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Evangelical Unity in the Light of Contemporary Orthodox Eastern—Roman Catholic—Protestant Ecumenicity¹

JOHN WARWICK MONTGOMERY

The following essay represents an approach to the ecumenical question from the standpoint of an Evangelical Protestant. We are printing it here for two reasons: first, because Dr. Montgomery says some things which the clergy of the Missouri Synod will be interested in reading in connection with their studies of the ecumenical movement; second, because Dr. Montgomery who has recently become a member of the clergy of our Church is presently teaching as a visiting professor at our Springfield Seminary. He is an exciting and stimulating teacher, a popular lecturer in many circles of Protestantism, a regular contributor to numerous theological journals, and a man of rare insight and perception in the theological world. We commend this article to the attention of our pastors with the thought that it will stimulate discussion and comment among them.

J. A. O. P.

Apologia pro Dissertatione sua

WITH A DEFERENTIAL BOW to the shade of John Henry Cardinal Newman, I must begin this essay in a spirit of personal apologia. Readers of a recent issue of *Newsweek* will have met the present essayist as an apparent ecclesiastical reactionary. Having quoted my judgment that contemporary renewal theology is "so preoccupied with sinful man's needs in our times that it is allowing the gospel to be swallowed up in the sinful situation,"² *Newsweek's* religion editor commented:

None of the "sinful situations" that vex the fundamentalists—whose greatest strength lies in the South and rural Midwest—is spelled out in detail. But their antipathies are well known, particularly toward the mainline churches' involvement in interracial projects, peace conferences, ecumenical dialogues with Roman Catholics, and urban-slum ministries.³

Were this a factually accurate criticism, then the Consultation on Evangelical concerns, in asking me to prepare this paper, would have made a *faux pas* comparable to a wine taster's union choosing a judge with no taste buds.

However, it so happens that (1) I did "spell out in detail" the evangelical objections to so-called renewal theology, namely, Bultmannian and post-Bultmannian de-objectifying of Christian

theology and Bishop Robinson's situational relativizing of Christian ethics, and (2) I am personally very much in favor of "peace conferences," "urban-slum ministries," "interracial projects" (having acquired the coveted epithet of "nigger lover" for activities in this area), and, last but by no means least, "ecumenical dialogues." As a confessional Lutheran, I hold to the great ecumenical principle set forth in Article VII of the *Augsburg Confession*.⁴

It is enough for the true unity of the Christian church that the Gospel be preached in accordance with pure doctrine and the sacraments be administered in keeping with God's Word. It is not necessary that human traditions or rites and ceremonies, instituted by men, should be alike everywhere. It is as Paul says in Eph. 4:4,5, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Moreover, in company with evangelical scholars of various confessional persuasions, I am presently serving on a theological seminary faculty sponsored by a church body, the Evangelical Free Church of America, which has become known for its truly ecumenical motto, "For believers only, but for all believers."⁵ Thus it would be a mistake to assume that the present essay is the work of a theological obscurantist who feels that "all are crazy but me and thee, and sometimes I've suspicions about thee."

But the writer is an "evangelical"; and he does look with grave suspicion on any movements in Christendom that would reduce the effectiveness of evangelical testimony. Here, of course, the term "evangelical" requires immediate definition, for the word is employed in many different ways today. To my way of thinking, "evangelicals" are bound together not by virtue of being members of the same Protestant confessional stream,⁶ but by their firm adherence to certain common theological tenets and emphases. These latter would summarize as follows:

- (1) Conviction that the Bible alone is God's objectively inerrant revelation to man;⁷
- (2) Subscription to the Ecumenical creeds as expressing the Trinitarian heart of biblical religion;
- (3) Belief that the Reformation confessions adequately convey the soteriological essence of the scriptural message, namely, salvation by grace alone through faith in the atoning death and resurrection of the God-man Jesus Christ;
- (4) Stress upon personal, dynamic, living commitment to Christ and resultant prophetic witness for Him to the unbelieving world; and
- (5) A strong eschatological perspective.

Whether a member of a large "inclusivist" church or of a small "separated" body, whether Anglican or Pentecostal, an evangelical

regards himself in home territory where the above theological atmosphere exists. Indeed, if we are to be ruthlessly honest, he ordinarily finds more genuine Christian fellowship with evangelicals outside of his own church body than with non-evangelicals within it. Why? Because a firm, uncompromising stand on the objective authority of Scripture and the necessity of personal salvation through the subjective acceptance of the Christ of Scripture appeared to the evangelical as the bedrock of Christianity itself.

Evangelicals such as this writer are, therefore, in many ways naturally ecumenical. Conditioned historically by the interconfessional American experience of the frontier revivals,⁸ evangelicals in this country have found it very difficult to push other evangelical believers beyond the pale, regardless of the "aberrational" views they may entertain on minor doctrines or the particular denominational affiliations they may hold. The twentieth century has accelerated the tempo of evangelically ecumenical contacts: the communications revolution has brought geographically insulated evangelical denominations into close proximity—and has made Consultations such as this, involving participants from all over America, readily feasible; America's "coming of age" has reduced almost to nil the isolated linguistic-cultural pockets of nineteenth-century evangelical orthodoxy; the growth and organization of American denominations have put evangelicals of various confessional persuasions into each others' back yards from suburbia to the foreign mission field; and the increasing pressures of secularism and unbelief in the mid-twentieth century have acted as a strong incentive to evangelicals to draw closer together for mutual support and more effective witness. The present-day spirit of evangelicalism was well voiced in a 1961 editorial in *Christianity Today* (itself a powerful evidence of the trans-denominational perspective of today's evangelical cause); under the rubric, "A Plea for Evangelical Unity," readers were reminded in the strongest terms that "Be of the same mind one toward another" is the direction of the inerrant and infallible Word."⁹

