).

Luchieius of Poggibonsi and his wife Buona of Segni (both d.28 April 1260) were the first Franciscan tertiary couple. He was a merchant and grain speculator. They distributed their wealth among the poor, retaining only a field for themselves.

The last General Chapter of Francis' life reported thirteen Franciscan provinces; six in Italy and one each in Spain, Provence, Aquitaine, France, Germany, England and Syria.

In the Wesleyan movement the emergence of the United Society as a distinctive association within the evangelical revival can be discerned from mid-1739 through the first half of 1740. This was the year of the developments of the New Room in the Horsefair in Bristol and of the Foundery in London. "For the members of the Foundery and New Room Societies Wesley was the supreme authority, their Father in God... Every responsibility undertaken by others in the organization of these Societies was authority delegated by Wesley" (Baker [1965], 1:220). In 1742 the third corner of a triangle of major centers would be secured when construction began on the Newcastle Orphan House. Wesley was on his way as the personal leader for the next fifty years of an identifiable people, the people called (denominated) Methodists. Both Frank Baker and Albert Outler identify Wesley's ministry as that of the superior general of an order (Baker [1965], 1:242; Outler [1964], pp 19, 306).

Rapid evolution of Wesley's Methodism into a movement that exhibits the essential marks of a religious order came as the result responding to a number of challenges. Above all, a discipline was needed for the nurture of those who wanted "to flee from the wrath to come and be saved from their sins". Wesley also felt compelled to expand the Methodist outreach into new territories. Each of those challenges carried with it the challenge of exercising the teaching office so that the evangel - what was being preached - would be distinctive amidst the welter of theologies in the revival. Finally, the growing movement required a system of government and measures that would secure the continuance of Methodism after Wesley's death.

The Wesleyan movement evolved into the reality, if not the official status, of an order. Wesley did not initially have a grand design for his ministry. As the movement grew, he developed or recognized pragmatic ways (prudential means) to advance it and to secure the gains. Many of these adjustments became Methodist institutions, distinguishing marks of the Wesleyan order. One of the first, lay preaching, was definitely not of his choosing. At first offended by Thomas Maxfield's temerity, he changed his mind across that winter of 1740/41. The full-time preachers, Wesley's "Sons in the Gospel" (Phil. 2:22) were designated as helpers or assistants. These Wesleyan "brothers, friars", itinerant lay preachers, were the primary agents of the Methodist apostolate of evangelism, including social service, to the first generation of workers in and victims of the Industrial Revolution.

So it was with the class system from 1742. At first, as primary groups for nurture (Christian conference), so-called bands met once a week. Then the stewards of the Bristol society divided the membership into groups of about twelve to make weekly personal contact and collect a penny toward the debt on the New Room. They soon learned the pastoral and disciplinary utility of this system. Wesley adapted Captain Foy's scheme, and the class emerged as the characteristic forum for Christian conference in the Methodist economy of the Christian life, though not to the total disappearance of the bands, especially in the large societies (Baker [1965], 1:222).

While Wesley produced rules aplenty for his people, especially the preachers, there is no single document that compares to the Franciscan Rule. The core Methodist rule of life document was the *General Rules*. They were published late in February 1743, at Newcastle in a pamphlet entitled *The*

Nature, Design, and General Rules, of the United Societies in London, Bristol, Kingswood and Newcastle upon Tyne. Here the kinds of rules that Wesley had drawn up for bands were applied to the emerging order. "Methodism" meant an identifiable discipline for anyone who continued in the United Societies, and we are justified in attributing to the *General Rules* the character of a *regula*.

Though not set forth in this sequence, the *Rules* have three parts, following the introductory historical paragraphs. First, the condition of membership in the Society: "a desire 'to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins'." Then, assignment to a class for spiritual nurture and for attention to the temporal needs of the Society: "...how their souls prosper; ...give toward the relief of the poor... any that are sick, or... that walk disorderly... to pay to the Stewards... account of what each person has contributed."

The third part comprises the rules themselves and there are three of them. Actually, they are more like three principles with specific examples attached. "...wherever this [desire to flee from the wrath to come and to be saved from sin] is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits." So Wesley required that members of the United Societies "evidence their desire of salvation." The first evidence was "doing no harm... avoiding evil of every kind." The second evidence was "doing good,... being, in every kind, merciful... doing good of every possible sort... to all... to their bodies... [and] to their souls..." Third, was "attending upon all the ordinances of God." The ordinances he listed were: public worship; the ministry of the Word; the Lord's Supper; prayer; searching the Scriptures and fasting or abstinence (Works, [Jackson], 8:269-71).

One discerns in these rules a dynamic of desire for salvation and disciplines appropriate to those who are working out their salvation. Working out one's salvation does not mean earning it, but following the way of a disciple. The discipline itself is that of cleansing (doing no harm; avoiding evil), filling (doing good to the bodies and souls of all) and feeding (attending upon the ordinances of God). Finally, the context of the discipline is the class and the society (a company having the form and seeking the power of godliness). Neglect of either the disciplines or the company resulted in expulsion from the United Societies. A person so excluded was not excommunicated from the Church, merely dropped from among those who had the privileges of the Wesleyan order.

Larger institutional forms became necessary. The circuit system was in place by 1746 and may have origins to 1742. In June, 1744, Wesley presided over the first Methodist Conference when six Anglican priests and four laymen advised him and received his decisions on matters, mostly doctrinal, affecting the order. The Conference met annually thereafter. Herbert B. Workman saw the Conference as similar to the General Chapter of the Cistercians in the 1100s and the Franciscans in the 1200s. The medieval organizations were the first expressions of connectionalism in the Western Church in the sense of churchwide self-regulating organizations which were still part of and loyal to the larger Church (Workman, p 64).

The Methodist Conferences of 1744-48 emphasized doctrine: "What to teach". In 1749 discipline and polity were the major concerns. The dream of that Conference was "that there might be a General Union of our Societies throughout England, with Wesley as Vicar General, the Assistants as his Agents, and the Foundery Chapel in London at the heart of an intricate network receiving reports and despatching both instructions and help..." This proposal was a logical extension of the new system of Circuit Quarterly Meetings, an experiment begun the preceding year to strengthen the cohesion of the societies. The Foundery would have been the hub of the United Societies. Assistants would have inquired at every Quarterly Meeting about every local Society, relaying information and questions to the Foundery, and receiving answers from the Stewards there (Baker [1965], 1:239, 242).

The *Minutes* of Conference, in particular the "Disciplinary Minutes" constituted the canons of this order's general chapter. "The 'Disciplinary Minutes' were revised and enlarged in 1753 to form a codified body of regulations, known as the *Large Minutes*..." Five more revisions were published in

Wesley's lifetime. This was the basic governance document for both British and USA Methodism into the early 19th century (Baker [1965], 1:243).

The Methodists also established preaching houses. These were not priories to be sure, but some of them, such as the New Room, Foundery, and Orphan House had permanent residency aspects. The first of these was in Bristol. By 1750 there were twelve Methodist preaching houses and at Wesley's death there were 588 in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland combined.

To maintain the connectional unity of the societies who used these preaching houses, the 1763 Conference adopted a Model Deed. Each trust deed to a Methodist preaching house was to state that following the deaths of John Wesley and William Grimshaw the right to appoint the preachers should belong to the Conference. Further, no doctrine contrary to Mr. Wesley's *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* (1754) and four volumes of *Sermons* (1746-60) was to be preached in those houses.

The Model Deed was merely a document of the Conference. Some more binding action was needed if its provisions were to stand against a challenge. After long deliberation, Wesley executed the Deed of Declaration (Deed Poll) in 1784. By it he constituted the so-called Legal Hundred as the official decision making Conference, and made them self-perpetuating, to govern Methodism after his death. The Deed Poll accomplished the "legal establishment of Methodism" (Baker [1965], 1:228-30). Thus did the Wesleyan order gain official status, but not in the Church.[2]

Wesley also left the order a quintet of core documents as standards of both doctrine and discipline: *The General Rules* (1743); *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* (1754); *Sermons on Several Occasions* (4th ed. 1787); *A Collection of Hymns for the use of the People Called Methodists* (1780), and the *Large Minutes* (1789).

Parallels between Mr. Wesley's Methodism and the great orders of the medieval Church go beyond *regula*, permanent foundations, connectional structures and standards of doctrine and discipline. Methodism may also be seen as having its First, Second and Third Orders. The ordained persons among the Methodists - the Wesleys, William Grimshaw, John Fletcher, for example - were like the ordained friars. The lay preachers were the brothers, the lay friars. Together these "Methodist friars" comprised the First Order among the Wesleyans.

The analogy holds even to the extent of celibacy being a distinct advantage, though not a requirement, for early Methodist preachers (and, of course, for missional rather than evangelical reasons). A preacher who married without the prior approval of the other preachers could not expect the Conference to include his spouse in the appropriations for preachers' wives.

At first, something of the principle of mendicancy was evident as well. The preachers were prohibited from taking any money from the people. In 1752 the Conference established an annual allowance for both preachers and their families, but nonpayment by the circuits was a frequent and continuing problem. Every year preachers had to be helped from connectional funds raised to assist with the building of chapels. Yet, if a preacher could not give full-time itinerant service, he was not retained by Wesley as a traveling preacher under appointment. He might become a local preacher. Local preachers did much to strengthen Methodism, but they were no longer members of Conference, the Wesleyan First Order (Baker [1965] 1:234-38; [1970], pp 81-84].

The United Societies also had a Second Order in the sense of having women leaders in the work. *Sister* was a form of address applied to all Methodist women. Among them there was an identifiable group of single (unmarried or widowed) women who were important leaders in the movement as a whole.

[2] Other evidence of the increasing institutionalization of the Wesleyan movement is ample: establishment of a General Fund for connectional purposes (1761); establishment of the Preachers' Fund (1763); controversy over whether or not Methodism should separate from the Church of England, brought to a head at Conference in Leeds (1766); Wesley's initial plan for preserving the unity of the traveling preachers after his death (1769); first appointment of a preacher to a work other than traveling a circuit (1773); institution of "the Cabinet" to assist Wesley year around in administration (1785); creation of the Book Committee as a group to oversee Methodism's general finances (1788), and organization of both a Building Committee and a Committee for the Management of Our Affairs in the West Indies (1790). The first Conference after Wesley's death established the District structure, the all-important Stationing Committee, and a committee to superintend Kingswood School.

While they were not admitted to the ranks of the friars, they were more than ordinary class and society members, and Wesley found ways to encourage them within the emerging structures of the connection.

Earl Kent Brown has shown that the Wesleyan sisters carried out three major types of work: speakers of the Word, itinerants and support-group leaders. While Wesley never appointed women as itinerants - they had to remain always a "second" order - some of them traveled extensively, doing the same work as the male traveling preachers. From the 1740s to the 1780s Wesley grew in his acceptance of their ministry. By the latter date he was using the same arguments to justify the "extraordinary" ministry of women that he had employed forty years earlier in defense of lay men preachers.

The Methodist friars and sisters were the leaders of the brothers and sisters at large - the members of the classes and societies, the Wesleyan Third Order. The minister or lay preacher, as Wesley's appointed assistant, maintained Methodist discipline among the tertiaries. In 1741, Wesley instituted quarterly renewal of the class ticket. Applicants for membership underwent a three month trial period (changed in 1780 to at least two months).The minister or lay preacher in charge alone decided about admission and expulsion. So too in the matter of local society leadership. Stewards, class leaders and band leaders were appointed and removed by the minister or preacher (Baker [1965], 1:223, 226).

The Wesleyan counterparts of Luchesius and Buona were people like George and Hannah Cussons of Scarborough. He worked as a joiner and cabinet maker thirteen hours a day, from 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Then he "usually attended preaching, when the chapel was open for that purpose, or public prayer meetings, or meetings for Christian communion; or if not engaged in any of these, then in reading and prayer." Childless themselves, the Cussons anonymously provided a "plain and useful education" for scores of children whose families were as poor or poorer than they (Church [1949], pp 226-30).

Thus in their lives - avoiding evil, doing good to the bodies and souls of others, and attending the ordinances of God, as the *General Rules* stipulated, in their plainness of apparel, as the *Large Minutes* prescribed, and in their fellowship with the sisters and brothers, as Society discipline required, the Wesleyan tertiaries were an identifiable people. They were "the People called Methodists". For the most part members of the Wesleyan Third Order were workers in and victims of the first generation of the Industrial Revolution. Scholars are beginning to document and assess the impact of the Wesleyan Third Order on the social history of Georgian England (Andrews, Jennings, Marquardt, Semmel).

At Wesley's death in 1791 there were some 72,000 Methodists in society and perhaps 500,000 general adherents in Britain (Harrison [1985], p 279). In addition, there was a new denomination in the USA and work in all parts of Britain's remaining American dominions.

Here we have been able to detail only a small part of the dynamics and phenomena which were shared by mendicancy, especially Franciscanism and Methodism. Other areas which are proving, or hold promise of being, fruitful for comparison are the following:

- Francis' and Wesley's expressed intention for the "extraordinary" ministry of their friars/preachers to inspire the ordinary pastors to do a better job. Some of Francis' wording is virtually the same as Wesley's.
- How mendicants and Methodists employed a Pauline paradigm of itinerant, connectional urban evangelism and discipline.
- The global missionary impulse of both mendicancy and Methodism.
- The importance of preaching and the comparison of what was preached. Redemption was their shared homiletical theme.
- Eucharistic devotion.
- Christian perfection and the imitation of Christ. This is the whole area of mendicant, especially Franciscan, and Methodist spirituality. Love was central in both.
- Use of music from popular culture. Francis used Provençal troubadour tunes for his canticles.

- Social ministry activism. Both promoted philanthropy rather than direct political reform. Also looking at the social implications of their acceptance of and respect for all persons and the "evangelical economics" (Jennings) of Franciscan poverty and Wesleyan stewardship.
- Comparative ideals of "Christain antiquity" (T. Campbell); *vita apostolica et evangelica* and primitive Christianity.
- Christcentric devotion and continuous presence of the Spirit (Outler [1985]).
- Second generation social domestication of the movements with attendant schisms involving elements which insisted on loyalty to the original vision and program of the founder; Conventual vs. Spiritual Franciscans; Wesleyan vs. Primitive Methodists (1821).

Some Mendicant and Methodist Differences

Almost as an appendix I should like to point out some differences between the Franciscan and Methodist movements, some of which need to be treated in any extended writing on this topic.

- Wesley was a scholar and provided a theological *typos* for a world Christian communion. Francis was not a scholar and did not produce a distinctive Franciscan doctrinal construct.
- On the other hand, Franciscans immediately after Francis became prominent in universities and influenced theology churchwide. Methodists did not.
- Wesley was less loyal than Francis to bishops and clergy.
- The Franciscans achieved more within the traditional Church on the long term. The Church of England did not assimilate the Methodists.
- The Franciscans were the "minstrels of the Lord". Wesley was a victim of Puritan black-bordered spirituality. There seems to have been more appreciation for and expression of the joy of life among Franciscans.
- Francis was not an organizer. He lost leadership of the movement in the last five years or so of his life.
- Wesley did not call his friars/preachers to poverty but led and called all Methodists to radical stewardship. Theodore Jennings' ideas, positing Wesleyan stewardship and philanthropy (charity) as ministries of justice (redistribution of wealth), in comparison with Francis' reliance on a strict construction of the Synoptic Gospels' interpretation of possessions and poverty, holds much promise.
- Franciscans did not have an equivalent of the Methodist class meeting.
- Analysis of the understanding of grace in the pursuit of perfection/life of holiness. Important differences arise from the variant readings of Mark 1:15 (*paenitemini* or "repent"). This is really the great matter of the effect of the Romans 1:17 and Ephesians 2:8-10 theological revolution of the 16th century.

Comparative studies must take into account and try correctly to assess the differences in theological mentality between historic eras. Nevertheless, I believe affinity of spirituality, arresting similarities in First and Third Order phenomena, and global missionary - world parish - vision combine to make the early Wesleyan United Societies the Protestant equivalent of an Order of Friars Minor, albeit they would be better described as an Order of Preachers.

Conclusion

This research has considerable application for Churches in the World Methodist Council. First, it helps us find what Rupert E. Davies calls the Methodist element in church history. Our tradition is older

than our separate history from 1739. We will be ecclesially more mature and theologically and spiritually deeper as we grow in understanding the place of Methodist-like expressions in the history of the *ecclesia*.[3]

Secondly, comparative studies like this and others help the historic Methodist denominations keep clear about what it means to be ecclesial bodies - Churches or rites - which have been impressed, stamped, formed, molded (*typoma*) by the ministry of the Wesleys.[4] If Methodism is "a work of God" as John Wesley believed, then it has distinctive marks (*notae*) of its own. Churches of this *typos*, seeking guidance for their mission, find help in picking up the thread of the Wesleyan apostolate. It is clear that *evangelizare pauperibus* is integral to a *ritus* of the Wesleyan *typos* in the *ecclesia*.

Finally, accurately delineating the place of Methodism in the catholic church provides light for Methodist ecumenical sharing participation. Reflecting on Methodism's ecclesial location and ecumenical vocation, Geoffrey Wainwright employs the paradigm of "an order in search of the church" as a working model through which Methodists "may even today find the direction for a dynamic self-understanding with which to share in the ecumenical task and pursue the ecumenical goal" (Wainwright, p 196). Prof. Outler told the Third Oxford Institute that Methodism works best when it has a Church to work in (Kirkpatrick, *Church*, pp 26-27).

Perhaps the Wainwright suggestion and the Outler assertion can be brought together by viewing Methodist Churches as rites who remember their origins as a movement like an order, a society in a Church.[5] With other Churches, Methodist Churches are now fully stewards (not proprietors) of the mysteries of God. Thus they know that while they are not the whole church they are authentically church. They look to make their contribution to the visible unity of the church as rites of Wesleyan *typos*. The minor premise to complement Prof. Outler's major one is that the church works better when it has Methodism working within it.

[3] "It is quite wrong to think of Methodism as coming into existence in the time of the Wesleys. Methodism is, in fact, a recurrent form of Christianity, which is sometimes contained within the frontiers, of the Church at large, and is sometimes driven, or drives itself, over those frontiers to find a territory of its own. Whenever it has gone into exile, both the Church from which it has been separated and the resultant 'Methodist' Church have been impoverished, and the breach has been difficult to heal." The pre-Wesley groups Davies identifies as Methodists are: Montanists; Waldensians; Franciscans; perhaps the *Unitas Fratrum*, later known as Moravians, and the German Pietists. What happened in eighteenth-century Britain was the rise of Anglo-Saxon Methodism (Davies, [1976], pp 11-21). Except for promoting Methodism to the rank of central organizing principle of all these movements, this search for the ecclesial location and vocation (apostolate) of Wesleyan *typos* Christianity is very helpful.

[4] I am using here an organic triad of concepts: *ecclesia* (the church), *typos* (type, or world Christian communion or family of Churches), and *ritus* (rite, Churches or denominations). The Joint Commission between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Methodist Council have seen the category of *typoi* as a way of thinking about ecclesial traditions within the one church. *Typoi* are characterized by their theology, worship, spirituality and discipline (*Proc. WMC*,[1987], p 365). Classically, a rite is a self-governing ecclesial entity with its own orthodox doctrine, valid sacraments, and ordained ministry.

[5] Rupert Davies offers a supplement to the church-sect typology of Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch, namely the society. "A 'society' acknowledges the truths proclaimed by the universal church and has no wish to separate from it, but claims to cultivate, by means of sacrament and fellowship, the type of inward holiness, which too great an objectivity can easily neglect and of which the church needs constantly to be reminded. ...it calls its own members within the larger church to a special personal commitment which respects the commitment of others" (Wesley, *Works* [Bicentennial Edition], 9:2-3).

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THE RESPONSE OF AMERICAN PEACE CHURCHES TO RELIEF AND REHABILITATION NEEDS IN GERMANY FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II -

Donald F. Durnbaugh

One of the first civilians permitted to travel in Germany following V-E Day (May 8, 1945), marking the end of World War II in Europe was M. R. Zigler (1891-1985). He was the executive secretary of the Brethren Service Committee (BSC), the relief agency of the Church of the Brethren. His tour through the devastation of Germany followed an inspection of Brethren work in the Low Countries, the location of the first post-war BSC work in Europe. After his return to the United States he recounted a visit to a mother of four children in Berlin in the fall of 1945:

> The woman announced without apparent emotion that she must decide which of her children she would try to keep alive during the winter to come. She could not possibly find enough food for all of her children, and so she had to choose which one or two had the best chance of surviving. The food she scrounged would go to them and she would have to watch the others waste away. This woman had seemingly gone beyond the point of grief and could make the statement calmly. It was reported from Berlin during that winter most of the children under three failed to survive.[1]

One of the Brethren Service field staff, John Barwick (1898-1968), who had spent much of the war period working with the World's YMCA in England, compared needs in Germany with the rest of Western Europe in February, 1946. Those nations were by that time well on their way to recovery, because of massive foreign aid and the resolute will of the populace to rebuild:

> Germany today looks rather like, though worse than, Holland a year ago. The large cities and the Ruhr district are concentrations of ravenous people... The fact that starvation exists on an incredible scale in even the American zone of occupation has been documented by so many accounts of reliable witnesses, I shall not tell more.

Barwick went on:

> Frankly, the psychosis of most allies in Germany worries me more. Four soldiers with whom I rode in a truck turned in a road to an air strip. At the intersection, the corpse of a baby lay on the trunk of an uprooted tree. Nobody, except the woman moaning over it, paid more than the slightest attention.
>
> I watched two soldiers detailed to take a load of corpses, all nothing but skeletons with tight skin stretched over them, to the "pit", as the local burying ground was called. They chatted and smoked and finally one rubbed his cigarette out on a shrunken foot protruding from the rear of the truck. The callousness of ordinary Americans to frightful need and starving thousands about them must be seen to be believed.[2]

These vignettes present in graphic form the situation of immediate post-war Germany. Bitter antagonism built up in the West since the National Socialists came to power in 1933, compounded by the agonies of the conflict itself, had been heightened by the liberation by Allied troops of the concentration camps and the consequent horrors thus revealed. Many voices were raised urging draconic punishment for the entire German population. The United States government seriously weighed as late as 1944 the adoption of the plan by Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr. (1891-1967), to destroy Germany's industrial basis, reducing it to an 18th century pastoral and agricultural economy. The Yalta

[1] Quoted in Eileen Egan and Elizabeth Clark Reiss, *Transfigured Night: The CRALOG Experience* (Philadelphia/New York: Livingston Publishing Co., 1964), 21. See also D. F. Durnbaugh, *Pragmatic Prophet: The life of Michael Robert Zigler* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 1989), pp 154-66.

[2] Quoted in D. F. Durnbaugh, ed., *To Serve the Present Age: The Brethren Service Story* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1975), pp 9-10, from *The Gospel Messenger* (Feb., 1946); on Barwick, see Hazel M. Peters, "Barwick, John Workman", *The Brethren Encyclopedia* (Philadelphia/Oak Brook, IL: Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc. 1983-4), 1: 91.

conference (Feb. 4-11, 1945) of the Allies had discussed dismembering Germany, thus undoing the nation-building of Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898). The Soviet Union demanded $20 billion in reparations in kind. Although these measures were not undertaken in their entirety, the document (JCS 1067) controlling the US occupation policy in Germany, in part echoing the Morgenthau plan, called for a strict ban of fraternization between Americans and Germans, distribution of food only to bar epidemics or civil unrest, and complete "denazification."[3]

There were those, however, who took a different tack. Faced with the horror of World War II and its tragic aftermath, their impulse was to offer relief, rehabilitation, and reconciliation. Their conviction led them to believe that demonstrating kindness to the recent enemies of their countries could lend powerful aid to the restoration of Germany to the family of nations. Extending assistance to all those in need, regardless of political attachment, racial background or religious affiliation, had become tenaciously-held principles.

These contrarian people were members of the so-called Historic Peace Churches – the Religious Society of Friends or Quakers, the Mennonite Churches, and the Church of the Brethren. The Mennonites were the continuation of the Radical Reformation of the 16th century, the Friends rose out of Radical Puritanism of the 17th century, and the Brethren stemmed from Radical Pietism of the early 18th century. Though of different origin and theological orientation, they shared a common commitment to religious pacifism.[4]

Except for scattered contacts on the continent in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, the three religious bodies began a long pattern of intermittent relationships when Mennonites and Brethren emigrated from Europe to Quaker-administered Pennsylvania after 1683. Difference in religious practices and tenets brought occasional flare-ups of polemical dispute (at times finding published form) but their common testimony against war and bloodshed brought them together, especially in war-time.

Since World War I (1914-1918) cooperation became especially close; leaders of all three fellowships recognized that the responses of their members to the pressures of US military conscription after 1917 had not been adequate. As a pacifist minority during belligerent times they were driven to make common cause to prepare themselves for future conflicts. Cooperation took varied forms, including work with college students and a series of conferences. A statement of two-fold objectives was announced for the first conference, held in 1922: "To bring together for a season of Conference and prayer representatives of all who profess discipleship of Jesus Christ and who hold that war has no place among Christians" and "To discuss ways and means of furthering this Christian principle outside the respective denominations participating in the Conference."[5]

At the most important of these conferences, held in North Newton, Kansas, in the fall of 1935, the term *Historic Peace Churches* was coined and popularized. The same meeting not only deepened the sense of communality among members of the three groups; it also brought about the creation of committee structures to ensure active peace cooperation. Directly stemming from the Newton conference were two high-level deputations which called on Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945) to present their peace position.[6]

The focus of the cooperation came through the respective service agencies. In April, 1917, leaders of several Quaker meetings organized a central clearing house to coordinate burgeoning relief actions and a unified response by Friends to military conscription. Within six weeks the body was named the *American Friends Service Committee* (AFSC) and had invited Mennonites and Brethren to work with

[3] Marshall Dill, *Germany: A Modern History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1961), pp 424-39, esp. p 439.
[4] Recent overviews of the nature and history of these three movements are: Cornelius J. Dyck, *An Introduction to Mennonite History*, 3rd ed. (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1993; J. William Frost and Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988); D. F. Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine: A History of the Brethren, 1708-1995* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 1997).
[5] Quoted in Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine* (1997), p 432.
[6] The best brief narrative is Albert N. Keim and Grant M. Stoltzfus, *The Politics of Conscience: The Historic Peace Churches and America at War, 1917-1955* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press), pp 52-71.

them. Accounting of the receipts of the first year showed that the Mennonites had contributed over $91,000 and the Brethren over $3,000. The most heralded programme of the AFSC was the formation of a large unit of conscientious objectors sent to France to do medical work and reconstruction of damaged housing.[7]

Though sixty Mennonites worked with the AFSC in France, Mennonites proceeded to organize their own service agency in 1920, when news came of famine among co-religionists in Russia, caught up in the turmoil of the Bolshevik revolution. This provided the immediate incentive for the organization of the *Mennonite Central Committee* (MCC) in July, 1920. As was the case with the AFSC, its mandate was the coordination, at that time thought to be on a temporary basis, of several different Mennonite relief enterprises. By 1926, MCC had expended some $1,300,000 in Russia and Siberia, at one point feeding more than 75,000 people. Its success, and growing trust among Mennonites of varied background, enabled the agency to persist through the inter-war period.[8]

The Brethren Service Committee (later called the Brethren Service Commission) was the last to form. Brethren had engaged in preliminary efforts during and after World War I; the most noted effort was raising and dispersing $267,000 to aid Armenian refugees fleeing genocidal persecution by Turkish nationalists. In the 1930s both personnel and funds were channeled through the AFSC. In 1938-1939 Brethren established a Special Neutral Relief Board to assist those suffering from the Spanish Civil War, the Sino-Japanese War and Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany. Finally, the church set up the Brethren Service Committee (BSC) in 1941 with a sweeping social mandate, of serving (in the language of Matthew 25) the hungry, thirsty, sick, and naked "least of these."[9]

Thus it was that when the war in the European theater ended in May, 1945, the three Historic Peace Churches all had agencies in place with experienced personnel and a charter for action.

Post-War Germany

Though certainly cognizant of the widespread sense among many Americans that Germans richly deserved all the suffering they experienced after the defeat of German arms at the hands of the Allied forces, the relief agencies – AFSC, MCC, BSC – sought to demonstrate their principle of evenhanded amelioration of human need, regardless of its source and locus. It was made possible in part by two considerations; the first was a widely-acknowledged record of their nonpartisan and efficient administration of prior relief actions acknowledged by US government officials; the second was the belated recognition by the occupation forces in the three western zones of Germany that they could not permit actual starvation of masses of German civilians. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969), Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, stated: "Germany is destroyed… They face a problem of real starvation… What are we going to do just to prevent on our part having a Buchenwald of our own?"[10] Some 40% of German factories had been destroyed. The former breadbasket of the German nation in the

[7] The most recent description of the formation of the AFSC is J. William Frost, "'Our Deeds Carry Our Message': The Early History of the American Friends Service Committee", *Quaker History* 81 (Spring 1992), pp 1-51. See also the chapter "Creativity in Peacemaking", in Frost and Barbour, *Quakers* (1988), pp 257-60, and Mary Hoxie Jones, "Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and the American Friends Service Committee", in *Friends of the Delaware Valley: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1681-1981* (Haverford, PA: Friends Historical Association 1981), pp 234-47. The original standard work was Rufus Jones, *A Service of Love in Wartime: American Friends' Relief Work in Europe, 1917-1919* (New York: Macmillan 1937); see also Mary Hoxie Jones, *Swords into Plowshares: An Account of the American Friends Service Committee, 1917-1932* (New York: Macmillan 1937), cast in story form, and John Forbes, *The Quaker Star Under Seven Flags, 1917-1927* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 1962).

[8] The best survey is Robert S. Kreider and Rachel Waltner Goosens, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger: The MCC Experience* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1988). This is the fifth summary volume in the series, Cornelius J. Dyck, and others, eds., *The Mennonite Central Committee Story, Volumes 1-5* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1980-88). The series is discussed in Calvin Redekop, "The Mennonite Central Committee Story: A Review Essay", *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 67 (Jan., 1993), pp 84-103. A fifty-year MCC review is found in the special issue, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 44 (July, 1970), pp 211-340. See also James C. Juhnke, *Vision, Doctrine, War: Mennonite Identity and Organization in America, 1890-1930* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1989), pp 249-54.

[9] A comprehensive survey, with emphasis upon Europe, is J. Kenneth Kreider, *A Cup of Cold Water: The Story of Brethren Service* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 2001). See also Durnbaugh, *To Serve the Present Age* (1975) and Roger E. Sappington, *Brethren Social Policy, 1900-1958* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press 1961).

[10] Cited in Kreider and Goosen, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger* (1988), pp 74-75.

East – Pomerania, Silesia, West and East Prussia – had been lost in the post-war realignment and the important agricultural areas in the Eastern (Soviet) zone of occupation were soon to be cut off as well.

Not only was Germany attempting to cope with the results of the mass bombing campaign that had left staggering amounts of housing destroyed or severely damaged, it had also been flooded with millions of refugees. These were officially classified into several categories: First, there were the *Displaced Persons* (DPs), identified as non-Germans, largely forced laborers who found themselves in Germany at the end of the conflict. The best estimate of their numbers was 1,500,000. DPs were the official responsibility of the United Nations, which set up the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and later the International Refugee Organization (IRO) to care for them, largely by resettlement (ca. 1,000,000) and by repatriation (ca. 75,000). The IRO concluded its operations in June, 1951.

Second, there were the *Volksdeutsche*, defined as those of German ethnic stock who had resided outside of pre-World War II Germany; their ancestors had settled into Eastern Europe since the 17th century, particularly in the 18th century under the colonization policies of the Habsburg dynasty. Many had gone to the German Third Reich as laborers, but many more had been expelled from their homes in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Rumania, ostensibly on the basis of the Yalta and Potsdam accords of the Allied forces. Others simply fled before the advance of the Red Army.

Third, there were the *Reichsdeutsche*, defined as those formerly resident in the eastern provinces of Germany now governed by the Soviet Union and Poland, east of the Oder-Neisse line. They were also expelled en masse under the Potsdam accord of July/August, 1945. A conservative estimate of German ethnic refugees, both *Volksdeutsche* and *Reichsdeutsche* mounted to 12,000,000.[11] Later, after the original four-power zones of occupation had hardened under East-West "Cold-War" tension, other large numbers of "escapees" arrived in West Germany, some 1,500,000 by 1951. The last named are not considered in this discussion.

Although the high-level Allied conferences had directed that transfers of populations dictated by their accords were to be carried out in humane fashion, in fact the expulsions were carried out with the utmost brutality and rapidity, in what a later age would call "ethnic cleansing." These excesses were excused by the level of hatred against everything German in the post-war turmoil and as rightful retaliation for Nazi crimes.

A word picture of the situation in post-war Germany, by one who was there, sets the scene:

> Sometimes it is difficult to remember, in view of the violence of the intervening decades, that the cessation of hostilities in 1945 left the European continent seething with a vast populace of the exiled and enslaved, wandering to and fro, waiting for transport to return to homes that in thousands of cases ceased to exist. Men were without machines, machines without fuel. Great areas of land lay waste, while whole people were wracked with famine and pestilence. Suppressed hostilities broke out in flaming fire and violence. In the heart of this seething cauldron was Germany, in whose destruction men of many nations had found common purpose; in whose ruins they could rejoice, even if it meant their own ruin. Germany, in effect, became a vacuum into which other peoples poured their hatred and venom until it threatened to engulf them.[12]

In the face of the post-war pressures of widespread destruction coupled with the mass influx of refugees, the Allied high commissioners recognized that they could well use the aid of voluntary agencies to help meet the unprecedented need. Thus, in February, 1946, with government encouragement (even insistence) the Council of Relief Agencies Licensed for Operation in Germany (CRALOG) was called

[11] On this crisis, see the following: Betty Barton, *The Problem of 12 Million German Refugees* (Philadelphia: AFSC, 1949); *Report from Hamburg: A Survey of the German Refugee Problem in 1949* (Geneva: World Council of Churches 1949); "Humanity on the March: Dramatic Story of World's Uprooted People", *[World's YMCA] World Communique* (Dec., 1951); Clifford Maser, *After Seven Years: World War Two Refugees in German and Austria Today* (Philadelphia: AFSC, 1952); and Elfan Rees, *The Refugee and the United Nations* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 1953).