But while evangelicals have more and more been discovering that—to use English *littérateur* Charles Williams' moving phrase—"their life and death is with their neighbor,"¹⁰ other religious unity movements have been gaining ascendancy in Christendom. Here we refer not primarily to the "objective" amalgamations of Protestant denominations in the twentieth century, but more especially to what H. Paul Douglass has called "those deep undercurrents of Christian unity which are emotionally or mystically realized"¹¹—chief of which, in the preceding lustrum, has unquestionably been the ecumenical relations among Orthodox Eastern, Roman Catholic, and Protestant bodies. As Handspicker rightly stated in the conclusion to his recent "Survey of Church Union Negotiations, 1961-1963":

In the realm of Christian unity "emotionally or mystically realized" we must . . . note the impetus toward Christian concord and unity in two recent developments: the ecumenical

impetus given to the Roman Catholic Church through the work of Pope John XXIII, and the increasing and deepening participation of the Orthodox Churches in the work of the World Council. Within the Second Vatican Council the most widely known expressions of this first development have occurred, but of at least equal importance is the attendant phenomenon of increasing dialogue between Roman Catholic, Anglican, Orthodox, and Protestant clergy and laity both in international conferences and in local dioceses and parishes. Increased Orthodox participation in the work of the World Council is not merely in terms of numbers, but in addition through a change in role from "observer and adviser" in ecumenical conferences to fully committed participant.¹²

Faced with this present climate of ever-deepening Orthodox Eastern-Roman Catholic—"mainline" Protestant ecumenical relations, the evangelical churchman finds himself reacting ambivalently. On the one hand, he recognizes with thanksgiving to God that the Roman Catholic church and the Orthodox Eastern churches have never ceased to stand uncompromisingly for the Trinitarian core of the Christian faith, as set forth in the Ecumenical creeds;¹³ in this regard, the evangelical sees these great churches as a healthy corrective to the unitarianizing of the faith which has occurred in more than a few mainline Protestant bodies under the impact of social-gospel liberalism and current demythologizations of Christianity.¹⁴ On the other hand, even the most unsophisticated evangelical is at least intuitively aware of the gulf that historically separates him from Roman Catholicism and the Eastern churches in respect to the other major elements of evangelical belief: *Sola scriptura*, *sola gratia* & *sola fide*, personal commitment & personal witness (in opposition to the *opus operatum* in all its forms), and a moment-by-moment eschatological orientation. The question of evangelical stance vis-à-vis Protestant dialogue with Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy becomes especially acute when we reflect that evangelicals (as this writer is using the term) exist in all mainline Protestant denominations; therefore Protestant movements toward cooperation or unity with Romanism and Orthodoxy can hardly help but alter the perspective of general Protestantism and thus indirectly affect evangelical unity itself.

Thus the overarching question to be posed in this paper: Where is evangelicalism to stand as relations grow closer between World Council Protestantism on the one hand and Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism on the other? More concretely, (1) Are evangelicals to encourage or discourage their respective denominations in these ecumenical efforts? (2) Should evangelicals, through the National Association of Evangelicals or by way of independent evangelically-sponsored efforts, carry on their own dialogue with Roman Catholicism and with the Orthodox Eastern churches? (3) What can be gained for evangelical unity from Orthodox Eastern-

Roman Catholic-Protestant ecumenical discussions? Urgent as these questions are, virtually no attempt has been made heretofore to answer them in depth;¹⁵ and I confess that only the overwhelming importance of the subject gives me the temerity to enter this tangled thicket in which objective fact and subjective interest are so closely intertwined. I believe that the questions here posed can be satisfactorily answered—but only against the background of more rigorous thinking on the nature of the present theological situation than is usually met with in ecumenical discussion. If we are prepared for some extended “depth analysis,” then we may find that solid answers await us at the end of the path.

The Cruciality of Theological Motif-Research

In matters ecumenical, evangelicals are universally convinced that considerations of truth must precede considerations of union, unity, worship, or fellowship. Granted that among evangelicals there is diversity of viewpoint as to how much doctrinal truth must be agreed to for common action, and as to whether a Christian can legitimately be a member of a body that in practice permits error or unbelief to exist alongside of truth, nevertheless it would be difficult to find any evangelical who would engage in common worship where the essentials of the Gospel (as stated, for example, in I Cor. 15:1-3) were lacking, or who would enter a church union without clear guarantee that the fundamentals of evangelical belief (as set forth in the preceding section of this essay) would be allowed him. Thus whether a “separationist” or a “non-separationist,” the evangelical is perforce committed to a stand on propositional theological truth which appears hopelessly rigid to contemporary secularists and broad-church Protestants alike.

When compared with the “tender-minded” approach of the “ecumaniac” (“churches that commune together stay together,” etc.), the evangelical attitude toward doctrinal matters is highly commendatory, for it both takes the Great Commission seriously (“teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you”—Mt. 28:20) and manifests a properly “tough-minded” appreciation for the law of contradiction.¹⁶ But the evangelical concern with doctrinal differences is not without its dangers—though these are not the ones upon which religious liberals are wont to ring the changes (lack of love, etc.). Trouble arises when, in concentrating on particular doctrinal problems, evangelicals neglect to penetrate behind the surface issues to the basic theological motifs that give the specific doctrines their force. The trouble is not that evangelicals are too occupied with doctrinal truth, but that they are too ready to skim the surface of doctrinal issues! Here we can learn much from Lundensian *Motivforskning* (“motif research”), which is described as follows by one of its foremost practitioners, Anders Nygren:

The most important task of those engaged in the modern scientific study of religion and theological research is to reach an inner understanding of the different forms of religion in

the light of their different fundamental motifs. . . . We must try to see what is the basic idea or the driving power of the religion concerned, or what it is that gives it its character as a whole and communicates to all its parts their special content and colour.¹⁷

Relatively seldom in interconfessional dialogue do we cut to the level of "the basic idea or the driving power" which gives significance and impact to the particular doctrines under discussion. In consequence, we generally experience bewilderment at the obtuseness of the other party—and create for ourselves roadblocks which prevent potentially fruitful discussion at depth level.