[12] Luther Harshbarger, "Work with Prisoners of War", in Durnbaugh, *To Serve the Present Age* (1975), p 131.

together. Military authorities in Germany demanded one agency, not many agencies, with which to work. This council was an offshoot of the central coordinating body, the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service (ACFAFS), founded in 1943.[13]

In the first nine months of operation CRALOG received and distributed 10,000,000 pounds of material aid. By the end of the first three years of work, the ecumenical agency had shipped nearly sixty thousand tons of relief supplies. It is estimated that one third of the German population was directly aided, with 1,000,000 children receiving sustenance through CRALOG-supplied feeding programmes.[14]

Among its constituent members were BSC, MCC, and AFSC. Several of their staff members were early directors of the CRALOG programme. Their tasks involved setting up the reception and distribution channels for the tons of material aid (foodstuffs, clothing, medications, etc.) that began pouring through the seaport of Bremerhaven. Dr. Eldon R. Burke (1898-1993), formerly a history professor in Indiana, had been sent earlier to Europe to direct the European programme of the Brethren Service Committee. He was now seconded to CRALOG. First stationed in Berlin, he later established his office in Bremen, in proximity to the relief goods arriving by the shipload. All such goods coming from America passed through his hands (with the exceptions of that sent by Mormons). He later received high civilian honors from the Federal Republic of Germany and the state of Bremen for his achievements.[15]

Earlier Efforts

For the three relief agencies of the Historic Peace Churches, work in Germany was not new. The AFSC had a striking record in this regard. Following the defeat of Imperial Germany in 1918, the civilian population in Germany was found to be in dire straits, largely because of the effective naval blockade by the British navy.

The initial effort of Friends in post-war Germany was a spin-off of their work in France and the Low Countries with German prisoners-of-war (POWs). The AFSC teams in France had employed German POWs in their rebuilding programme and these prisoners were eager to send their earnings to families at home. The French authorities, however, forbade direct transfer. They did permit, however, a plan developed by the AFSC that involved sending their volunteers to Germany. They looked up the families of the POWs, delivered the wages and reported on sons, brothers, and fathers; they were also often able to hand over photos of the prisoners.[16]

Details on this programme are supplied in letters sent by one of the AFSC volunteers from Germany to relatives in Pennsylvania. The volunteer was Solomon E. Yoder (1893-1991), one of the young Mennonites working with the Friends contingent. His knowledge of Pennsylvania German facilitated his work in Germany. He arrived in Berlin in December, 1919, and reported that his first impression of the city was a "vision of sad faces", of hunger and want. As he walked down the street he encountered "pale faces, hollow cheeks, at times a staggering walk." His account of the first thirty families he and colleagues visited read:

> Most of the families we visited are poor. The father being in France as a prisoner or it may be a son who supported his families [sic]. [Ludwig's] father and mother were sick in bed. The floors and walls were bare. Two daughters in their late teens were pale from malnutrition. We brought them news of their only son and brother. Tears spoke more than words… Most all the children we see are dwarfs for the food they needed is not available. Milk is next to impossible to be had.[17]

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[13] Elizabeth Clark Reiss, *The American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service: Four Monographs* (New York: ACVAFS 1985).
[14] Kreider and Goossen, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger* (1988), pp 78-9.
[15] Eldon R. Burke, "The Development of BSC in Europe", in *To Serve the Present Age* (1975), pp 164-71; Kreider, *Cup of Cold Water* (2001), pp 220-5.
[16] Frost, "Deeds", (1992), pp 34-5; Patricia K. Helman, "Burke, Eldor R.", *The Brethren Encyclopedia* (Philadelhia/Oak Brook, IL: Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc. 1983-4), 1: 230.
[17] "Solomon E. Yoder Letters and Photos", in S. Duane Kauffman, *Mifflin County Amish and Mennonite Story, 1791-1991* (Belleville, PA: Mifflin County Mennonite Historical Society 1991), pp 404-16, esp. p 410. See also M. H. Jones, *Swords into*

The verdict of Quaker leader Rufus M. Jones (1863-1948) on this venture read: "The effect of [these] visits was electric on the German families involved, and it was an excellent preparation for our next undertaking, which was the feeding of the German children who were brought into a desperate condition by the blockade, continued after the war was over."[18]

A delegation of British and American Friends and the American Relief Administration (ARA) investigated the conditions in Germany in the spring of 1919, within a week of the signing of the Versailles Peace Treaty, the first civilians permitted to travel in defeated Germany. The delegation was led by the famous reformer and peace advocate Jane Addams (1860-1935). The delegation, limited to four women, was instructed to study German children. So intense was the anti-German feeling that only children, as innocent parties, were accepted as worthy recipients. The delegation reported in the USA the urgent need of aid, because of widespread malnutrition, an epidemic of tuberculosis, and the danger of famine. The report met with acceptance by American authorities, who were becoming concerned about political instability in Germany, a rising tide of Bolshevik influence, and also the need to dispose of agricultural surplus.[19]

The upshot was that early in 1920 the AFSC was asked by the American Relief Administration to organize a national feeding programme in Germany. The ARA was led by Herbert Hoover (1874-1964), a Quaker who had become famous for his efficient relief of the Belgian population after its liberation by Allied forces. (This reputation had much to do with his later election to the US presidency.) Under the agreement negotiated between the AFSC, the ARA, and the German government, the ARA purchased food in the USA and paid for ocean transportation to German ports. The German government paid for storage costs and for transportation costs within Germany. AFSC staff supervised the distribution of food throughout Germany.

The food went to school children categorized as the most needy by German physicians. Each child received one hot meal a day, made of rice, beans, flour, corn starch, sugar or cocoa and reconstituted whole milk. By July, the programme was feeding 632,000 children per day; at the peak of the programme, the Friends were supervising the feeding of over 1,000,000 per day. The programme continued under Quaker direction until 1922, at which point it was turned over to German control. Administrative costs, kept at 2%, were covered by Quaker gifts, so that all of the funds collected in the USA went directly to the feeding programme. So extensive was the effect that the programme entered the language. Instead of asking whether a friend had eaten that day, a German child would ask: "Hast du ge-Quakered?" The 1921 budget of AFSC (which included work in other countries as well) had income of nearly $300,000 from Quaker sources and over $1,300,000 from the American Relief Administration.

Another high-level Quaker delegation drew on this background when they intervened with high Gestapo officials on behalf of suffering German Jews in late 1938. This followed the wave of persecution by Nazi officials following the assassination of a German diplomat in France (*Kristallnacht* or the "Night of Broken Glass"). The visit opened the possibility for a number of Jews to leave Germany under Quaker auspices.[20]

Mennonites and Brethren had also been involved in a less extended way with relief in Germany following 1918.[21] An American Mennonite was sent to Europe in late 1939 to administer relief efforts; he was based in Germany. These efforts included immediate assistance to Polish civilians in deplorable circumstances as a result of the German invasion in September, 1939, and relief to Polish soldiers interned in Germany. This was expanded to assist Mennonite families evacuated to Germany from the

Plowshares (1937), 79-80, and R. M. Jones, "They Mend the Heart", *Atlantic Monthly* (March, 1940), p 335.

[18] R. M. Jones, "Heart", (1940), p 335.

[19] See on the delegation, M. H. Jones, *Swords into Plowshares* (1937), pp 75-80.

[20] The large-scale feeding programme is described in several places; see John Ormerod Greenwood, *Quaker Encounters: Volume 1, Friends and Relief* (York, UK: William Sessions Ltd. 1975), pp 219-25; Frost, "Deeds" (1992), pp 34-6; M. H. Jones, *Swords into Plowshares* (1937), pp 80-2; Frost and Barbour, *Quakers* (1989), p 113. The Gestapo interview and its results are discussed in Hans A. Schmitt, *Quakers & Nazis: Inner Light in Outer Darkness* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press 1999), pp 107-9.

Alsace-Lorraine provinces of France. This work was only possible with the approval of the German government, which recognized the non-political basis of Mennonite relief. MCC was permitted to operate from Germany until war between the USA and Germany was declared in December, 1941. The MCC administrator was interned until he was repatriated in June, 1942.[22]

Early Post-World-War-II Relief Efforts

As mentioned earlier, the first relief goods distributed by voluntary agencies in Germany after 1945 came through the combined efforts of CRALOG. With its regular office located in Bremen, and directed by Dr. Eldon R. Burke, CRALOG directed the distribution throughout the three Western zones of occupation. The work was carried out by five German agencies and also directly by Quakers, Brethren and Mennonites.

Burke also saved a former German military installation from destruction by occupation authorities, by having it transferred to an agency of the German church as a social institution. This complex, known as *Friedehorst*, became the center for a number of active programmes, thus assisting a large number of civilians. Of particular prominence was a vocational workshop for disabled war veterans, given the name *Christopher Sauer Werkstätte*, after the name of the multi-talented printer in colonial Germantown, Pennsylvania.[23]

An ambitious programme developed with returning Prisoners of War, under the joint auspices of the World's YMCA. John Barwick (1898-1968) and Luther Harshbarger (1914-1986), had been seconded by the BSC to this agency to work in Great Britain with German and Italian POWs during the war. At war's end, their activities shifted to the continent. Some 75,000 POWs from camps in the USA, Canada and Egypt were assigned to mines in Belgium, at low wages, as part of the reparations programme. Because they had believed at the time that they were being released, the prisoners highly resented this forced labor. The Germans among them were further disheartened by news of the miserable conditions faced by their families in Germany.

In an imaginative (but unrecognized) repetition of the AFSC programme following World War I, the YMCA staff members developed a scheme which involved the POW miners buying food and clothing which were then made into parcels for delivery in Germany. YMCA workers delivered the parcels inside the German border, from where they were sent to the recipient families.

In March, 1947, Harshbarger was assigned to Germany to direct the POW programme there. At that point between 50,000 to 100,000 POWs were arriving each month, most channeled through two reception camps, the *Münsterlager* in the Lüneberger Heide and *Friedland* near Göttingen, on the border between the British and Russian zones of occupation. Those returning from the Soviet Union were in especially deplorable shape. In one trainload of 651 men, 525 had to be immediately hospitalized. The Soviet practice was to work POWs until they were completely unfit, then throw them onto a train heading West. Many never survived the miserable journey. The POW programme of the World's YMCA clothed and fed those returning. One of the most important services was a message center that attempted to connect POWs with their families, many of whom had been forced from their homes.[24]

Another needy grouping that the YMCA sought to help were homeless young men, estimated to number 100,000. An imaginative programme to aid some of these formed fifty youth villages to provide settled homes, vocational training and assistance in finding jobs. Brethren Service staff established the

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[21] Durnbaugh, *Pragmatic Prophet* (1989), p 113.
[22] Irvin B. Horst, *A Ministry of Goodwill: A Short Account of Mennonite Relief, 1939-19949* (Akron, PA: Mennonite Central Committee, 1950), pp 3-6.
[23] Kreider, *Cup of Cold Water* (2001), pp 225-7.
[24] Harsharger, "Prisoners of War", in *To Serve the Present Age* (1975), pp 131-43; special issue, *Brethren Life and Thought* 26 (Spring, 1981), pp 66-121; Kreider, *Cup of Cold Water* (2001), pp 62-5.

Kaltenstein Youth Village, in a former castle near Stuttgart. The village won acclaim because of the democratic basis upon which it operated, allowing the young men to experience self-government.[25]

Programme Emphases

With certain exceptions the relief work of the Brethren, Friends and Mennonites focused on programmes that can be categorized as follows: material aid (distribution of food, clothing, soap and the like); provision of livestock; refugee resettlement; neighborhood centers; international work-camps; and exchanges. Though too complex to be completely described, they can be sketched with some examples.

Material aid: The most urgent need for refugees and German civilians alike was sheer access to food. The rations, for example, in the British zone of occupation were one-third of what they had been in 1938; not surprisingly, the death rate in the hospitals had tripled. By June 1946, ca. 3,000 tons of material aid had been received via Bremen by the CRALOG office, distributed with priority to refugees.[26] A report to the MCC board in January, 1947, revealed that three MCC representatives were at work under CRALOG auspices, one in each of the three Allied zones of occupation. By that time MCC had sent over 2,500 tons of supplies through CRALOG, worth some $800,000. Distribution had been largely through the Protestant relief agency *Evangelisches Hilfswerk,* but increasingly the MCC workers were involved personally in the handing out of supplies thus providing a personal touch "to make the gift more meaningful." A child-feeding programme was in the process of establishment in Schleswig-Holstein.[27] By early summer, 1947, MCC staff members were regularly providing meals for 140,000 Germans. During 1946 and 1947 MCC ranked first among contributors to CRALOG in volume of contributions of relief supplies.[28]

One of the most repeated stories about material aid came about in 1947 when the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded jointly to the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Service Council of London. American Quakers determined that the AFSC chairman, the biblical scholar Henry J. Cadbury (1883-1974) should travel to Oslo to receive the honored award. A problem arose: Cadbury did not own the formal attire required for the ceremony. He contacted the AFSC relief warehouse in Philadelphia, where clothing was received, sorted, baled, and dispatched to its overseas destinations. It so happened that the material aid programme had recently sent out an appeal for tuxedos in order to supply the needs of the Budapest Symphony Orchestra, which had been invited to a concert in London but lacked appropriate dress. It turned out that the warehouse contained a long-tailed suit of adequate proportion. It was thus that Cadbury accepted the Norwegian honor in Oslo, wearing a formal suit from the AFSC material aid programme. It has been claimed that Cadbury found a needy waiter in Oslo, to whom he gave the outfit following the ceremony, but this may be legendary.[29]

In the award statement, the chairman of the Nobel Committee included these words about the Quaker approach:

> It is the silent help from the nameless to the nameless which is their contribution to the promotion of brotherhood among nations… This is the message of good deeds, the message that men can come into contact with one another in spite of war and in spite of differences of race. May we believe that here there is hope of laying a foundation for peace among nations, of building up peace in man himself so that it becomes impossible to settle disputes by the use of force.[30]

[25] Byron P. Royer, "The Kaltenstein Project", in *To Serve the Present Age* (1975), pp 185-7; Horst Mönnich, *Jugenddorf: Reise in eine neue Welt* (München: Schneekluth Verlag 1984), pp 171-81.
[26] Sappington, *Brethren Social Policy* (1961), p 132.
[27] Dyck, *Responding to Worldwide Needs* (1980), pp 44-5.
[28] Kreider and Goossen, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger* (1988), pp 78-9.
[29] Margaret Hope Bacon, *Let This Life Speak: The Legacy of Henry Joel Cadbury* (Philadephia: University of Pennsylvania Press 1987), 147-50; Jack Sutters, "'The Quakers…' 1947", *Friends Journal* (November, 1997), pp 21-2.
[30] Cited in Bacon, *Let This Life Speak* (1987), p 150.

Provision of Livestock

One of the innovative programmes developed by the Brethren Service Committee was the Heifer Project. The origin of this creative response to human need goes back to the Spanish Civil War. One of the relief workers operating under the aegis of the American Friends Service Committee was Dan West (1893-1971), who had earlier been assigned by the Church of the Brethren to work with young people and to promote peace. He found himself facing starving children with only limited supplies (primarily of dried milk) at his disposal, forced to choose which children to help. In this tragedy of necessary triage, he recalled the bountiful output of milk by the cows of his neighbors at home, farmers in Northern Indiana.

Upon his return to the United States, he presented his idea to farmer-church members and in 1939 organized a committee called "Heifers for Relief". Although the outbreak of World War II prevented shipping young cows to Europe, by 1944 some 1,000 animals had been donated. They went to poverty-stricken residents of Puerto Rico and to sharecroppers in the American South. A feature of the plan was that recipients of animals pledged to give a female calf to another needy family. The earthy quality of the project was widely appreciated.

In the early post-war period, the Brethren Service Committee made an arrangement with the UNRRA, the agency of the United Nations. BSC would supply attendants for the shipments of livestock UNRRA was sending to rebuild the decimated herds of Europe. In return, UNRRA provided ocean transportation for the Heifer Project. In time more than 7,000 students, farmers and pastors volunteered to become "sea-going cowboys" to accompany shiploads of donated animals to Europe. The Heifer Project quickly became an ecumenical body and still flourishes from its ranch base in Arkansas. By 1994 more than 1,000,000 families around the world had been assisted by HPI self-help projects. In very recent times, the agency, now known as Heifer International, has received wide recognition.

In 1949 Germany became one of the countries to receive heifers; they were directed primarily to refugees attempting to build a new livelihood in Western Germany. The 9,000th young cow distributed by the Heifer Project went to such a refugee. Among other words of appreciation, he said: "With our American cow, we can start a new life in Germany. From this cow we can build a new herd." Equally important with the economic benefit in the minds of farmer-recipients was the gift of something living, an intangible reality with deep emotional resonance.[31]

Refugee Resettlement

Because of the chaotic and crisis situation of Germany, the best hope for many refugees was resettlement to a foreign country. As already mentioned, this was the primary thrust of the work of the International Refugee Organization, working with Displaced Persons. Ethnic Germans, considered to be "ex-enemy", were not eligible for this assistance. It was not until 1953 that the US government passed the Refugee Relief Act, which included a quota for *Volksdeutsche* and *Reichsdeutsche*, largely housed in barrack camps and without meaningful work. All three service agencies, AFSC, BSC, MCC, worked on refugee resettlement, at times in accord with larger agencies, sponsoring both DPs and ethnic Germans.

Complex screening by a variety of governmental authorities was involved, often taking months before selected families and individuals were actually able to embark on converted troop transport ships for the ocean travel to North America. An innovation developed after 1949 sped up the process. This was the provision of the "blanket assurances"; prior to this arrangement, before any refugee could leave a barracks camp, he or she had to have a specific assurance from an American citizen that the person, if admitted to the USA, would not become a welfare case. With the blanket assurance, American institutions, usually church groups, pledged to the government that those admitted under the group

[31] Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine* (1997), 463-5; Glee Yoder, *Passing on the Gift: The Story of Dan West* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1978), 100-14; Clara T. Johnson, *Mild for the World: The Heifer Project on the West Coast* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1981); Kreider, *Cup of Cold Water* (2001), pp 131-149, passim.

arrangement would not become wards of the state. This permitted the voluntary agency representatives to select large numbers of refugees and processing their emigration, leaving to their counterparts in the United States the actual matching of sponsors and immigrants.[32]

Neighborhood Centers

Quakers, especially, focused much of their work in post-war Germany on establishing neighborhood centers in badly destroyed cities. These provided a warm, quiet center, with access to food and clothing when needed, which was most often the case. One of the purposes was to rebuild a sense of neighborliness, a basic human trait that had, in the stress of wartime, been neglected and forgotten. This would, of course, be much needed if communities were to take responsibility in rebuilding their own lives and broader society.[33]

Mennonites also pursued this tack. By 1949 they had opened such centers in Kreuzberg, a badly damaged sector of Berlin, as well as in Kaiserslautern. They reached out from their administrative centers in Kiel, Hamburg, Krefeld, Neustadt and Frankfurt to develop community activity.[34] The same approach was brought to a higher level in later programmes: in cooperation with the social agency of the German church they converted a large former munitions-dump and poison-gas factory, the *Espelkamp-Mittwald* near Bielefeld into a resettlement community for refugees. The two-square-mile area, dotted at the end of the war by 120 barracks, was slated for demolition by the British Army, when a Swedish Lutheran pastor saw the site's possibilities and alerted the MCC staff. American volunteers working with refugee families constructed new housing. In later years the new town became a center for Mennonite settlement.[35]

A comparable project was created in 1951-1953 at Backnang, Württemberg. Mennonite men in PAX-units, alternative service as conscientious objectors, worked shoulder-to-shoulder with Mennonite refugees to build a new colony. Most of the refugees had been residents of the Danzig area. Ten apartment blocks housing sixty-four families were erected during the three-year project. In later projects hundreds of refugee families were assisted by similar efforts to find decent housing.[36]

International Work-Camps

Initiated by Swiss pacifists following World War I, international work-camps brought together young adults from varied national backgrounds to labor together on a socially-important project for several weeks. Their two-fold intent was to assist on a project of social need and also to build international understanding through common effort. Hence work-camps have been called "pick and shovel peacemaking". All three of the service agencies of the Historic Peace Churches organized such camps in Germany, after the most urgent physical needs were met. Typical projects included construction of houses and church buildings for refugees, of YMCA centers in camps for endangered youth, and of educational buildings.

A variation of the work-camp was the peace seminar, also recruited from disparate nationalities and social classes, often from groupings at the time in great tension. In this approach, the work project took secondary importance to intensive discussions guided by experienced resource leaders. AFSC, MCC,

[32] Joseph B. Mow, "The Refugee Resettlement Programme", in *To Serve the Present Age* (1975), pp 196-9; Kreider, *Cup of Cold Water* (2001), passim, esp. pp 104-8; Harold E. Fey, *Cooperation in Compassion: The Story of Church World Service* (New York: Friendship Press 1966), pp 37-9, passim.
[33] Roger C. Wilson, "Relief and Reconstruction", in *The Quaker Approach to Contemporary Problems*, ed., John Kavanaugh (New YorkL G. F. Putnam's Sons 1953), pp 25-40, esp. p 38; Achim von Borries, *Quiet Helpers: Quaker Service in Post-war Germany*, ed. Peter Daniels (Philadelphia: Quaker Home Service/American Friends Service Committee 2000), esp. pp 47-51.
[34] Kreider and Goossen, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger* (1988), p 31.
[35] Paul Peachey, "Espelkamp-Mittwald", *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1956), 2:249; Kurt Klassen, "Espelkamp", *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1990), 5: 272.
[36] Harold S. Bender, "Backnang", *Mennonite Encyclopedia* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press 1955), 1: 204-5. See also on these housing projects, Calvin W. Redekop, *The Pax Story: Service in the Name of Christ, 1951-1976* (Telford, PA: Pandora Press 2001).

and BSC organized such camps and seminars in 1948 and following years. The rationale for such camps is well articulated in this comment by an historian of Quaker relief services:

> Work camps, where young people of different nationalities or racial groups actually do a hard day's manual labor together, have also loomed large in Quaker relief and rehabilitation plans. By concentrating on jobs where ideological and language difficulties are relatively unimportant, and particularly where persons of a dominant nation or race or class work on a humble level with others, it is found that good human relationships establish a firm base from which the difficulties of ideologies, economics, and politics can be more objectively faced. These are not efforts to obscure real group conflicts, but rather to educate persons with a different experience of the same issue so that the central and intractable differences may be the more intelligently and resolutely grasped.[37]

Exchanges

Growing out of the experience in Europe of scores of American volunteers from the Historic Peace Churches were exchange programmes of creative types. It seemed very natural for these voluntary service workers (who seldom stayed in Europe for more than four years) to invite Germans (and others) to travel to the USA for year-long visits of home stay and schooling. MCC developed a Visitor Exchange (Trainee) programme to arrange for German Mennonites to travel to the United States for short periods. MCC also assisted the Mennonite colleges to initiate a process whereby German students of appropriate ages studied abroad.

Some Brethren workers in the World's YMCA programme invited German members of their staffs to study in Brethren colleges in America. One of these young men, Erich Hoffmann, recalled his experience. Because of his early anti-Nazi conduct, Hoffmann had as a student in a North German gymnasium encountered harsh treatment, before being drafted into the German army. He described his experience:

> One week after joining the Y[MCA], Ernie [Lefever] suddenly asked me, "How would you like to study in America?" Well, if you can imagine what it means to a beggar if somebody asks him how he would like a million dollars, that is the way I felt. It was a pipe dream, of course, I thought. But it became a reality. Ernie got the Brethren Service Commission to sponsor me and Manchester College gave me a two-year scholarship.[38]

Hoffmann pursued graduate study after completing college, joined the Peace Corps in a senior staff position, and later was an executive in a private management and consulting firm in Washington, DC, specializing in Latin America.

BSC staff workers in Germany pioneered in an exchange programme for high-school age students, later picked up and expanded by a number of organizations such as American Field Service and Rotary International. In 1949, in conjunction with the Cultural Affairs Department of the American High Commissioner in Germany (HICOG) and the Food and Agricultural Agency (FAO) of the United Nations, BSC sponsored ninety teen-age students for a year's study in the USA. This came about when the occupation officials learned about an earlier programme (1947) in which Brethren placed ten young Polish farm youth with American farm families. The purpose was to teach them advanced agricultural methods, which could be taken back home and used to enhance food production in Poland. Despite an interval when Cold War tensions blocked the programme, by the fiftieth anniversary of the Polish programme in 1997, more than 1,250 specialists had been hosted in American universities. In turn, over 250 young Americans were placed in Poland for two-year stints by the Brethren Volunteer Service

[37] D. F. Durnbaugh, "Workcamps", *Brethren Encyclopedia* (Philadelphia, PA: Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc. 1983-84), 2: 1165-7; Mary Coppock Hammond, "International Work Camps", in *To Serve the Present Age* (1975), pp 208-14; Kreider and Goossen, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger* (81. The quotation is from Wilson, "Relief and Reconstruction" (1953), pp 38-9; Kreider, *Cup of Cold Water* (2001), passim.

[38] Erich Hoffmann, "Memoir", *Brethren Life and Thought* 26 (Spring, 1981), pp 103-9, esp. p 107; Kreider, *Cup of Cold Water* (2001), esp. pp 151-69.

programme, most to teach English. (The programme was later expanded to China and the post-Soviet Union Russia.)

Despite minor problems of adjustment and matching of young person and host family, the programme was deemed a great success and expanded in subsequent years. In 1950 four hundred pupils were sent to the United States, of which number Brethren hosted 194, with six other organizations taking responsibility for the remainder. In 1957-1958 six denominations incorporated the programme as the International Christian Youth Exchange (ICYE). In later years, such exchanges came to be commonplace, but it was a risky and adventurous move in the late 1940s.[39]

Conclusion

Given the hatred generated by Nazi methods before the war, compounded by the agonies of World War II and exacerbated by the revelations of the horror of the Holocaust and the concentration camps, it is remarkable that the level of achievement here reported was attained so soon after the end of hostilities. The activities of the relief agencies of the Historic Peace Churches were not, by any means, universally welcomed. The saving grace in this tense situation can be explained by several considerations. The first was, as earlier indicated, that the agencies had already a long track record of world-wide aid given to those suffering from war, natural disaster and political unrest. Secondly came the widespread acknowledgment that this aid had been given in an open-handed, non-partisan, and non-politicized way. Thirdly, the agencies had been alert to Jewish suffering in the 1930s and had reached out a helping hand to many of them. As mentioned above, in December, 1938, a delegation of American Quaker leaders traveled to Berlin to appeal on the highest levels of the Gestapo on behalf of the Jews. In these dangerous times, German and American Friends helped some 50,000 desperate refugees, largely Jewish, in many cases those ineligible for help from other agencies.[40]

M. R. Zigler, director of Brethren Service work in Europe from 1948 to 1958, expressed some of the problematic. He also well portrays the attitude in which Historic Peace Church workers approached their demanding tasks of relief and rehabilitation work in Germany:

> Reconciliation was highly desirable, but most difficult to establish in the presence of mass cemeteries. The records of Dachau and Buchenwald, the destroyed cities and villages, the church spires with sanctuaries missing, smokestacks of industry standing in rubble and ashes, men with parts of their bodies injured, many blind, widows and children homeless, worn-out farm animals and equipment, lack of fire to heat the rooms crowded with people, not enough food to go around, scanty clothing, -- these were European realities.
>
> The ever-present, annoying question that plagued every representative of the conquering nations was how to be a humble, sincere, equal-basis partner in reconciliation and in sharing gifts of love. Reconciliation often took place in silence. There were no words in the language to express the anguish of those served, or the humiliation of those who had come out of a land of abundance into a devastated land. This extraordinarily difficult feat had to be accomplished person to person and face to face. It was not easy for needy people to receive the gifts. … A new fellowship developed out of the memories of both conquering and conquered spirits, something like a beautiful sunrise after a dark night of fear.[41]

[39] John H. Eberly, "The High School Exchange Programme", in Durnbaugh, *To Serve the Present Age* (1975), pp 200-7.
[40] Margaret Hope Bacon, *The Quiet Rebels: The Story of the Quakers in America* (Philadephia: New Society Publishers 1985), pp 188-9; Hans A. Schmitt, "Quaker Efforts to Rescue Children from Nazi Education and Discrimination", *Quaker History* 85 (Spring, 1996), pp 45-57.
[41] M. Z. Zigler, "Beachheads for Service", in *To Serve the Present Age* (1976), pp 27-46, esp. pp 45-6.

PRAGUE CONSULTATIONS PAST AND FUTURE -
Milan Opočenský & Walter Sawatsky

I wish you to remember Dr. Ludêk Brož who participated in all the meetings. In his magazine *METANOIA* (Czech and International version) he dealt with many issues which were on our mind. He passed away on August 20, 2003, and we shall deeply miss him.

The original vision was to let the voice of the First and Radical Reformations be heard in the symphony of many Christian contributions. There was no platform for the voices coming from this tradition. By our Prague Consultations **such a platform was created** on which there is an opportunity for some coordination and comparing of notes. Now we have a handle for the study of our respective legacy. However, going back to the roots should not be just an **academic exercise.** From the beginning we wanted to enrich the **current ecumenical discussion.** These meetings are a visible sign of the Christian unity we seek to materialize. Since 1994 our discussions were broadened and included representatives of the Second or Magisterial Reformation. Our meetings represented a visible sign of Christian unity.

The *first* meeting in January 1986 brought together various traditions of the First Reformation. It was probably the first time since the times of the Reformation that all these groups came together. An attempt was made to define the First Reformation. The meeting called for more dialogue on the relation between the perspectives of the First and Second Reformation. The discussion concentrated on the significance of the Sermon on the Mount for personal and social praxis.

The *second* consultation (June 1987) dealt with the theme "Eschatology and Social Transformation". Both wings of the Reformation have to understand each other as necessary parts of the one body of Jesus Christ in their contexts.

The *third* consultation (June 1989) concentrated on the theme "Christian Faith and Economics" from the perspective of the First and Radical Reformation. The First Reformation sought the locus of biblical authority. It found it in a christological understanding. It formulated it in terms of ethics (law of Christ). It meant that economic issues were raised as well.

The *fourth* consultation was joined by the Lutheran and Reformed participants and other traditions (Methodist, Baptist, Roman Catholic). We were guided by a working hypothesis that in the 15th and especially 16th century there was a dialogue between various camps and groups. The religious wars ended that dialogue. Today it is our duty to renew the interrupted dialogue. Therefore we called the theme of the meeting "Towards a Renewed Dialogue". We confronted each others' legacy of reading the Sermon on the Mount. The Radical Reformers read Matthew more accurately than other traditions.

The *fifth* consultation brought together all groupings of the Reformation. The theme of the meeting was the question of justification and sanctification. An Asian theologian and African churchwoman reminded us that we were forgetting to speak about colonialism, racism, poverty, oppression, genocide and sexism. As Walter Sawatsky writes "to speak of sixteenth-century understandings of justification and sanctification was to skirt the edge of irrelevance". And yet, it is necessary to study carefully the doctrinal issues. It is difficult to combine a serious study in depth with practical volunteer involvement.

The *sixth* consultation continued the fifth consultation and discussed the problem of justification and sanctification. The meeting was also aiming at a more comprehensive and inclusive concept of the Reformation. The theme "New Life in Christ" indicated that justification-sanctification language did not sufficiently reflect customary usage as some consultation members had protested. An Orthodox theologian and a Seventh Day Adventist scholar were welcome additions to the communions represented

in the series of consultations. So far we were not in a position to make possible participation from the Anglican Communion.

What did we accomplish?

1. We created the platform on which we can share our frustrations and hopes.
2. We renewed a dialogue between the First, Radical and Second /Magisterial Reformations.
3. We clarified the term "REFORMATION". Instead of speaking of "The Reformation" it is more helpful to speak of different specific and historic "Reformations".
4. We are accepted by grace alone. Soteriology includes ethics and sanctification. Justification has not only individual but social consequences.
5. We affirm that new life in Christ is grounded in the reality of the triune God.
6. Justification becomes a reality through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.
7. Life in Christ involves costly grace. The challenge to faithful discipleship continues.
8. Over the years we have grown into a full communion of churches related to the First and Radical Reformation. We are grateful that we are joined by other communions and traditions.
9. We are involved in **a multilateral dialogue.** We have been tremendously strengthened and enriched. In the Christian family we no longer feel isolated and alone. This multilateral dialogue is our contribution **to seeking Christian unity.**
10. I regret that the Hutterites are absent a second time. In addition, this time we were unable to secure the participation of the Quakers. In our discussions we have to address their question whether the discussion of the traditional issues of theological discourse still have a useful function. They are pressing for a new vocabulary.
11. The relationship between church and world is now very different from that of the 16th century. Our common task and challenge is to develop a social vision of the Gospel which includes attention to issues of justice and injustice.
12. The outstanding questions:
    a. The formal anathemas in our confessional statements.
    b. Our obligation to find prophetic words to help overcome the violence and exclusions of our world.
    c. The ecological threats and the widened resource and financial gaps between peoples.

Prague Character and Purpose: The Background

In what follows I hope to identify a few shifts in the 18 year history of the Prague consultations, some key learning, several commitments that should not be forgotten, and to bring forward major issues that seemed in need of addressing.

Progressions

There were several progressions worth articulating here. Following self-introductions from groups that were linked to Hussite and Anabaptist traditions as minority groups we began with two basic statements of historical-theological understanding (by Molnár & Durnbaugh); responding to their accuracy for how those traditions see themselves now. That was a progression, even if generally unsatisfactory. Prague III came in the middle of 1989, just before the Velvet Revolution in Prague but the Comenius Faculty students and teachers were already engaged - this accounts for a statement of social ethical commitments.

Prague IV & V constituted a new context and approach, bringing the reformations from the fringes into dialogue with Lutheran and Reformed traditions. Prague IV was a confrontation, "a good

confrontation by capable people who declared at the end that this conversation must continue." What changed, especially in Prague V was the awareness of "how multilingual the Reformation traditions had become", with southern voices not as naturally assuming common ground with their northern counter-parts. Prague VI was a further progression in that the guests were more insistent than the original participants, that this dialogue must continue.

What Character and Purpose?