Consider an example apart from the Orthodox Eastern-Roman Catholic scene—an example which, because of its familiarity, will serve as a paradigm for our later discussion. From the Reformation period to the present, Lutherans and Calvinists have attempted to convince each other that the Verba in the Lord's Supper passages are to be understood literally (Lutheranism) or metaphorically (Calvinism). To an adherent of either position, the exegetical force of his particular interpretation is overwhelming—and neither can comprehend why the other insists upon retaining his obtuse view of the scriptural texts. Now although the Lord's Supper problem does significantly depend upon the exegesis of the Verba, this exegesis fits within a larger context in the case of both Calvinism and Lutheranism. For Lutherans, the Verba must be understood literally, for otherwise a "spiritual" Christ could exist apart from the now eternally-incarnate Christ; for Calvinists, the Verba have to be taken metaphorically and "la vertu secrète et admirable du Saint-Esprit"¹⁸ has to be introduced to raise the believers' spirits on high to commune with the ascended Christ, for otherwise the normal human body of our Lord would be divinized and the "wholly other" character of the eternal God violated. Striking even deeper, we see that the issue really focuses on the question of the "communicatio idiomatum"—whether divine attributes can be communicated to human nature; and the answer to this larger question depends upon the even more basic issue of theological starting-point or motif in the two systems: the incarnation (Lutheranism) or the sovereignty of God (Calvinism). For Lutherans, the incarnation must be unqualified, and the sovereignty of God has to be qualified by it; for Calvinists, God's sovereignty is unqualified, and the incarnation must be viewed in light of it. Thus the particular doctrinal question of the Lord's Supper becomes a manifestation of the fundamental motifs of the two theological systems under discussion: Calvinism, with the First Person of the Trinity as its starting-point, and Lutheranism, with its focus on the Second Person of the Trinity.

Once discussion has reached the level of root motifs, the really important questions can be asked. Are the variant motifs *biblical*? (In the case of motifs lying at the center of the great confessional streams of Christendom, the answer will almost always be a quali-

fied "Yes"; in theology as in politics, the devil finds it difficult to fool "all of the people all of the time.") Are the motifs *equally* satisfactory for interpreting the doctrine(s) at issue? (Here the sensitivity of the theologian to the total impact of the scriptural message will be particularly tested.) Can a biblically-grounded calculus be developed to *interrelate* properly the several genuinely scriptural motifs underlying the confessional positions of Christian churches? (For example, the Calvinist "First Person" motif might be established as fundamental in the realm of creation, the Lutheran "Second Person" motif as basic in matters of "new creation," i.e., redemption.)

In general, it appears to me that problems of Christian unity, as seen from the evangelical perspective of objective theological truth, require a rigorous "motif-level" examination of confessional orientations—with a view toward the ultimate building of a meta-theological calculus for the proper interrelating of those motifs that survive the scriptural test. Such a metatheological calculus would theoretically provide what evangelicals have longed for since the days of Calixtus' commendable but question-begging *consensus quinquesaecularis*:¹⁹ a fully realistic map for Christian cooperation, fellowship, unity—and even organic union.

The development of a metatheological calculus would require the concentrated labors of evangelicalism's most devoted scholars and churchmen; here we can only point to the overwhelming need, both theoretical and practical, for it. Our specific concern at this point is the more modest one of orientating evangelical thinking to motif issues, so that a mature evaluation can be made of Protestant-Orthodox ecumenicity and Roman Catholic resurgence in our time.

The "Geist" of Eastern Orthodoxy

Protestants in general—and perhaps evangelicals in particular—are remarkably vague in their knowledge of the Orthodox Eastern churches. For many Protestants, "Eastern Orthodoxy" is a monolithic entity; whereas in fact it consists of Byzantine, Syrian, Armenian, and Alexandrian (Coptic) traditions, and within the Byzantine tradition alone one must think in terms of Greek, Russian, Serbian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Albanian, and Rumanian churches, as well as Arabic-language churches under jurisdiction of the Alexandrian, Antiochan, and Jerusalem patriarchates. If pressed to characterize the history and distinctive position of the Orthodox churches, the most knowledgeable Protestant clergy would perhaps dredge up from seminary days the judgment that "in A.D. 1054 the split between the Eastern and Western church took place over the iconoclastic issue and the *filioque* clause in the Nicene Creed"; beyond this, little would ordinarily be ventured other than the common opinion that "Eastern Orthodoxy is practically the same as Roman Catholicism except that the former will not accept the authority of the pope." Upon such fragmentary and superficial knowledge naive opinions are readily voiced concerning Orthodoxy's growing participation in

Protestant ecumenical discussions; e.g., "The presence of Orthodox churches in the World Council is tantamount to a Romanizing of Protestantism," or (conversely), "The presence of Orthodoxy in the World Council is to be encouraged as a counterpoise to the exclusivistic historical claims of Rome."

In point of fact, we shall forever remain on the periphery of the Eastern Orthodox question if we do not penetrate beyond superficial generalizations to the heart motifs of Orthodoxy. To focus attention on the year 1054 is like endeavoring to discover the essence of the American character by referring to Columbus' discovery of America in 1492; as historians and specialists in the history of dogma have been at pains to emphasize, the division date 1054 does no more than mark—by way of political conflict and diplomatic ineptitude—a breach which had been widening for centuries and which reflected two distinctive approaches to the Christian faith.²⁰ The question as to whether the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father "and from the Son" (*filioque*—in the Western form of the Creed) or from the Father *through* the Son (the Eastern doctrine) parallels the Lord's Supper issue in Lutheranism-Calvinism: it is not a root problem *per se*, but a clear manifestation of a conflict over fundamental motifs. Until we penetrate to this basic motif-level we shall neither be able to rid ourselves of the fallacy that the Orthodox Eastern churches are really "Roman Catholic bodies without a pope," nor be in a position adequately to evaluate Orthodoxy's significance for evangelical unity.

What is the central key that unlocks the exotic treasure house of Orthodox Eastern doctrine? This is by no means an easy question; witness the variation of opinion among Orthodox theologians themselves who have wrestled with the problem! Within the extensive modern literature of Orthodoxy,²¹ one finds three especially persuasive interpretations of the *Geist* of the Eastern church. Professor George Florovsky of Harvard sees the heart of Orthodoxy in its "Christian Hellenism"²²—in its preservation of the *Phronema* or mind of the Patristic church.²³ Evidently, however, this interpretation is at least in part a *petitio principii* (as Florovsky would of course admit); one must still ask: Of what specifically and uniquely does the "mind" of the Hellenistic Fathers consist? The classic answer was given by the pre-eminent lay theologian A. S. Khomiakov (1804-1860) in his concept *Sobornost*. This term can be regarded as a slavonic equivalent of "catholicity", but not with the Roman connotation of centralized magisterial authority.²⁴

Like the Holy Trinity, multiple in persons but one in substance, it [the Church] unites the living and the dead in a living organism, the "Sobornost", where revealed truth is entrusted to their mutual love; alone among all societies it possesses truth and unity at the same time—outside of it one can have neither the one nor the other.²⁵

Khomiakov had especially developed the idea of a community

of all the faithful of one mind (in Russian: *sobornost*). According to him Catholicism possesses unity without liberty; Protestantism, liberty without unity; while Oriental Orthodoxy would realize liberty and unity in love.²⁶

Sobornost is the statement that the Christ-Event has created and placed in the stream of history the event of the Christ-bearing community. This Christ-bearing community is a free union of men, brought about by the reception of the Holy Spirit.²⁷

Here we see that the *Sobornost* concept points beyond itself to a kind of mystical relation between earth and heaven, the living and the dead, and that this organic union is grounded in Trinitarian love and more especially in the Holy Spirit. Thus the contemporary Orthodox theologians Schmemann and Bobrinsky find in the divine life of the Trinity the spirit of the Eastern church. In defense of conciliar (vs. papal) theory, Schmemann writes: "The Church is in deed a council in the deepest meaning of this word, because she is primarily the revelation of the Blessed Trinity, of God and of Divine Life as essentially a perfect council."²⁸ For Bobrinsky, "the very structures of the Church reflect the ineffable *Taxis* [order] of the trinitarian hierarchy"; and the Eucharistic mystery, being "the sacrament of the New Covenant between the Holy Trinity and the human race, . . . constitutes the culminating-point of the whole life of the Church."²⁹ Particular stress is placed upon the Holy Spirit in connection with the Eucharist, for not the Verba but the Epiclesis (the invoking of the Spirit so that the elements "may become the Body of the Lord and His precious Blood") effects the Eucharistic consecration.

It is in the Orthodox emphasis upon the divine life of the Trinity and in what my former professor Roger Mehl of Strasbourg well calls the "seriousness with which Orthodoxy has always considered the doctrine of the Holy Spirit"³⁰ that we shall find the fundamental motif of the Eastern churches. This motif can be summed up in a single word: Mystery. The entire theology and church life of Eastern Christendom is an effort to give organic expression to the unfathomable, mysterious life of the Godhead, particularly as reflected in the Third Person of the Trinity—of whom it is written, "*To pneuma hopou thelei pnei.*" (Jn. 3:8).

Space forbids us from drawing connections between the motif of Mystery and all the variegated aspects of Orthodox Eastern belief and practice;³¹ a few basic illustrations will have to suffice. *Doctrinally*, we have already had occasion to mention the *filioque* controversy. Why the Eastern resistance to the procession of the Spirit from the Father *and* from the Son—in spite of powerful biblical testimony in support of the *filioque* position?³² Because the Western doctrine seems to subordinate the "free", "mysterious" Third Person of the Trinity to the concrete, historically-revealed Second Person; and because the *filioque* appears at the same time to elevate

the historical, objective Christ to a status comparable with that of the Father—whom no man has seen and lived—and to give the Spirit, the essence of divine mystery, a place inferior to both. *Architecturally*, what is the almost universal impact of Eastern church construction, as displayed, for example, in such monuments as Hagia Sophia in Constantinople? When that edifice was still new, Procopius of Caesarea (6th Century) wrote of the lofty dome, built so that it appears to have no earthly support: It is "as if suspended by a chain from heaven."³³ A millenium and a half later, the contemporary Roman Catholic historian Christopher Dawson described S. Sophia in like terms:

When we look at the Byzantine church as a whole, with its polychrome adornment of mosaic and coloured marbles, its antique columns, its carved capitals, oriental in richness and variety, yet Hellenic in proportion and grace, above all the crowning miracle of the dome of Santa Sophia, in which architecture transcends its limitations and becomes impalpable and immaterial as the vault of the sky itself, we must admit that never has man succeeded more perfectly in moulding matter to become the vehicle and expression of the spirit.³⁴