In his careful assessment of the Prague Consultation in the context of bi-lateral and multi-lateral dialogues Alan Falconer drew attention to some analytical frameworks that I found more helpful on a second reading. Falconer opened with a paragraph on what dialogue had come to mean for him. A key sentence was: "Dialogue is a process which allows divided churches to journey from conflict and competition to conversion and communion". A few pages later he returned to the word *conversion*, noting the call to conversion spelled out by the *Groupe des Dombes* - a set of proposals never directly addressed by Prague participants but presupposed by some of us as a reason for assuming common readiness for *transformation*, another word used by the French group. In Falconer's language "such a call to conversion or transformation involves a radical change of perception in which the newly gained cognition which emerges in dialogue brings about a changed way of understanding."[1]

Falconer described four methodologies of ecumenical dialogue - the comparative, the Christological, the intercontextual (all of which were not very good at dealing with non-doctrinal issues), and convergence methodology combined with case studies. Turning then to the Prague consultations, Falconer found them *sui generis*, at one point saying the "particular profile" of the Prague consultations "have the possibility of addressing the central contemporary agenda of the churches through a combination of confessional and contextual methodologies, and of emphasizing the importance of holding the intrinsic connection between ecclesiology and ethics."[2]

Further Falconer posed six separate questions about the nature and scope of the dialogue intended hereafter, still worth considering today:

1. Is the aim of such a dialogue to overcome division at the time of the Reformation?
2. Is it to clarify or even affirm central theological insights of the Reformation?
3. Is the intention of such a dialogue to seek consensus on certain central issues facing the churches today?
4. Is the dialogue aimed at exploring the continuing significance of the Reformation for the church?
5. Is the dialogue aimed at leading towards visible unity?
6. If it is #4, in what sense does this lead to cooperation and communion?

As I reflect on those questions, to which some affirmation seems necessary in each case, it strikes me that what has created the *sui generis* element is that each of those questions (or others like them) get addressed differently when around the table sit this diverse a set of Reformation traditions. It might even make sense to group them as Hussite/Waldensian, the 16th century Reformation groups including Britain, the Pietist and Great Awakening renewal movements, and the Charismatic wave of renewal - the source of stimuli for the latest are rooted in various ways in the former, but also recal us to a time when eastern and western Christianity were not divided and common foundations such as the Nicene Creed were recognized. To speak differently in a larger circle of diversity is the essential way of marking the journey.

[1] Alan Falconer in *Justification and Sanctification in the Traditions of the Reformation*. Prague V, Geneva, 13-17 February 1998. Edited by Milan Opočenský and Páraic Réamonn. *Studies from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches*. Nr. 42. Geneva: WARC, 1999, p 236. The reference is to Groupe des Dombes, *For the Conversion of the Churches*. New York: World Council of Churches, 1993.
[2] *Ibid*., p 239

Learning and Commitments

Milan Opočenský opened Prague V by quoting from the 1994 Prague IV statement: "We have begun to learn now to help each other by claiming our histories and traditions as common resources which help us to respond to the dilemma and possibilities of the future... The time has come to realize that the First Reformation, the Magisterial Reformation and the Radical Reformation are our common heritage. Only then will we be able to enter together into ongoing reformation."[3]

In 1989 we committed ourselves to seek more modest lifestyles, apply moral criteria to investments, work toward sustainable development in areas of poverty, insure that our church income sources were not tainted by violence, oppression, etc.

My own assessment in 2000 was that 15 years of meetings with these sisters and brothers, "has caused me to care deeply about the larger church and its witness." "In understanding we have moved the Reformation eastward, though it will take time for our own Reformation scholars to move beyond the linguistic barriers of German and Latin...We have not yet moved far enough eastward."[4]

By Prague IV more of us were coming to see the degree to which the First, Radical, Magisterial and Catholic Reformations "were part of the Westernization project that was collapsing".

Major Issues not yet Addressed Seriously

The Reformation ***legacy in mission*** is rich but is seldom addressed in ecumenical dialogues. To do it well would require adding to our ranks a few more missiologists, those skilled to think comparatively across cultures. The assumption, often repeated in my Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition, that the major reformers did not take mission seriously, and only the Anabaptists were missionary, needs serious revision. The main mission energy emerging out of the Reformation era was Roman Catholic mission, with re-catholicization in eastern Europe being only one of the ways that in very short order the Roman branch of Christianity became global. Other groups entered into mission beyond their cultures and territories after the Moravian Brethren in 1732 launched their first mission settlements. The way to the past century of ecumenical discovery was by following the mission trails.

The Reforming traditions showed an obvious trait, especially if we view them from the persistent theme starting from the Waldensian era through the Pietist Reformation at least, and resurfacing again in Vatican II, namely the strong participation of *the **laity***. As Fernandez-Armesto and Wilson put it in their provocative *Reformations*, "What is emerging... is the respectability of lay theology - not an emasculated theology, not a second best to academic or clerical theology, but something born out of the experience of living the faith in the world."[5] The writers acknowledged that lay activists show impatience, produce aberrations, "but the continual reformation without which the Church will die is now increasingly in the hand of the unordained majority." The role of the laity has not been absent from scholarly conferences in recent years, but addressing that theme from the shared experience of our collective Reformation traditions would be most helpful.

Finally, there is the matter of ***style and the problem of memories***, already addressed in other venues. In my remarks at Prague VI I raised a point that I feel is even more relevant for finding a responsible agenda for commemorating our 500th anniversaries within the next several decades: "Can there really be anything but a penitential starting point and tone of discourse as we seek to delineate an inclusive agenda for today? Will it soon become possible to enter into a mutual 'healing of memories' process as we name each other's dead and present a more inclusive martyrology, one that does not so quickly ascribe sanctity to the martyrdoms in the name of Reformation partisanshp, but a martyrology of

[3] *Ibid*. p 9.
[4] *Ibid*. p 332.
[5] Felipe Fernandes-Armesto & Derek Wilson, *Reformations: A Radical Interpretation of Christianity and the World 1500-2000*. New York: Scribner, 1997, p 193

lived witness, even unto death, in the face of the violence of the Soviet era, of the national security states of Latin America, of the racisms in Africa?"

Prague VII Consultation - the Significance of Reforming and Prophetic Movements for Church and Society - Prague Nov. 28- Dec. 2, 2003

The Prague VII consultation, meeting in the Jan Hus House in Prague, in essence returned to the concern for reform of church and society, that was a common thread of concern within what has come to be understood as the First (Waldensian and Hussite) and Radical (Anabaptist) Reformation traditions. The major papers reviewed the way in which the temptations to a left or right wing extreme were resisted as an ongoing Reformation tradition developed; one could see the parallels for the Waldensians over half a millennium, the Hussite Movement or the Anabaptist movement.

Carlo Papini presented the Waldensians in essence as a movement of travelling preachers, committed to poverty and a rigorous ethic, who were sustained by a larger group of friends. They were mainly a penitential movement, stressing *sola scriptura* and *solus Christus*, not yet *sola gratia* and *sola fide*. They were the first to translate the New Testament into the vernacular in specific regions of France, Italy and Germany. They sought to reform the Catholic Church, understanding their preaching as keeping the church from final ruin. All church practice must be tested by Scripture. Thus they insisted that the church should abstain from every coercive power, holding that the Sermon on the Mount is Christ's law, deserving absolute respect. Therefore they stressed absolute nonviolence, and wanted secular power to exact punishments that were restorative or curative justice. Participants noted the ways in which subsequent reformations took up similar reform concerns, albeit in distinct ways.

Charles Brockwell's later paper delineated parallels between numerous features of Methodist preaching renewal in the 18th century and the 13th century Franciscan *ordo* which help to recognize the persistence through Christian history of concerns to reform and renew church and society.

Milan Opočenský concentrated on the Taborite part of the Hussite movement which manifested a pronounced biblicism, a critique of sacerdotalism by stressing the priesthood of all believers and by taking the Eucharist in both kinds. But they resorted to violent defence of their reform. With the Taborites the eschatological orientation of the Czech movement reached its zenith, their concern for church renewal included attacking an unjust feudal order, as expressed in the widely disseminated *Confessio Taboritarum*. By the 1430s other leaders had called them to a moderate Hussitism. Thereafter the pacifist and biblicist teaching of Petr Chelčický, deeply rooted in Taborite critique of the feudal social (estates) and political order, became a bridge to the formation of the Unity of Czech Brethren in 1457.

Another approach illustrated by Donald Durnbaugh, was to compare the extended legacy of prophetic impact on society of Anabaptist-Mennonites, Brethren and Quakers, who in the 1930s formed the Historic Peace Churches' committee for common action. After World War II the HPC presence in rebuilding efforts in Europe resulted in the Puidoux conferences as the first (1955) serious theological encounter between magisterial and peace churches, since the Reformation.

By 1994 (Prague IV) representatives of the Magisterial Reformation had expanded the multilateral nature of the dialogue. This time therefore, Reinhard Böttcher's paper sought to assess in what way the Lutheran Reformation was a prophetic movement, and to note the ways in which by the 20th century the prophetic voices of Barmen and Bonhoeffer were taken up more by other churches.

Another broadening of the conversation was to hear an assessment of how the Roman Catholic Church understands prophecy, as both a permanent and special function within the church. Msgr John Radano mentioned that Second Vatican Council became, in the words of Karl Barth, a reforming council. It had the characteristics of a prophetic event with an impact well beyond its own boundaries. The final document from phase two of the bilateral dialogue with WARC presents reasons why Rome in the 16th

century resisted the reformers. Today numerous convergences in understanding have been identified through bilateral dialogues. The methodology of a historical review, Radano emphasized, needs more space in dialogues, because it draws attention to what was intended as well as what emerged in the end.

Finally a series of papers sought to show how the prophetic concerns of the Reformation movements were expressed in very different 20th century contexts. Those included inter-church efforts to rebuild in post-war Germany (Durnbaugh), including theological renewal, noting the testing of faith under Soviet rule and national security states (Sawatsky), and most recently through the challenge of the present system of economic globalization (Winzeler), and the domination of security interests as evidenced, for example, by the "Project for the New American Century".

It appears that as a coherent series with a continuity of participants, the Prague Consultations have come to completion. The common platform for dialogue that was achieved can now be attempted in several new initiatives, in light of widespread financial constraints, such as study processes in preparation for observing the 500 years Reformation anniversaries, with the intent of appreciating the plurality of reformations that developed over the process of several centuries. The original initiators of the Prague consultations attempted an assessment of what had been accomplished.

The Prague Consultations created for the first time a platform for voices from the First and Radical Reformation traditions to be heard within the symphony of ecumenical conversation. The vision for such a visible sign of Christian unity, expressed in academic reflection, shared testimonies from separate histories, spiritual fellowship and deepened friendship, were in great measure attributable to the spirit and ecumenical heart of Milan Opočenský and his colleagues, and to the longstanding Mennonite concern for relationships to Christians in central and eastern Europe. We noted how regularly the sensitivity to the prophetic, forced a re-examination of theological understandings in the context of the burning social, economic and political issues of the day. Attempting to note perspectives differing due to the East/West divide, or due to North/South inequities, regularly brought a corrective to one-sided views. Numerous issues were listed for further study, such as seeing the Reformation legacy in mission, and reflecting on the way the laity has come to play a larger role in the continual reformation of the church.

Consultation participants underlined the importance of the way papers and discussions took place in the framework of worship. As we prepare for the commemoration of a half millennium of Reformation history, all sense the urgency of seeking a healing of memories, including a process in which the martyrdoms no longer serve the cause of Reformation partisanship, but a martyrology of lived witness, including those of the 20th century under settings of extreme testing.

The proceedings from Prague VI and VII will be published with the intent of fostering broad circulation among the participant churches and communities. Less known documents, such as the *Confessio Taboritarum*, may be published in English translation.

The planning committee for Prague VII - Milan Opočenský, Larry Miller, Odair Pedroso Mateus and Sven Oppegaard - along with Donald Durnbough will guide future communication and forms of dialogue to continue the interest expressed by the Prague consultations.

Findings Committee - Theo Dieter & Walter Sawatsky

Editorial Afterword

The Prague Consultations as described in the preface to this volume consisted of seven sessions, usually lasting 2-4 days. At the end, it was clear to most participants that the next stage should be a different format, to be picked up by other multilateral initiatives. The most frequently cited suggestion was to devise a way to incorporate the central themes of eschatological and prophetical motivations for renewed practical and theoretical attention to social ethics into the developing ecumenical process called the Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV). Without direct connections, it would seem nevertheless that the initiatives begun in 2007 to plan for a conference in 2011 that will articulate a common call to peace witness as culmination of the DOV process, is indeed promising.

At another level, the 18 year process gained a character and quality of ecumenical give and take that was possible because a core group of persons provided the continuity, many of them already building on longer experiences of joint initiatives. That personal familiarity also made possible a style of discourse that members of the Hussite (First Reformation) and Radical Reformation traditions recognized. In some sense one might say that there was a self-conscious effort to listen to and hear the 'other', that included the distinctive style of that tradition. This was most evident in the way the primary host and organizer, Milan Opočenský made certain that Hutterian representatives were able to speak in their style (sermon and testimonial) and their contribution showed through in the final statements as did the contributions of those presenting written texts. The Hutterian role was no longer present for Prague VI and VII, Opočenský regularly pointing out the fact of their absence (which had to do with internal conflicts between Arnold Leut and the older Hutterian communities) and the reminders of radical faithfulness to the Gospel that their presence had evoked.

As the proceedings of Prague VI and VII go to press, its publication becomes a reminder of legacies to be remembered. There are at least two elements of that legacy that account for this afterword. The Prague Consultation story included an unfortunately large number of influential participants who died along the way, still deeply concerned for the ongoing task and the value of sharing the conversations more widely. A primary conviction of the participants toward the end was that when the 500th anniversaries of the Reformation era would come along, each of the respective Reformation traditions would treat that occasion of remembering as an opportunity to foster an inclusive and comprehensive appropriation of the renewal visions, rather than as a time to foster the identity of the little traditions. One measure of that was to see how the websites would link separate stories with the whole, how the spiritual markers of other traditions would be recognized.

The year 2007 marks the beginning of such a process, for it was the 550th anniversary of the *Unitas Fratrum*. The *Daily Readings* (*Losungen*) of the Moravian Brethren, begun in Herrnhut in 1721, have been circulated around the globe in many languages since then. During the spring and fall of 2008 there were ceremonies marking the 300th anniversary of the Brethren movement, the one starting with Alexander Mack in Germany in 1708. Of necessity, the speakers (from various divisions such as Church of the Brethren, Brethren [Ashland], Grace Brethren, and Dunkards) called to mind the renewing impulse of continental Pietism, in particular the strong commitment to personal ethical living and a commitment to service for peace, which also had such speakers locating themselves theologically in the Anabaptist movement of the 16th century. Other Reformation anniversaries are soon to follow, such as the 500th anniversary of John Calvin in 2009, whom many consider the most essential theologian of the Reformed tradition of churches.

The challenge to appropriate the agendas for renewal of the Church from that Reformation era was the recurring focus of the Prague Consultations. Yet that agenda must be rethought for the many

contexts around the globe where the communities from these legacies now live. Thus that legacy remains vital and urgent, especially when we attempt to grasp it more comprehensively, including the ongoing historical dynamics. We honor those legacies best, and we honor the thoughts and efforts of those contributors to these pages who have already passed to their reward in truth, to the degree that readers whose traditions were represented in the Prague Consultations continue the conversation that was started, and do so in its spirit.

Walter Sawatsky

The death of Milan Opočenský in January 2007 became a renewed stimulus for the sponsoring organizations to publish the proceedings of Prague VI & VII and to dedicate the volume to Milan who cared so deeply that the words of the Reformers not be forgotten, and that the conversations completing the Prague process continue to speak in print. A long time friend of Milan's, and a fellow respected leader in the Reformed world, Ethics professor emeritus and former dean of Princeton Theological Seminary, Dr. Charles West wrote the following memorial tribute that we are pleased to include here.

Milan Opočenský 1931-2007

Milan Opočenský was one of those rare theologians who lived and worked in Communist Europe (Czechoslovakia) during the years of the cold war, yet played an active role in ecumenical church affairs both during those years and after them. He was the son and grandson of pastors in the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren, itself a union of the followers of Martin Luther, John Calvin and Jan Hus. He was the last assistant to Josef L. Hromadka before the latter's death in 1969, and remained throughout his life a faithful follower and interpreter of Hromadka's theology. He was Professor of Theology and Social Ethics in the Comenius Theological Faculty in Prague, before and after the "Prague Spring" and its suppression by the Soviets; but he was caught up in the broader revolutionary ferment that swept through the churches in the rest of the world during the 1970s and 80s. He was for a time Europe Secretary of the World Student Christian Federation, which published his book *Christians and Revolutions: a Breakthrough in Christian Thought*. Then, in the last years of his active career, he was called from his Comenius Faculty chair to become General Secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches from 1989 to 2000. It was a post that brought out all his abilities as churchman, diplomat, Reformed theologian and prophetic witness.

Some of these stages call for further elaboration. First, Opočenský was a pupil of Hromadka. He learned in his formative years what it meant to accept the Communist revolution, as his teacher did, as God's judgement on the breakdown of western Christian civilization, but also as bearing a promise of God of which Communists themselves were not aware. He shared Hromadka's participation in, and witness to, the socialist society which the Party was building, which gradually softened its brutality and led to the 1968 development of "socialism with a human face". It was an exhilarating time. It all collapsed with the Soviet invasion. Hromadka protested, and, politically disillusioned, died soon after. Opočenský did not mention this collapse or reflect on its meaning in his later writings, though in a 1986 essay, *Christian Faith Challenged by History*, he staunchly defends Hromadka's ministry up to 1968.