"Heavenly", "transcendent", "impalpable", "immaterial", "spiritual"—these are accurate descriptions both of Eastern church architecture and of the theological motif that infuses it: the motif of Mystery. *Liturgically*, one can enter into the *Geist* of Orthodoxy in virtually any Easter rite church in the world. The sense of wonder and exaltation, conveyed both by music and text, surpasses even the most elevated moments of the Roman High Mass.³⁵ One seems almost to be transported into the courts of heaven when, for example, in The Great Entrance of the Armenian Liturgy of the Faithful, the Hagiology is delivered in melismatic solo:

"With angelic order Thou hast filled, O God, Thine Holy Church. Thousands of thousands of archangels stand before Thee and myriads of myriads of angels minister unto Thee, O Lord; yet Thou art well-pleased to accept praises from men in the mystical song: 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Hosts'."³⁶

The Belgian Jesuit theologian G. Dejaive, in an extraordinarily penetrating article, has well captured the contrasting motif character of Eastern and Western theology by the following scheme:³⁷

Orthodox Theology

Mystical

Negative

Experiential-existential

Trinitarian

Focus on heaven & future

Latin Theology

Rational

Positive

Essentialistic

Christological

Focus on earth & present

The Orthodox Eastern churches are *mystical*, "seeing all things in God and God in all things"; the Western church is *rational*, "pro-

ceeding from the known to the unknown." Orthodoxy is *negative*, "conscious of God's transcendence vis-à-vis all human intelligence"; the Latin church is *positive*, "establishing itself on what God reveals." Whereas the Eastern church concentrates on *existential experience* of God, the Western church is concerned with the *essentialistic* "how" of the mysteries; it "seeks to explain them." Orthodoxy's "beginning, middle, and end is the mystery of the *Holy Trinity*"; the West's theology is *Christocentric*, "that is, a theology of God made man, 'revealed', visible." Thus the *heavenly, futuristic* orientation of Eastern theology, as compared with the *earthly, present* perspective of the Western theological mind.

Dejaifve's articulation of the Mystery vs. Revelatory contrast between Eastern and Western theology at motif level leaves us in bewilderment at the accelerating ecumenical dialogue between Orthodoxy on the one hand and Roman Catholicism and Protestantism on the other. With root-level differences so great, how could ecumenical relations be constantly growing closer? Yet such is precisely the case. Roman Catholic journals devoted to Eastern Orthodoxy (e.g., *Irénikon*) are an evidence of the trend; Pope John XXIII's contacts with the East and concern for dialogue with Orthodox Christendom is a matter of record;³⁸ January, 1964 marked the first time in over five centuries that a Roman pope (Paul VI) met an Orthodox ecumenical patriarch (Athenagoras I of Constantinople) face to face; and the latest issue of the *American Review of Eastern Orthodoxy* informs us that, as a result of the recent Third Pan-Orthodox Conference at Rhodes, representatives of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople met at Rome in February with officials of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity in order to draft "positive programs for future 'unity talks'."³⁹ As for Orthodox-Protestant relations, it is well known that in 1961 the Orthodox churches of Russia, Poland, Bulgaria, and Rumania became members of the World Council of Churches, thus taking a step previously made by the Greek church and by the Ecumenical Patriarch's jurisdiction, the Great church of Constantinople; since that date, the Orthodox Eastern theological position has been more and more actively represented in World Council discussions, e.g., at the consultation between Orthodox and non-Orthodox theologians held in connection with the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order at Montreal in July, 1963.⁴⁰

How different from Reformation times, when in the late sixteenth, early seventeenth century, the herculean efforts of Martin Crusius and the Lutheran theologians at Tübingen to establish ecumenical relations with the East were summarily rejected by Jeremias II, patriarch of Constantinople;⁴¹ and when Patriarch Cyril Lucar of Constantinople, having accepted Calvinist teaching, was hounded unmercifully and eventually martyred!⁴² Evidently a significant change has occurred or is now occurring in the motif structure of Western theology, Catholic and Protestant, so as to encourage

an ecumenical atmosphere hospitable to the mysticism of Orthodoxy. To this new Western theological *Zeitgeist* we now turn our attention.

A New Catholicism and a Neo-Protestantism

The distinguished Orthodox theologian John Meyendorff, professor at St. Vladimir's Seminary, has astutely pinpointed the epistemological gulf that has yawned between the theological motifs of Eastern and Western Christendom:

[The] lack, in Orthodox ecclesiology, of a clearly defined, precise, and permanent criterion of Truth besides God himself, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, is certainly one of the major contrasts between Orthodoxy and all classical Western ecclesiologies. In the West, the gradually developed theory of papal infallibility was opposed, after the collapse of the conciliar movement, by the Protestant affirmation of *Sola Scriptura*. The entire Western ecclesiological problem, since the sixteenth century, turned around this opposition of two *criteria*, two references of doctrinal *security*, while in Orthodoxy no need for, or necessity of, such a security was ever really felt, for the simple reason that the living Truth is its own criterion.⁴³

As a historical statement, this is precisely accurate: the existential mysticism of the Orthodox Eastern churches has stood in marked contrast to the "rational", "essentialistic" concern of Romanism and Protestantism for objective, external authority. Today, however, in practice if not in theory, the Western theological landscape has taken on a significantly different character.

Prior to the pontificate of John XXIII, Protestant relations with Roman Catholicism could be characterized as negative but clean-cut. The Roman church presented to Protestants a solid wall of Aristotelian-Thomist propositional doctrine (as represented, for example, in Denzinger's *Sources of Catholic Dogma* and Ludwig Ott's *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*), and dialogue, when it took place at all, proceeded on the level of objective comparison and contrast of theological tenets held by the respective churches. Common ground lay in the Ecumenical creeds and in mutual acceptance of the propositional inerrancy of Holy Scripture—the latter dogma being held with particular strictness in Roman Catholicism particularly after the papal condemnation of Modernistic biblical scholars such as Loisy at the turn of the present century. Traditional discussions between Romanists and Protestants would, if pursued far enough, eventually arrive (as Meyendorff suggests) at the question of religious authority, and it would become clear that for the Catholic, church tradition must serve as interpreter of Scripture, whereas for the Protestant the Bible alone, regarded as perspicuously self-interpreting, stood as final arbiter of all religious questions.

Today the pattern of Protestant-Catholic dialogue has altered much. On the Roman side, a remarkable and all-embracing new philosophy of Catholicism has entered the picture.⁴⁴ This "New

Shape," largely reflecting post-war theological developments in Germany and France, has infuriated traditional Romanism (especially in Spain), produced tensions at the Second Vatican Council and in American Catholic circles, and been heralded as an ecumenical panacea by many enthusiastic Protestants. On the surface, the latter have a point: New Shape Catholicism is positively concerned with Scripture, with the theological insights of the Protestant Reformers, with the need for personal "incorporation" into Christ, and with the reduction of superstitious, *ex opere operato* piety in the church. On this level, evangelical Protestants have every right—and indeed responsibility—to praise God for the new perspective.

But one must not be afraid to look deeper—to the motif that underlies the New Shape. This is the substitution of a "dynamic," "personalistic" category of doctrinal interpretation for the formalistic, propositional, Aristotelian-Thomistic categories of "efficient causality." So Romano Guardini repeatedly claims that Christianity is neither a metaphysical understanding of the world nor an ethical system, but "participation in the existence of Christ Himself"; Yves Congar stresses "the mystery of the Church" (this is the title of his important work on ecclesiology); Dom Odo Casel and Louis Bouyer regard the Eucharist not from a technical, transubstantiation viewpoint, but as a *mysterion*—as reflecting a sacramental, supratemporal realm between God in eternity and man in history; Hans Küng argues that Karl Barth's personalistic view of the Atonement is entirely consistent with, and ought to be incorporated into, Roman Catholic teaching; and Karl Rahner has set a view of Revelation as "Christ the new reality" over against the traditional "propositional" concept of revelatory truth.

It is in fact in its approach to scriptural Revelation that the Roman Catholic New Shape displays its fundamental motif with particular clarity. Historically, after the papal condemnation of the Modernists, biblical liberalism went underground in the Roman church. For forty years scholars of critical bent limited themselves to the publication of "harmless" material. But by the 1940's, men sympathetic to critical biblical scholarship had reached high positions in the church, and the less radical Protestant Neo-Orthodoxy had sufficiently replaced Protestant Modernism to remove an overt threat; a policy change therefore became feasible.

The papal encyclical, *Divino afflante Spiritu* (1943), was the herald of the new era. Though it did not explicitly permit a radical approach to Scripture, it clearly allowed the use of the *formgeschichtliche Methode* and made it possible for Roman Catholic scholars to doubt, for example, that given biblical miracles occurred historically if their doubt stemmed from conviction that the miracles were included as literary devices to illustrate theological points.⁴⁵ In the wake of *Divino afflante Spiritu* has come Father Raymond E. Brown's catalytic dissertation, *The Sensus Plenior of Sacred Scripture* (published 1955), which argues that the "fuller

sense" of the Bible must not be subsumed under the *sensus literalis*; this interest in a "fuller sense" has been recognized to have "affinities with Gerhard von Rad's interest in the successive reinterpretation of the Old Testament *Heilsgeschichte* within the successive oral and written layers of the Old Testament itself, or with Rudolf Bultmann's detection that the Christology implicit in Jesus' mission becomes explicit in the Christological titles attributed to him after Easter."⁴⁶ In *sensus plenior* fashion we thus find George Tavad, who has endeavored to blend Scripture and tradition into a single dialectic source of religious knowledge,⁴⁷ expressing views that might have come from the fonts of Eastern Orthodoxy:

The scientific reading of a text may well determine the notional sense conveyed by its words, but it cannot approach the real sense. After science has done its necessary work, the letter still remains to be personally understood and assimilated as spirit. . . . The question of how much of Revelation may be known with certainty through Scripture alone raises a false problem: it assumes that Scripture has a noetic purpose as a source of knowledge, rather than a kerygmatic purpose as the proclamation of a Word from God. . . . If scientific exegesis cannot arrive at some of the Church's doctrines, we should remember that scientific study cannot by itself discern the sense of the Spirit. We should therefore continue this scientific study, with faith and in the light of the analogy of faith, until the Spirit, witnessing interiorly to the heart of the Church, graciously opens new insights into His mystery.⁴⁸

As the "mystical" and the "existentialistic" replace the "rational" and the "noetic" in avant-garde Roman Catholic theology, the West draws closer to the East, and the epistemological question—the question of how one distinguishes religious truth from religious error—becomes harder and harder to ask, much less to answer.⁴⁹

Little need be said to show the place of mainline Protestantism in the pattern which has been emerging. We have noted above the close affinities between New Shape Catholic biblical interpretation on the one hand and the Barthian *Heilsgeschichte* and the Bultmannian *Formgeschichte* on the other. Vis-à-vis Eastern Orthodoxy, the Neo-Protestant conceptions of revelation-as-event and revelation-as-existential-experience (as contrasted with historic scriptural propositionalism) have no less significance; John Meyendorff writes:

The authenticity of Scriptural texts is not necessarily a formal or verbal authenticity. The Word of Life is not a theological encyclopedia which has only to be opened at the right page for the desired information to be found, exhaustively treated. Modern exegesis discovers more and more—as for instance the works of Oscar Cullmann, or Joachim Jeremias, have shown—that essential Christian truths, such as the doctrine of the Sacraments, not treated directly by the inspired authors, are

considered by them as self-evident. . . . This makes it quite clear that Scripture, while complete in itself, presupposes Tradition, not as an addition, but as a *milieu* in which it becomes understandable and meaningful. . . . Revelation, in fact, is not a formal dictation of certain formally definable truths to the human mind: Revelation in Jesus Christ is a new fellowship between God and man, established once and for all, a participation of man in divine life.⁵⁰