But the experience led to the second phase of his career, Christian participation in broader revolution around the world, as Europe Secretary on the staff of the World Student Christian Federation in Geneva from 1969 to 1973. *Christians and Revolutions* sketches the historical dimensions of it from Jesus through the Reformation, the 19th century and the 20th century ecumenical movement to the World Conference on Church and Society in 1966. In those years he saw revolution as the dominant theme in

society everywhere, challenging the West and driven by the political movements of Asia, Africa and Latin America. He believed that the World Student Christian Federation was the instrument of Christian leadership, the new form of the church taking shape in this world. “When Christians work for revolution”, he quoted from the Theological Commission of the Christian Peace Conference, “they do not derive their right from an idea of revolution but from the Gospel. Thus the revolutionary aims of justice and humanisation which the revolution decides are not relativized.” In this spirit he worked with others for four years to remake the WSCF in this image. It did not work. There was too much human revolution and not enough Gospel in their common effort. In 1973 Opočenský was abruptly called home by the Ministry of Culture of his government. But the book, with a supplement on the scientific and technological revolution, remains a monument to his vision then.

The third phase came much later. After several years on the faculty of the Comenius Theological Faculty in Prague, he was invited in 1989 to return to Geneva as General Secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, a post which he held until his retirement in 2000. Here a different Opočenský emerged. The student of Hromadka is still there. The book of his reports, lectures, sermons and Bible studies during that time, compiled and presented to him at his retirement, is entitled *Faith Challenged by History*. The phrase is pure Hromadka, and Hromadka’s theology permeates it. So does the prophetic drive that led both teacher and student to embrace different revolutions at different times. But in these years we first of all see Milan Opočenský the ecumenical servant of the church at work. He speaks not about revolution but about covenanting for justice and about political responsibility. His concern is for the churches, their unity, their responsibility and their mission in the world together. He became a theologian in general for the Reformed churches. In his annual reports he defined and redefined the special perspective and contribution of the Reformed tradition for the member churches. In dialogue with other confessions about faith, theology and social witness he brought that tradition into ecumenical dialogue and community. One of his most beautiful talks was on “The Beauty and Service of Theology” to a Reformed-Syrian Orthodox conference in India. He even confessed to a clergy conference in the United States that he felt a little impoverished not having been, as four generations of his ancestors were, a parish minister, for “To be a preacher and a local minister is really the crown of all theology.”(p 202).

Milan Opočenský, a theologian in the tradition of Josef Hromadka, a revolutionary with a theological compass, and finally an ecumenical statesman who loved the church and who never lost his passion for the power of God in Christ to overcome the powers of the world – perhaps we should join him in saying, as he said so often, “The Lamb has conquered; let us follow him.”

Charles C. West

APPENDIX 1 - FINDINGS STATEMENT PRAGUE I: The Heritage of the First and Radical Reformations, 24 to 27 January 1986

A consultation dealing with the heritage of the First and Radical Reformations took place at the Comenius Faculty of Protestant Theology in Prague from 24 to 27 January 1986. Twenty-two people came together from the following groups: Church of the Brethren, Czechoslovak Hussite Church, Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, Hutterian Brethren, the Mennonites, the Moravians, the Society of Friends (Quakers) and the Waldensians. After hearing introductory papers read by Prof. Amodeo Molnár (Prague) and Prof Donald F. Durnbaugh (Oak Brook, USA), participants discussed the legacy of their ancestors and the ways these traditions play a role in their churches and communities. Those in attendance were aware of the historic significance of the meeting; it was probably the first time that members of all these groups met in order to ask what they had in common, in what ways they can deepen their cooperation and how they together can enrich the continuing ecumenical discussion.

The First Reformation

What is meant by the First Reformation, the first of the radical reformations? According to Prof. Molnár, who both defined the First Reformation and described tendencies which appear in subsequent Radical Reformation movements, it is a complex phenomenon expressed primarily in the Waldensian (12^{th} to 13^{th} centuries) and the Hussite (15^{th} century) movements. Not only did the phenomenon give birth to the Unity of Brethren (*Unitas Fratrum*) in Bohemia and Moravia, it inspired other groups as well, such as the Anabaptists. The First Reformation was not just a forerunner of the German or Swiss Reformations in the 16^{th} century, but was historically independent and unique. It emphasized the message of the Gospels (including the Sermon on the Mount) and the pervasive eschatological aspect of the biblical message. It was carried by the faith that Jesus Christ is the Lord of the world and that the social order should be shaped by his Lordship. The bearers of the First Reformation understood the gospel as the guiding principle for life — with consequences both for the individual and for social and political structures. They wanted to renew the eschatological dynamism and awareness in Christianity. The First Reformation had inclinations towards prophetic visions and referred to the Holy Spirit, sometimes without the safeguard and correction of Holy Scripture. The Second Reformation — sometimes called the Magisterial or Classical Reformation — partially joined and continued the struggles of the First Reformation.

However, it concentrated on the Pauline epistles and spoke more about grace and freedom than about the law of the gospel. The Second Reformation often reduced the eschatological component of Christian faith to the individual hope for eternal life. While the First Reformation had a strong relationship to the multitude of poor and simple people, the Second Reformation maintained a close connection with the middle stratum and was therefore more conservative.

In discussion of Prof Molnár's presentation, participants agreed that the First Reformation deserves additional attention and serious study. Also, they called for more dialogue on the relation between the perspectives of the First and Second Reformations in order to see to what extent the two movements' emphases are complementary and to what extent a balance between their emphases can be established.

The Radical Reformation

What is meant by the Radical Reformation? According to Prof. Durnbaugh, Radical Reformation groups such as the 16^{th} century Anabaptists (Mennonites/Hutterian Brethren), the 17^{th} century Friends,

and the 18th century Church of the Brethren manifested emphases parallel to those of the First Reformation groups. They sought to reform Christian life and the church in a way which constituted an alternative to Constantinian Christendom. They linked faithfulness to the Lordship of Christ with discipleship, accepted Scripture as the basis for life as well as for doctrine, and adopted a restitutionist view of church renewal. The Radical Reformation movements emphasized both nonconformity and dedicated service to the world. They understood the church as a covenant community of believers, developed nonclerical patterns of ministry and reached out to other churches in 'sectarian' or 'alternative ecumenism'.

Discussion at the Consultation

After the initial presentations by Professors Molnár and Durnbaugh, most of the consultation consisted of discussion on issues related to the various movements in their historical and contemporary expressions. Participants explored selected characteristics of their groups, noted similarities and differences, acknowledged needed reforms, and addressed contemporary challenges in church or society. Most conversation focused on the significance and authority of Scripture, the Sermon on the Mount, eschatology and matters related to wealth and economics.

The discussion linked the authority of Holy Scripture with its interpretation in the gathered congregation and with the leading of the Holy Spirit. Through the Spirit, the congregation and Scripture, God's will and direction for Christian life can be discerned. In the context of the congregation, God's word provides guidance for and addresses all of life — social and political realities as well as the attitudinal and relational dimensions of Christian faith. The discussion highlighted similarities and differences of emphasis on the relation between Scripture, the Spirit and the gathered congregation in the process of giving shape to Christian discipleship, particularly in its present expressions.

Most groups represented at the Prague meeting emphasize the significance of the Sermon on the Mount for social *praxis* as well as for personal attitudes and relationships. They may understand it as a practical point of reference for daily living and as the truth which Jesus embodied and taught. However, they believe that the Sermon should not be understood as a message inherently different from, or at variance with, the Epistles or justification by faith. In this spirit, participants discussed the importance of the Sermon's call for inner transformation as well as for the exterior expressions, or of faith. They acknowledged the dangers of individualism and legalism in some of the groups and underlined the continuing need for repentance and renewal.

The topic of eschatology, both in terms of its historical significance for these movements and in relation to current understandings, sparked considerable discussion, particularly as a motivating factor in the reformation of the church and for change in social structures. Several traditions represented at the consultation have understood its significance primarily in determining Christian ethics and moral conduct. Others have viewed eschatology more as an interpretation of historical events and the introduction of fundamentally new possibilities into history. Some groups have struggled with forms of millenarianism in their midst. It was agreed that these areas of convergence and divergence merit serious study and further conversation.

The discussion touched on several matters related to economics and social organization. Time did not permit thorough consideration of these issues in either their historical or contemporary expressions. It was agreed that this area of concern should be given serious consideration in future consultations. It was noted that, ever since their origins, the various groups have challenged economic patterns in different ways, ranging from community of goods to experimental managerial and industrial efforts.

Finally, consultation participants adopted the following declaration in which they expressed their sense of common calling and outlined plans for the future:

'We declare that we intend to stay together and to grow into deeper and more committed fellowship. We believe that we have been called together by our Lord Jesus Christ, who empowers witness to the gospel in the places where we live. In repentance and obedience, we accept Christ's call to give a more visible expression of the unity which is already given in Christ. We want to seek ways in which we can serve Jesus Christ in "the least of these our sisters and brothers" in the worlds of today and tomorrow. We share in the predicament of humankind regarding the threat of war and of social and economic injustice. We commit ourselves to work toward peace and justice, together with all those who have the same objectives.'

'We plan to meet again in June 1987, in order to continue discussions on key questions and to examine possible common projects. A central theme at the 1987 meeting will be *Eschatology and Social Transformation* and will include conversation on related questions such as economics; peace; nonviolence and justice; liberation; and biblical interpretations. Possible common projects which may be considered at the meeting are publication of appropriate First and Radical Reformation materials, congregational exchanges and exploration of relationships to contemporary grassroots Christian movements around the world.'

'To coordinate and facilitate our common work, we appoint a continuation committee consisting of Donald Durnbaugh (USA), Hans Meier (USA), Larry Miller (France), Milan Opočenský (Czechoslovakia), and Eva Pinthus (England).'

APPENDIX 2 - FINDINGS STATEMENT PRAGUE II: Eschatology and Social Transformation, 23 to 28 June 1987

A second consultation called by representatives of the churches related to the First and Radical Reformations took place at the Comenius Faculty of Protestant Theology in Prague from 23 to 28 June 1987. The theme of the consultation was *Eschatology and Social Transformation.* Thirty-two people from eight nations attended, representing the following confessional groups: Church of the Brethren, Czechoslovak Hussite Church, Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, Hutterian Brethren, the Mennonites, the Moravian Church, the Religious Society of Friends and the Waldensians. Professor Harry M. de Lange (The Hague, The Netherlands) and Professor Bertold Klappert (Wuppertal, West Germany) were invited to make presentations in order to broaden the ecumenical context of the consultation.

Professor Josef Smolik, Dean of the Comenius Faculty, led directly to the central theme with his opening meditation on I Cor 2.1-11. Speaking on the theme of strength through weakness, he characterized all groups represented in the consultation as those who have traditionally looked at history from the bottom. He concluded that groups viewing history from below should have a unique perspective in understanding the plight of those on the margins of society.

Professor Milan Opočenský brought words of welcome that made the group aware of the ecumenical significance of the gathering. For example, a present sense of stalemate over the restrictions placed on the original plans for the Council on Peace and Justice announced at Vancouver in 1983 make the deliberations of the consultation even more important.

The keynote paper by Prof. Opočenský, 'Eschatology and Social Change', appealed to the participants to revive as matters of faith *(status confessionis)* original Reformation themes on eschatological thought, which still challenge the present generation to join the struggle for global economic justice, peace and peacemaking, and the integrity of creation. Citing Bohemian reformers Petr Chelčický and Milič of Kroměříž, the paper developed an interpretation of the character of Antichrist. Antichrist not only distorts and destroys life by working through the secular powers, but also by existing within the body of believers. The same greed and avarice that have led to massive imbalances of wealth, vast stockpiles of weapons and destruction of the environment, is also alive and active within the life of the churches. A response by Murray Wagner and the discussion that followed raised questions about anthropology (human nature) and competing concepts of history. On the one hand is a dominant view that is pessimistic to the point of believing that 'there will always be wars and rumours of war', given the fact of human sin. On the other hand is the more hopeful estimate that human life has 'the residual capacity of sinners for justice and genuine concern for the neighbour'.

Group opinions ranged from a tragic view of human nature caught in the brokenness of sin to a hopeful view for human prospects in the eschatological conviction that the kingdom already reigns among those who see the signs of God's grace. Professor Opočenský's reply stayed within the assertion of his paper. 'In spite of our sinfulness and fragility, in spite of demonic powers which are at work in the world, we are called upon to change the world. We are considered worthy of becoming God's coworkers in the process of the humanization of this world.'

Professor Amadeus Molnár opened the day on Thursday with a meditation on Num 20.21-31, the story of Balaam's ass. Using an exegesis by Jan Hus, for a sermon prepared for the very time he was forbidden to preach, Professor Molnár encouraged the group to be ready to hear witnesses to the truth in unexpected voices.

Professor Marlin Miller's paper, 'The Church in the World as the Community of the Kingdom', distinguished between types of eschatological belief that informed various 16th century Anabaptist groups. The influence of eschatology can be seen in the 'explicit' engagement of militants to change an oppressive order and institute a new order through direct action, including violence. Eschatological impulses also can be detected in the practice of the Anabaptists who located God's transforming activity primarily in the community of committed believers in the world. These Anabaptist groups represent an 'implicit' engagement for social transformation through the existence, witness and nonviolent service of the Christian community as a sign of the kingdom in the midst of the world. Professor Paolo Ricca's response spoke directly to the distinction between 'implicit' and 'explicit' forms of protest by distinguishing between two types of social alienation. One type has made us quit history and separate, i.e. to withdraw from the world, not to stand against it but for it, as an exemplary community. A second type sacralizes history in a militant attempt to replace the powers with a new Christian order.

Participants questioned whether either form of protest is a fitting response to Reformation eschatologies. Does social transformation require that the church be more than a model? Ricca argued that it must be more. Separation represents the primitivist motive of the First and Radical Reformations. However, social transformation is possible only if history is affirmed. Only if the church engages directly in political action can the challenge of the Second Reformation be answered. This means the church must 'soil its hands' in the political arena of public power. Still, the two Reformations must not go their separate ways, sectarian communities in one direction, transforming churches in another. They must not mutually exclude each other. Instead, they must remain in constant conversation so that a more complete witness to the gospel might be made and mutual support might be extended to all Christians.

Professor Harry de Lange presented a paper taking up the theme of social transformation in terms of economic justice. Appealing to the biblical tradition of 'jubilee', Professor de Lange issued a call for Christians to assume responsibility in restoring human relations broken by the sins of economic greed and exploitation. Continuing with the biblical witness, he contended that justice is not a mere set of rules but a way of living in covenant with God and the neighbour. Destructive to the human community and the entire structure of justice are the current trends in economic development that cause massive poverty, worldwide hunger, exhaustion and waste of natural resources, and exploitation of less-developed nations. Professor de Lange drew particular attention to the environmental deterioration that results from economic expansion. In exploring means to transform society, he cited a report by Dag Hammerskjöld recommending reduction of meat and oil consumption, more economic use of buildings, greater durability of consumer goods and more limited use of private automobiles. He concluded by asserting that redistribution of power and wealth is not an act of charity, but a recognition of the rights of the poor and powerless. Underlining the direction of the entire paper was the economic wisdom of Mahatma Gandhi: 'The earth provides enough to satisfy everyone's need, but not everyone's greed.' The response by Wolfgang Harms largely supported the main points of this paper by adding a point of substantiation. He reaffirmed the theological position of Professor de Lange by stressing that we urgently need to consider ways that can help restore relationships broken by economic injustice.

Pastor Jindrich Halama, jr. opened the Friday sessions with a meditation on Rev 14.1-3. From his own experience, he told how he gradually adjusted to the noise of howling dogs, just as we can become deaf to the cries of millions whose suffering comes as judgement upon us.

The following discussion on economics began with an attempt to spell out the boundaries of 'sufficiency'. That proved difficult for the world context, but attention was draw to the suggestion made by a group of economists in The Netherlands that minimum and maximum net income should be no greater than a ratio of one to three. Participants affirmed that the satisfaction of minimum human needs is declared by Jesus in Mt 25 to belong to the criteria employed in the last judgement. The consultation group was also told that the fundamental issue is one of meeting basic human needs while also meeting basic security needs for all without the massive expenditures for arms that drain human and natural

resources. Numerous voices then affirmed the suggestion that this group of representatives covenant together to seek, in the course of the next ten years, acceptance of the guideline that there be no more than a one to three income differential in our churches. Many supported this small step in order not to be overwhelmed by the world context. There was less readiness, however, to discuss the question of applying this guideline toward economic distribution, whether between our groups or on a world level. Some consultation participants also restated the traditional position of several Radical Reformation groups that we do not control history, and that, in contrast to the Quakers, it was usually not our intent to achieve economic justice by exerting political influence on state authorities. In that context, Professor de Lange repeated his call that we do not shirk our political responsibility toward the Third World and all future generations.

Professor Klappert's presentation, 'Peace, Nonviolence and Justice', tried, by means of an examination of major 20th century Protestant voices — Bonhoeffer, Barth, the *Barmen Declaration* (1934), the *Darmstädter Wort* (1947) — to demonstrate how the Second Reformation was beginning to draw on the insights of the First Reformation. He suggested that justification must be understood in the concept of the Exodus and must have a social dimension. But Professor Klappert also appealed to us to draw from Second Reformation insights, especially those illustrated in point five of Barmen, namely, that we assume a readiness for political mediation and social responsibility. This led the witnessing community *(Bruderschaften)* in the tradition of the Confessing Church to make a strong commitment to nuclear pacifism in postwar Germany. The speaker accepted the integrity and validity of the historic peace church position, but he called for cooperation and mutual respect between those Christians engaged in political responsibilities and those who take a more separatist stance. Both wings of the Reformation have to understand each other as necessary parts of the one body of Jesus Christ in their respective historical contexts.