Such an Orthodox statement as this is at the same time an accurate depiction of the current Protestant attitude to Scripture. World Council Protestants at the Montreal Faith and Order Conference in 1963 characteristically spoke not in terms of unqualified *Sola Scriptura*, but in terms of "Scripture, Tradition, and traditions"; Methodist Robert A. Nelson comments on that "breakthrough" formulation in a manner fully consistent with both Eastern Orthodoxy and New Shape Catholicism:

A stage has been reached in ecumenical conversation where we have gained some perception of the determinative place occupied by Tradition in the life of the Church, as something upon which we all are dependent and as something which operated from the very beginning of the Church's history even before the New Testament scriptures were written. We have also become more deeply aware of the dialectical relationship between our expressions of the Faith and their embodiment in confessional structures, and the Tradition. . . . What has become very clear is that the link between Tradition and Scripture must always be of a dynamic character.⁵¹

One of the most amazing—and, to an evangelical, appalling—phenomena in the theological literature of the last few years is the Protestant-Catholic-Orthodox "colloquium" volumes in which Protestants bend over backwards (yet consistently with their dialectic, existential conception of biblical truth) to show that Scripture is either insufficient as a self-interpreting ground for religious truth or that its proper interpretation leads away from Reformation theology to Catholic-Orthodox doctrinal emphases.⁵² In Protestantism the theological *via dolorosa* from Schleiermacher and Ritschl through Dilthey and Heidegger to Bultmann and the post-Bultmannians—a road hardly softened by the Barthian dialectic interlude—has painlessly led to a devaluation of objective propositional truth, making Protestantism the eager swain of Eastern Orthodoxy and of New Shape Catholicism. Protestant, Orthodox, and Catholic do indeed seem to be converging theologically in our time—but the convergence appears to be taking place, not at a recognizable, articulated, and firmly established juncture, but in a mystic cloud of unknowing.

The Potential Crisis and the Evangelical Responsibility

The world in the mid-twentieth century is in an unbelievable state of tension and insecurity. Global war and perhaps the de-

struction of all civilized life loom as less and less remote possibilities as Vietnams follow Koreas and the arms race accelerates. Unbelief and rank secularism are on the rise throughout the world, from the Russian block with its ideological atheism to the Western powers with their pragmatic Realpolitik. As more and more effective communications make the globe smaller and smaller, the mutually contradictory religious pluralism of mankind becomes clearer to all, including the non-Christian. Under these circumstances, the quest for religious certainty and truth assumes unparalleled importance. The world asks, either in longing or in derision: "Do you Christians have the truth? If you claim to possess it, give us a reason for the faith that is within you!"

At this crucial time, when a decisive, epistemologically sound religious answer is needed, the non-evangelical Christian world refuses the question and instead offers existential, non-noetic understandings of faith which are unverifiable and meaningless to the seeker. External, objective tests of truth are discounted, and the unbeliever is asked to enter a mystical realm of divine "encounter" where, in spite of obvious differences and contradictions in Christian viewpoint, no concrete means of distinguishing truth from error is provided.⁵³ Thus is the great missionary challenge of our time abrogated.

Yet is not the "community of faith"—the Church—constantly appealed to as the medium of truth? Does not one find this theme almost continually present in contemporary Eastern Orthodox, New Shape Catholic, and ecumenical Protestant writing? The answer is most definitely "Yes", but this appeal to Mother Church is fraught with the gravest consequences when combined with a vague, relativistic, mystical view of theological truth. For what happens when a corporate body lacking a clear external standard of truth and judgment grows in strength? The political answer in our times has been given by way of the Third Reich: the corporate body strives to become a standard to itself, a law to itself. In a word, it presses forward to the status of a Leviathan, that "mortal god" which Hobbes described so accurately.

And churches are by no means exempt from this ghastly possibility, as Rolf Hochhuth so trenchantly demonstrates in his dramatic account of the effect of Pius XII's Realpolitik on the wholesale slaughter of Jews by the Third Reich.⁵⁴ Even if we balk⁵⁵ at Hochhuth's precise parallels between Nazi and Papal autocracy, we cannot but see the profound truth in the aphorism of Lord Acton—himself a Catholic—"Power corrupts, and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely."⁵⁶ Vladimir Solovyov, in his last work, *A Short Story of Antichrist*, gave a vivid literary reason to believe that where objective religious truth no longer stands as a firm criterion, none of the three great branches of Christendom has the holiness to withstand the blandishments of antichristian power.⁵⁷ And if a concrete, indisputable historical illustration is demanded, then the most

"mystical" of the Christian churches provides it: Eastern Orthodoxy, which over the centuries has conducted its magnificent liturgies while unprophetically succumbing to all manner of Caesaropapism—even to the present-day control of most of its churches by atheistic totalitarianism.

In sum: unless an infallible, inerrant Word stands above the church, judging it and proclaiming grace to it, magisterial authority is the greatest liability the church can have, for it will inevitably become the unprincipled tool and demonic reflection of sinful man. Only an ecumenicity grounded solidly and unqualifiedly in *Sola Scriptura* can answer the needs of the unbelieving world and the hopes of believing Christians.

So the evangelical mandate becomes clear, and the questions posed at the outset of this essay can now be given specific answers.

1. "Are evangelicals to encourage their respective denominations to participate in current Catholic-Orthodox-Protestant ecumenical activities?" Participation should be encouraged only on levels where the foundation doctrine of *Sola Scriptura* will not be compromised, since wherever the "formal principle" of the Christian faith is dethroned, every other doctrine—including the "material principle" itself, the Gospel of justification by grace through faith—is in immediate danger of being lost.