The subsequent round of discussions began to identify numerous points of difference that need to be acknowledged and understood if dialogue between the First and Second Reformation is to be promising for each. They included the observation that the term 'First Reformation' was being used too loosely, that we are working with an ahistorical typology, that the 'Second' or 'Magisterial Reformation' took place within a Constantinian world-view and that the Reformers always retained a sense of responsibility for social structures by relying on physical power. Further questions drew attention to fundamental differences in understanding the church and the state, and it was noted that the Radical Reformation groups were not antistatist in principle. The experiences of history cause these groups to ask what kinds of power are appropriate to a Christian community. While the Barmen and Darmstadt statements were spoken of with admiration, it was recognized that this wing of German Protestantism did not take over leadership after 1945 *(Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*), but is still influential in witness communities with strong ecumenical involvement. The response of Hans Meier provided the reminder of a witnessing community that first acts to put its own fellowship under the discipline of Christian love, including economic equality, before it attempts to act as a conscience for the secular order.

From still another perspective, Professor Gerald Shenk presented a sociological analysis. The group heard a description of 'grid and group factors' to account for the remarkable continuity of the small groups represented at the consultation. A key point was the observation that these First and Radical Reformation groups did not recognize the state as ultimate, but rather as a limited reality dependent on the assent and legitimation of the ruled. These groups have demonstrated greater interest in 'church' and 'society' as important categories. That is, the interest is in *social transformation.*

Some Affirmations

1. We affirm our desire to stay together and to grow together into a deeper and more committed fellowship.
2. We affirm that, having jointly returned to our roots, drawing on the experience of our respective communities throughout the centuries, we now intend to learn from our different stories. We believe they will become a continuing source of encouragement and inspiration for today and tomorrow.
3. We believe that our ultimate hope comes from Christ who has conquered. In the light of that hope and faith by which our ancestors in the First and Radical Reformations lived, we see that we cannot solve the present predicament of humankind through human effort.
4. We believe that the kingdom of God — the reign of peace, justice and love — is already present in this world. True discipleship today calls us to bear witness to this reality.
5. We believe that the Holy Spirit moves us to see that God is already at work in history. Our eschatological hope prompts us to join God's action towards justice, freedom and peace, knowing that God challenges every *status quo.*
6. We confess that the fact of children and adults starving daily throughout the world challenges our faith and our Christian existence to its very core. We ask ourselves whether we as churches can, in fact, still live in Christ if we do not commit ourselves to alleviating global economic injustice.
7. We commit ourselves to a simple lifestyle as a sign of our longing for a thorough structural change. We believe that the demands of the gospel to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, free the captives are reasonable demands if a humane civilization is to survive.
8. We believe that the issue of nuclear weapons, and of war in general, challenges the very integrity and foundation of our Christian life. We commit ourselves to make clear to our communities and churches that by our stance in respect to weapons of mass destruction we either *affirm* or betray the gospel.
9. We are called to be responsible for the integrity of creation. We believe that the transformation and taming of nature should occur out of cooperation and communication, not out of exploitation and plunder.
10. We must confess that we who come from diverse dissenting traditions are also heirs of a post-Constantinian world. We confess our temptation to seek power and influence. Yet we are learning again from our past that a Christian existence is fragile, uncertain, we do not glorify poverty and suffering, we know that we may be called upon to join the marginalized and suffering. Our faith in Jesus Christ lets us see that we in all our efforts are sustained by God's forgiveness and grace.

APPENDIX 3 - FINDINGS STATEMENT PRAGUE III: Christian Faith and Economics, 20 to 26 June 1989

Our Shared Perspective

1. We believe that our ultimate hope comes from Christ who has overcome the powers of sin and death. In the light of that hope and faith by which our ancestors in the First and Radical Reformation lived, we see that we cannot solve the present predicament of humankind solely through human effort.
2. We believe that the kingdom of God — the reign of peace, justice, and love — is both already present among us and still to come in all its fullness. True discipleship today calls us to bear witness to this reality.
3. We believe that the Holy Spirit moves us to see that God is already at work in history in spite of human weakness and corruption. Our eschatological hope prompts us to join God's action towards justice, freedom, peace and the redemption of creation, knowing that God challenges every *status quo*.

Some Common Affirmations Related to Economics

4. We affirm that our thought and practice in relation to economic matters are integral parts of Christian faith and life, rather than separate from or of no direct concern to Christian faithfulness. According to the biblical story from the Exodus to Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom, God shows compassion p articularly for the poor and disenfranchised. We cannot serve God and mammon.
5. We acknowledge God as creator of the world and owner of all things **in** it. We are called to be caring stewards of creation rather than exploiters of the earth. Hence we must speak prophetically against all manifestations of unrestrained and unqualified economic growth in the societies where we live.
6. We reaffirm the historic calling of the faith community to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked and to visit those in prison, in whom we meet Jesus. This compels us to stand with Jesus in his solidarity with the poor and afflicted in every generation, both within and beyond the household of faith.
7. We recognize in our various traditions a biblical witness against dominant and oppressive economic practices and structures on the weak. This witness has included protest against slavery, luxurious living, economic oppression, the accumulation of wealth, and particularly Christians' and the churches' all-too-frequent complicity in these practices.
8. We reject the spirit, and practice of the predominant world economic system which destroys national economies through debt and trade mechanisms, impoverishes and causes the death of millions, and destroys the earth for the sake of profits.
9. We accept the testimony of our various traditions to the biblical calling of believers to repent of our greed and avarice by renouncing our 'sacred' claims on wealth and property, and by creating alternative habits of thought and patterns of *shared* economic practice in our personal and corporate existence. We believe that the churches' credibility depends on their — and our — willingness first to practise what is commended to others.

Some Differences in the Midst of Shared Perspectives

10. We recognize differences among us with regard to the primacy of Scripture for discerning God's will for our life and thought. Some of us believe that Jesus Christ as witnessed in the Scripture is the primary norm for discerning truth and right practice. Some of us appeal primarily to the Spirit's leading for direction in the present time.

11. We recognize that we have chosen a variety of alternative patterns to the dominant economic systems. Some have established communities of common production and goods as a normative Christian practice. Others have developed other forms of sharing and mutual accountability also as normative Christian practice. Still others would give dissenting witness while participating within the broader economic systems.
12. We acknowledge differences among us as to the means our witness in the form of protest may take. Some of us reject all types of coercion and violence; others of us may accept some types of coercion or violence as a last resort.
13. We are not yet of one mind on how to assume our responsibility for the world. Some of us believe that we are called to witness in the world by being the church as a new and just community separate from the world. Some of us believe that we are called to exercise our responsibility by becoming agents of economic justice in the social and economic structures of the society in which we live. Some of us believe that we are called primarily to be the church while also witnessing directly to those in power or expressing critical support of those in power or working within the structures of the society in which we live.

Some Common Commitments and Areas of Ongoing Work

14. We affirm our desire to stay together and to grow together into a deeper and more committed fellowship.
15. We affirm that having jointly examined our roots, drawing on the experiences of our respective communities throughout the centuries, we intend to continue to learn from our different stories. We believe they will be an ongoing source of encouragement and inspiration for today and tomorrow.
16. We commit ourselves to more modest lifestyles out of our commitment to economic justice and as a sign of our longing for a thorough structural change.
17. We agree to encourage our churches to accept a ratio of not more than 1 to 3 as a guideline for income differential between the minimum and maximum net income after taxes.
18. We agree to make our collective and individual investments conform to our professed values and to the goals of sustainable development in areas of poverty. This includes a reevaluation of the biblical prohibition of taking interest in the context of the modern economy.
19. We commit ourselves to seek and maintain in economic practice the equal dignity of women and men, and of all races and nationalities.
20. We shall seek to avoid sources of income which involve violence, harmful substances, oppression of human beings and the misuse of natural resources.
21. We have been made aware of the biblical judgement on systems which accumulate power, land and money in the hands of a few to the detriment of the people and creation. We want to study further the private individual or corporate accumulation of capital at the cost of the welfare of the people. We also wish to examine how this system is driven by consumerism and secured by wars against the poor. We wish to find solutions for this problem in the light of the gospel.
22. We agree that our responsibility to the earth includes bearing in mind our diminishing ecological resources, the dangers of polluting our environment, and the needs elsewhere in the world for resources we may waste.
23. We affirm our continued openness to work with all persons of goodwill on projects to save our ecology system.
24. We commit ourselves to encourage our churches and institutions to make increased funds available for ecological justice programmes.
25. We invite individuals, communities and churches to join with us to meet the challenge of action for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Our Concluding Stance

26. We confess that we who come from diverse dissenting traditions are also heirs of a post-Constantinian world. We confess our temptation to seek power and influence. Yet we are learning again from our past that a Christian existence is fragile, uncertain and risky. While we do not glorify poverty and suffering, we know that we may be called upon to join the marginalized and suffering. Our faith in Jesus Christ and dependence upon the Holy Spirit lets us see that we in all our efforts are sustained by God's forgiveness, grace and strength.

APPENDIX 4 - FINDINGS STATEMENT PRAGUE IV: Towards a Renewed Dialogue, Geneva, 28 November to 1 December 1994

The meeting was the sequel of three previous consultations which brought together representatives of the churches related to the First and Radical Reformation, held in Prague in 1986, 1987 and 1989 (Prague I—III). The churches represented in the first three meetings were Church of the Brethren, Czechoslovak Hussite Church, Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, Hutterian Brethren, Mennonites, Moravians, Society of Friends and Waldensians. The idea behind this initiative was to explore these traditions and their potential contemporary relevance for ecumenical dialogue. It was felt that this would be a visible sign of Christian unity. In a situation of violence and injustice these traditions find particular hope in the transforming and renewing power of the coming reign of God. The First Reformation emphasized the message of the Gospels and the eschatological aspect of the biblical texts. The gospel was understood as the guiding principle for life. The emphasis of the Radical Reformation represented an alternative to Constantinian Christendom. The meetings called for more dialogue on the relation between the perspectives of the First/Radical and Second Reformations which have been seen as complementary.

This consultation in Geneva ("Prague IV") was different. It was organized by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation and the Mennonite World Conference. In addition to the churches mentioned above, participants related to the Lutheran and Reformed tradition were invited. Representatives of the Methodist, Baptist and Roman Catholic churches were also present. This broadened framework was conducive to the discussion and to the outcome of the meeting. The leading question was whether we can arrive at a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of the Reformation. In what way can the new insights renew our churches and enrich the ecumenical discussion today?

This is *a summary* of the papers presented:

Donald F. Durnbaugh discussed the First and Radical Reformations and their relation with the Magisterial Reformation. Member bodies of the First Reformation (Waldensians, Czechoslovak Hussite Church, Unity of Brethren, Czech Brethren) and of the Radical Reformation (Mennonites, Hutterian Brethren, Quakers, Church of the Brethren) share emphases on the ethical demands of the gospel (Sermon on the Mount), eschatological orientation and a gathered church ecclesiology. Although they accepted many of the core beliefs of the Magisterial Reformation (Lutheran, Reformed), distinct differences remained. Waldensians and Czech Brethren aligned themselves with Reformed bodies partly because of the Calvinist openness to disciplined church communities. Although changed social conditions in the late 20th century have brought both dissenting and mainstream churches more closely together, there still remain a number of divergent views on substantive doctrinal issues. Responses to the paper by D.F. Durnbaugh were given by V. Bruce Rigdon (Presbyterian) and Ulrich Bubenheimer (Lutheran). Carter Lindberg asserted that Luther's reform movement is theologically discontinuous from the continuum of medieval renewal movements that lead into and continue in the 'Radical Reformation'. Luther's reformation differed in kind rather than in degree from those reform movements which preceded him. Carter Lindberg rested this claim for distinguishing Luther's endeavours on his doctrine of justification by grace through faith alone. Does not this emphasis on doctrine over life lead to quietism? This doctrine led to renewed community worship and a new social ethic exemplified in social welfare legislation. Responses to this paper were given by Walter Sawatsky (Mennonite) and Renate Ellwanger (Hutterian Brethren).

Jan M. Lochman was asked to speak about Comenius as an example of the dialogue between two Reformations. Comenius tried to transmit the legacy of the Unity of Brethren to the broader stream of ecumenical Christianity. His critical comments and positive contribution concern especially christology and eschatology. Comenius challenges any temptation to restrict the authority of Christ to the personal or ecclesial realm. The chiliastic elements of his hope help him to relate the kingdom of God to concrete challenges of social and ecclesial history. Christ encourages him not to give up creative discipleship in the service of genuine renewal. In this respect Comenius is the heir of the Czech Reformation and at the same time 'a custodian of ecumenical hope.'

Hugh Barbour spoke on the Sermon on the Mount in Radical Reformation traditions, emphasizing Scripture's call to 'be perfect as God is perfect'. Early Quakers considered perfection a sign of how God works **in** men and women of faith, and massive lay movements arose among radical reformers to live the 'higher law' of perfection previously assumed reserved for monks. Wyclif's Lollards, the Swiss Anabaptists, the Mennonites and Hutterites embodied this calling. Other forms of perfection were self-renunciation, recalling the mystics' *Gelassenheit,* renouncing of possessions in poverty like early church, monastic and Hutterian communities, commitment to transform the world as God's call like Puritans and English Baptists, openness to new leadings of the Spirit like the Quakers, surrendering self-righteousness like Lutheran Pietists, and receiving the infusion of God's love directly into the heart like Moravians and Wesleyans.

Antti Raunio examined the golden rule as the summary of the Sermon on the Mount in the Reformed and Lutheran traditions. Most Reformers (except Melanchthon) paid much attention to the golden rule (Mt 7.12). They saw it both as the summary of natural law and of the Sermon on the Mount, both as the source of just legislation and judging and the principle of Christian love. The Reformers interpret the golden rule as precept, which demands a radical change in the 'direction' that love must take and does not contain any requirement of reciprocity. Luther and Calvin seem to have thought that the 'natural' reason of human beings can also understand the demands of the divine natural law to some degree. Luther, who does not develop theocratic thoughts, sees more possibilities for 'outward' justice and participation in the order of love than Calvin. Zwingli and Bucer consider human reason to be so corrupted that natural law can only be understood through faith and therefore worldly government should also be under God's word, which through the Spirit reveals the meaning of natural law and creates the order of love.

Ulrich Luz spoke about the Sermon on the Mount in present biblical scholarship. Matthew's Sermon on the Mount is a challenge for the dialogue between representatives of First Reformation and Radical Reformation churches on one side, Magisterial Reformation churches on the other side, because

1. it understands Christian identity as *praxis,* and not as doctrine or confession;
2. it does not presuppose the axiomatic difference between gospel and law, but rather the (Jewish) category of law as gift of God or salvific law;
3. it is the expression and the basic text of a living, praying and acting community and not of an individual's relation to God.

To mainstream Protestant churches which are looking for a new identity in a situation where the visible identity of their 'folk churches' is more and more put in question, this should be a real challenge. In the same way the life and theology of the First Reformation and Radical Reformation churches, for which the Sermon on the Mount was a key passage, could and should be a challenge for them.

Lukas Vischer was given the task of establishing a link between the living legacy of the Reformation and contemporary ecumenical work. The First and the Second Reformations are part of an ongoing history. The message of these movements constitutes a resource for the witness of the Protestant churches and, beyond them, for the ecumenical movement as a whole. The ecumenical movement represents a particular challenge for the churches claiming as their origin the First or the Second Reformation. They need to rediscover the universal horizon which was characteristic of their beginnings.

The encounter with other churches in the ecumenical movement is for both of them a new chapter in their ongoing history.

Justification by grace remains central for the witness of the churches of the Magisterial Reformation. But the message of God's grace in Jesus Christ needs to be formulated in the horizon of today's experience. The primary concern must not be to repeat the doctrine of justification but to respond to the threats the suicidal course of the present generation creates for the future of humanity. Justification is justice for the victims of injustice and violence. In the new situation the 'ascetic tradition' of Christianity acquires new meaning. Rejected by the Reformers on the ground that salvation cannot be obtained by 'meritorious' acts, it needs to be revived today because of its inherent respect of the neighbour and of creation. True law protects life. A dialogue between the First and Second Reformations on Christian lifestyle appropriate for today is called for.

The encounter between the First and Second Reformations inevitably raises the question of the continuity or discontinuity between the two. Though they are similar in many respects, their response to God's word was different. But, as they witness in today's world they discover that they need one another — the resources of their histories are in many ways complementary. The new questions they face lead them beyond the controversies of the past. What is the relationship between justification and sanctification? What does sanctification mean in the horizons of today's crises — social and ecological? How can they witness to true *koinonia* in a time of fragmentation and disintegration of society? A response to this paper was given by André Birmelé (Lutheran).

Konrad Raiser in his paper entitled 'Ecumenical Agenda for Today and Tomorrow' recalled the original impetus of the ecumenical movement and underlined the necessity for reassessment. The search for a visible unity of the church has reached a decisive stage. There is a growing convergence in the conviction that *koinonia* and *diakonia* belong inseparably together. A new challenge comes from Pentecostal, charismatic, evangelical and other movements. Nowadays, Christian churches witness often in the context of renascent world religions and cultures. The question of indigenization and inculturation of the gospel has been raised with a new vigour. We are faced with the question of how to preserve the oneness and unity between indigenous expressions of the faith. Another challenge is the ecological threat to survival. We learn to see that God's *oikoumene* is the whole of creation, the 'one household of life'. The emphasis on theology of life is an attempt to spell out a life-centred ethos promoting a culture of sharing and solidarity. We are at the threshold of the ecumenical movement where a new articulation of an ecumenical vision is emerging.

II

We have learned from each other as heirs of the First and Second Reformations. We have learned that our historical experiences are different. Heirs of the First and Radical Reformation have found energy, direction and vision in the Sermon on the Mount sufficient to sustain their witness even in the face of their exclusion from the power structures of Christendom. Heirs of the 16th century Reformation have found resources in the classical doctrines of their traditions for speaking to the human situation and shaping the history and culture of national communities.

More important, we have begun to learn now to help each other by claiming our histories and traditions as common resources which help us to respond to the dilemmas and possibilities of the future. We recognized that the world in which we seek to live as Christians is one in which ever greater numbers of people are being marginalized in relation to employment, political participation, education, human rights, health and access to scarce resources.

We have started to understand that we are not simply different churches, but different bodies within one greater church with a complementary function for each other. Churches which are heirs of the First or of the Radical Reformation, with their intensive community and their distinctive Christian life, might assume a role towards the mainstream Reformation churches which is somewhat similar to the role

of the monastic orders in the Roman Catholic Church. They can remind them of the importance of a new life for Christian identity. On the other hand, the mainstream Reformation churches preserve a treasure of theological thoughts which they might be able to share with churches whose origins are in the First or Radical Reformation. The time has come to realize that the First Reformation, the Magisterial Reformation and the Radical Reformation are not the particular heritage of one or another church, but our common heritage. Only then will we be able to enter together into the process of the ongoing Reformation.

We confess that our church institutions and structures are not designed for witness and ministry in such situations and are simultaneously experiencing increasingly severe reductions in members and funds, thus producing a survival mentality and outlook.

We want to continue this process of sharing in order to claim from our past the insights and experiences which may equip us to live into yet another reformation of the church and its mission in the 21st century. We believe that such a reformation requires that we think and act ecumenically.

For our future conversations we want to look more deeply at situations in which churches have had to learn to witness without recourse to the use of power, such as Central and Eastern Europe.

III

The Third World participants who were present observed that while reflecting on the heritage of European Reformations (both the First and Second), they could see a parallel to this movement in their own situations. Like the European reformers, their struggle is how to make the Christian faith which they have received through Western missionary activities more contextual.

Probing into one's own historical heritage is basically searching for one's own identity. As long as the search for such identities is not for promoting exclusive claims nor for serving parochial interests they have a positive contribution to make in the development of a holistic sense of community. Churches which are successors to the First and Second Reformations have to raise the question of how sensitive they were when they transmitted their heritage to a different human community. In many cases, unknowingly, they considered their heritage absolutely unique and imposed it on others as they engaged in the proclamation of the gospel.

Relationships with people of other faiths were an issue that was raised by some participants and was endorsed by the Third World participants. Is there any valuable insight from the First and Second reformers on this matter? The First and Second Reformation Christians were not living in a totally mono-Christian situation. At least in some situations they had to interact with Jews and Muslims. Did their preoccupation with the church and the Christian community prevent them from relating to the larger society both in their immediate surroundings and elsewhere in Europe?

IV

We expressed deep appreciation for the valuable and important insights of these days. We rejoice that the Prague conversations on Reformation were broadened to include voices from the 16th century Magisterial Reformation.

We call for continued dialogue and a yet more expanded circle of participants. We wish more fully to engage the practical concerns that arise in living our faith in difficult and diverse cultural and ecclesial contexts in relation to the theological considerations and historical legacies we treasure.

We desire another gathering, with continued emphasis on reformation as the church's response to God's life-giving presence in each age and place. We suggest focusing on questions around God's acceptance of us and human transformation. Avoiding technical theological language, we might ask how we talk about what God is doing among us in the whole created order, among humankind, in the church, and in personal lives. Or, how we discern and embody marks of the church amid *the* challenges of our

societies. How we learn from our forbears' suffering and marginalization as we face cultural marginalization or diminishment.

We cherish each tradition's commitment to its legacy. We honour the particularities of one anothers' faith and praxis and seek to support and learn from each other as all learn deeper faithfulness incarnating our legacy in our age and place.

We wish to hear the theological depth of each tradition's confessions, express the convergence as well as divergence of our convictions, to learn as fully as possible from each Reformation's insights for contemporary faith and to express our communion in and as Jesus' living, risen body, the church.

APPENDIX 5 - FINDINGS STATEMENT PRAGUE V: Justification and Sanctification, Geneva, 13 to 17 February 1998

A working paper

"Prague V" is the shorthand designation of a consultation held at Le Cénacle, a meeting centre in Geneva, Switzerland, from 13 to 17 February, 1998. It continued a series of consultations held in 1986, 1987 and 1989 in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and in late 1994 in Geneva. Participants in the first three meetings were representatives of communions which understand themselves as belonging to the First Reformation — Waldensians, the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, Moravian Brethren *(Unitas Fratrum)* and the Hussite Church — and to the Radical Reformation — Hutterian *Brethren/Bruderhof*, the Religious Society of Friends, Mennonites and the Church of the Brethren.

The first three consultations led to a sense of unity of heritage and compatibility of witness among these church fellowships, enabling them to contribute together to ecumenical conversations on pressing theological and contemporary issues. Among the many foci of discussion were shared heritage and eschatological grounding as well as Christian faith and economics.

The theme of "Prague IV" in Geneva in 1994 was the meaning and implications of the Sermon on the Mount (a theme which emerged in the first three consultations), but a shift in approach was marked by the purposive broadening of the discussions to include representatives of the Magisterial Reformation — the Lutheran and Reformed communions — alongside those from the First and Radical Reformations. Also present were representatives of the Baptist, Methodist and Roman Catholic traditions.

"Prague V", attended by members of all the above-mentioned denominations (with the exception of the Hussite Church), was sponsored jointly by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Its focus was *Justification and Sanctification*, a theme which has been in the forefront of Lutheran—Reformed discussion in recent decades, leading to the *Leuenberg Agreement* (1973) and the *Formula of Agreement* (1997-8) between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and three Reformed churches — the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Church in America and the United Church of Christ. The recent *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1997) issued by the LWF and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and now in the process of reception by the Lutheran and Roman Catholic communions was received with great interest by participants and recognized as having significant implications.

The programme included interpretations of justification and sanctification by members of the participating churches. It gave attention to African, Asian and Western perspectives and also examined the theme in relation to current threats to survival. The crowded schedule did not permit extended dialogue following these presentations. Nevertheless, areas of agreement can be identified, as well as areas demanding more discussion to discover convergence or divergence.

Areas of agreement

We are encouraged by a number of convergences that invite us to continuing dialogue. There was general agreement among the participants that:

1. Justification is received from God, not achieved by human effort. It establishes a new salvific relationship between God and human beings and a new communion among human beings.
2. Justification and sanctification are held together in the unity of the Christian life.
3. Justification takes place within community and has significance both ecclesiologically and ethically.

4. Justification frees us to respond to the challenges of the world in faith, without arrogance and without despair.
5. Every generation needs to restate the message of salvation in a way that responds to the peoples of that day in their various cultures and contexts.

Areas needing further discussion

1. While there was agreement on a basic definition of justification (see previous section above, no.1), some called for further consideration of its implications for society and the whole of creation.
2. We discovered that the term 'sanctification' covers a range of themes variously emphasized in our communions — 'evangelical obedience', 'personal and social transformation', 'good works', 'holiness' and 'Christian perfection'. The relation of these to each other (as well as to justification) would be a fruitful topic for further joint exploration in the tradition of the Prague consultations.
3. Since justification takes place within community, ecclesiology and ethics need more developed discussion.
4. Justification and sanctification need to be explored in historical perspective, in relation to such topics as election, calling and perseverance, and also in theological and eschatological perspective.
5. In our consultations we have focused primarily on interdenominational differences in understanding, to the comparative neglect of cross denominational differences in understanding. As we are called to respond to today's challenges, more attention needs to be given to emerging convergences and divergences within our communities.
6. We need to explore more intentionally what it means to be an inclusive community, hearing and being transformed by voices that have been excluded or marginalized.
7. In relation to the diverse religious traditions in which many Christians live today, we need to explore the implications of our discussion with other faiths.
8. We recognize the need to focus on what difference theological understanding makes to the way we live, both as individuals and as communities in society.
9. Not all of our traditions represented in the Prague Consultations express the process of salvation in terms of 'justification' and 'sanctification'. Therefore the different modes of talking as well as the interrelations between matters of fact and linguistic expression deserve careful investigation.

Context and communication

In this fifth consultation, there was more sharing of the faith community contexts from which we come, and there needs to be still more of this in future meetings. We have not finished the task of comparing our traditions, but we recognize the need to go beyond this. This requires a different method from exchanges between experts, so that we may reach results that may be communicated to our faith communities.

What next?

We affirm that the Prague conversations should continue. We recommend the publication of the papers from this consultation and the appointment of a small continuation committee in order to resolve questions of future theme, structure and method.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS (Prague VI, 11-15 February, 2000, Strasbourg, France)

Prof. Dr. Jeff Bach Bethany Theological Seminary Richmond, IN 4737 USA	Rev. Karin Bloomquist Lutheran World Federation 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland	Prof. Dr. André Birmelé 87 rue Strohl 67520 Wangen France
Dr. Charles Brockwell, jr. 3907 Ashridge Drive Louisville KY 4024 USA	Prof. Dr. Ludìk Brož Čajkovského 8 13000 Prague Czech Republic	Prof. Dr. Emidio Campi Hohenstrasse 11 CH 8702 Zollikon Switzerland
Dr. Donald F.Durnbaugh P.O. Box 484 James Creek, PA 16657 USA	Rev. Dr. Alan D. Falconer World Council of Churches 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland	Dr. Thomas Finger Eastern Mennonite University & Seminary Harrisonburg VA 22802, USA
Rev. Hah Eun-Kyu Missionsstrasse 37 4055 Basel Switzerland	Dr. Jindrich Halama Ev. Theol. Fakulta Charles University Černa 9, 11555 Prague Czech Republic	Prof. Dr. A.I.C. Heron An den Hornwiesen 2 91054 Buckenhof Germany
Ms. Marianne Ijspeert Willem de Zwigerlaan 21-III 1056 JD Amsterdam The Netherlands	Dr. Viorel Ionita Conference of European Churches 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland	Dr. Jan B. Lášek Vratislavova 8/30 12800 Prague Czech Republic
Prof. Dr. Carter Lindberg 113 Whitney St. Northboro, MA 01532 USA	Dr. Peterr Macek Ev. Theol. Fakulta Charles University Černa 9, 11555 Prague Czech Republic	Dr. Odair Pedroso Mateus World Alliance of Reformed Churches 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland
Dr. Roland Meyer Faculté Adventiste de Théologie 74165 Collonges sous Saleve France	Dr. Larry Miller Mennonite World Conference 67000 Strasbourg France	Rev. Dr. Israel P. Mwakyolile Mukumira University College P.O. Box 55, Usa River Tanzania
Prof. Dr. Milan Opočenský World Alliance of Reformed Churches 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland	Ms. Eva Pinthus 22 East Parade, Manston-in- Wharfedale Nr. Ilkley, LW29 6LH United Kingdom	Msgr. John Radano Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity 00120 Vatican City
Rev. Dr. V. Bruce Rigdon 1028 Yorkshire Road Grosse Point Park, MI 48230 USA	Dr. Martin Robra World Council of Churches 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland	Dr. Walter Sawatsky Assoc. Mennonite Biblical Seminary Elkhart IN 46517 USA
Prof. Dr. Josef Smolik Belgická 22 12000 Prague 2 Czech Republic	Dr. Peter Winzeler Melchiorstrasse 23-148 3027 Bern Switzerland	

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS (Prague VII, 28 November to 2 December 2003, Prague, Czech Republic)

Dr. Charles Brockwell, jr. 3907 Ashridge Drive Louisville KY USA	Prof. Dr. Theo Dieter Centre d'Etudes Oecuméniques 8, rue Gustave Klotz 67000 Strasbourg France	Dr. Donald F. Durnbaugh Juanita College Huntington PA 16652 USA
Prof. Dr. Milan Opočenský Nepomucka 1025 15000 Prague Czech Republic	Prof. Dr. Jindrich Halama Ev. Theol. Fakulta Charles University Černa 9, 11555 Prague Czech Republic	Dr. Carlo Papini Via Emilio Granelli 1 A/S 16156 Genova Italy
Msgr. John Radano Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity 00120 Vatican City	Dr. Walter Sawatsky Assoc. Mennonite Biblical Seminary Elkhart IN 46517 USA	Prof. Dr. Josef Smolik Belgická 22 12000 Prague 2 Czech Republic
Dr. Peter Winzeler Melchiorstrasse 23-148 3027 Bern Switzerland	Dr. Reinhard Böttcher Lutheran World Federation 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland	Dr. Sven Oppegaard Lutheran World Federation 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland
Dr. Odair Pedroso Mateus World Alliance of Reformed Churches 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland		

This was a smaller gathering, over half those initially planning to come were unable to arrange their travel and sent apologies. Including five as first participants, they were: Jeff Bach, Jan Lášek, *Claude Baecher, *Otto Dreydoppel, Thomas Finger, Marianne Ijspeert, Peter Macek, *Mickey L. Mattox, Roland Meyer, Larry Miller, Eva Pinthus, Bruce Rigdon, Karen Bloomquist, André Birmelé, *Gregory Cameron, *Scott Hendrix, Alasdair Heron.

PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED PROCEEDINGS

Papers from the Second Prague Consultation on the Heritage of the First and Radical Reformations. Special Issue, *Brethren Life and Thought*, XXXV, 1 (Winter 1990). This contained key papers only plus introductory essays, Part I from Prague I (January 1986); Part II from Prague II (June 1987). ISSN 0006-9663.

Prague III, also held in Prague in June 1989, was the last consultation in which only representatives of the First and Radical Reformation participated, along with several invited presenters from other Reformation traditions. The proceedings were never published, only the findings summary statement was included in the subsequent proceedings listed below. The papers are to be included in a pending web posting of the entire series of consultations.

Towards a Renewed Dialogue (Prague IV). Consultation on the First and Second Reformations, Geneva 28 November to 1 December 1994. Edited by Milan Opočenský. **Studies from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches**. Nr. 30 Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 1996. ISBN 92-9075- 023-5.

Justification and Sanctification in the Traditions of the Reformation. Prague V, the fifth consultation on the First and Second Reformations, Geneva, 13-17 February 1998. Edited by Milan Opočenský and Páraic Réamonn. **Studies from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches**. Nr. 42. Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 1999. ISBN 92-9075-064-2.

The Message for the Last Days - the Three Essays of Milič of Kroměřiž. Edited by Milan and Jana Opočenský, in **Studies from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches**, 1998.

INTRODUCTION OF AUTHORS - PRAGUE VI & VII

- Dr. André Birmelé is Professeur de Dogmatique at the Faculté de Théologie Protestante, Strasbourg, France and also part-time Professor of Research at the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg. Lutheran.
- Dr. Reinhard Böttcher was Director of Studies of the Lutheran World Federation, Geneva, Switzerland. Lutheran.
- Dr. Charles W. Brockwell, jr., Professor Emeritus History and the University of Louisville and Pastor Emeritus of Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church, Louisville KY, USA. Methodist.
- †Prof. Dr. Luděk Brož, long-time editor of *Communion Viatorum*, Prague, Czech Republic. Ev. Church of Czech Brethren.
- Dr. Theo Dieter is Professor of Research at the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg, France. Lutheran.
- †Dr. Donald Durnbaugh, retired Professor of Church History at Bethany Theological Seminary, then teaching Church History at Juanita College. Church of the Brethren.
- Prof. Dr. Alasdair I Heron is Professor of Reformed Theology, University of Erlangen, Germany. Church of Scotland.
- Dr. Carter Lindberg, Professor of Reformation History, Brown University, Boston, MA, USA.. Lutheran.
- Dr. Odair Pedroso Mateus was Director of Studies for World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Geneva, Switzerland and is currently Academic Dean of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Switzerland. Reformed Church of Brazil.
- †Dr. Milan Opočenský was retired General Secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Prague, Czech Republic. Ev. Church of Czech Brethren.
- Dr. Carlo Papini is editor of Claudiana Press, frequent publications in Italian as member of the Società di Studi Valdesi, living in Genova, Italy. Waldensian Church.
- Eva Pinthus, teenage refugee from the Holocaust, became Quaker, is Chaplain at the University of Bradford, representative of the Yorkshire Yearly Meeting, living in Manston-in-Wharfedale, England.
- Msgr. John A. Radano is a member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, (1984-2008), Vatican, Italy. Roman Catholic.
- Dr. Martin Robra, member of the Evangelical Church in Germany, is a theologian and pastor on staff at the WCC since 1994 with oversight of ethics and ecology, plus other issues. In Faith and Order, and since 2007 has headed the programme on WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 20th Century.
- Dr. Walter Sawatsky is Professor of Church History & Mission, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN, USA. Mennonite.
- †Prof. Dr. Josef Smolik was retired Professor of Pastoral Theology, Ev. Protestant Faculty, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic. Ev. Church of Czech Brethren.
- Prof. Dr. Peter Winzeler, Pfarrer and Honorary Professor of the Faculty of Theology, University of Bern, Switzlerland. Reformed Church of Bern, Switzerland.