2. "Should evangelicals, through the N.A.E. or independently sponsored efforts, carry on their own dialogue with Orthodox Eastern churches and with Rome?" Very definitely—but in a posture of *witnes*s, as did Melancthon and the Tübingen theologians of the Reformation era, not in a spirit of vague, tea-and-crumpets good will, which does no one service. But to engage in such badly needed dialogue, evangelicals must (as perhaps this paper has indicated) come to know Orthodox Eastern and Roman Catholic theologies much more intimately than is presently the case. Stereotypes and superficiality are the death of any worthy theological dialogue.

3. "What can be gained for evangelical unity from present-day Orthodox Eastern-Roman Catholic-Protestant ecumenical discussions?" Several vitally important insights: (1) in our intra-evangelical unity discussions we must resist every pull toward chimerical union on "mystical", "negative", "existential" bases; we must recognize the absolute necessity of seeking God's objectively revealed will in the inerrant Scriptures whenever we would find the grounds for fellowship or common activity. (2) Having had our baptism in fire as to the necessity of delving to motif level vis-à-vis Romanism and Eastern Orthodoxy, let us make certain that we pursue our own unity discussions at comparable depth—always searching for those elements of what we have called a "metatheological calculus," whereby the wondrous goal of full unity could theoretically be realized. (3) Since, as suggested previously, it is a rare thing for the *Leitmotiv* of a major Christian body to be unqualifiedly antibiblical, let us seek to enhance our evangelical position by *properly* incorporat-

ing the motifs of others into our theology and church life—thus endeavoring to declare the “whole counsel of God” in our ecclesiastical pilgrimage. Just as the appearance of sets and cults invariably points up negligence in doctrine or practice on the part of established churches, so the misuse of motifs in one Christian body points to their neglect in others. Thus, for example, the despising of great liturgy, art, and church architecture by evangelicals has driven souls to the Orthodox and the Roman churches;⁵⁸ we have much to correct here.⁵⁹ Moreover, our cavalier attitude to the visible church and to church authority has often made the evangelical voice of little account in the great moral issues of the day—the racial persecutions of Jews⁶⁰ and of Negroes⁶¹ come at once to mind; here we can profitably seek to imitate the stalwart, united front presented by centrally organized church bodies. Even in the matter of Trinitarian existential mysticism we can learn much, for the evangelical patron saint is too often fourth century Bishop (and Arian heretic!) Eunomius of Cyzicus, who declared, “I know God as well as He knows Himself.” We must not become rationalists in Christian guise who forget that in the final analysis God’s thoughts are higher than our thoughts, His ways than our ways. The dimension of the Holy must enter more into our evangelical circles, where our church life often parallels a secular club more than a congregation of saints.

But—as a final caveat—we must never forget to ground the existential *unio mystica* in the objective word of Holy Writ.⁶² Though the Persons of the Trinity are ontologically equal, God’s Revelation does not deign to teach as much of the Spirit as of the Father, nor as much of the Father as of the Son. Indeed, apart from the Word made flesh we would be woefully ignorant of the Father’s heart and of the Spirit’s procession. Thus our theology, as long as we remain under the Cross, must be at center Christological; and the only reliable picture of the Christ is imparted by the written Word. Hermann Sasse has well located the contemporary “inability to express doctrinal consensus” in “the tragic fact that modern Protestantism has lost . . . the ability to think dogmatically, that is, to think in terms of a trans-subjective truth which is given to us in the revelation of God.”⁶³ May the Lord grant that in our efforts to achieve evangelical unity, in our posture toward the ecumenical movements of our day, and in our witness to a lost world, we evangelicals may hold that revelatory truth so high that none on our account shall miss its unambiguous claims.

NOTES

1. An invitational paper presented at the Consultation on Evangelical Concerns (Clyde W. Taylor, chairman; Carl F. H. Henry, co-chairman), held in Colorado Springs, Colorado, May 17-20, 1965.
2. John Warwick Montgomery, “Renewal and Contemporary Theology,” *United Evangelical Action*, XXIV (April, 1965), 13.
3. “Church for Unbelievers?” *Newsweek*, April 26, 1965, p. 62.

4. Our translation here combines elements of the German and the Latin texts of the *Augustana*. Cf. Willard Dow Allbeck, *Studies in the Lutheran Confessions* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), pp. 78-82.
5. See Arnold Theodore Olson, *Believers Only: An Outline of the History and Principles of the Free Evangelical Movement* (Minneapolis: Free Church Publications, 1964), *passim*.
6. I look with a jaundiced eye on endeavors to persuade evangelicals that one particular confessional orientation conveys the "true" nature of evangelicalism; for a recent example of such an argument from the Calvinist standpoint, see Fred H. Klooster, "The Heidelberg Catechism—An Ecumenical Creed?" *Evangelical Theological Society Bulletin*, VIII (Winter, 1965), 23-33. Lutherans, I hasten to add, are not above this sort of thing either; cf. G. H. Gerberding's once popular book, *The Way of Salvation in the Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1918).
7. My good friend Dr. Donald Masters, F.R.S.C., professor of history at Bishop's University, Lennoxville, Quebec, distinguishes "conservative" and "liberal" evangelicals—the former holding to the inerrancy of Scripture, the latter not (*The Rise of Evangelicalism; Lectures Delivered at the Wycliffe College Alumni Meetings in 1960* [Toronto: Evangelical Publishers, 1961]). Though this is a sound distinction *historically*, Professor Masters rightly refuses to give it *normative* status; he is quick to identify himself with those who believe that "faith in the divine inspiration of Scripture is necessary if Evangelicalism is to regain its old power" (p. 15). Moreover I myself have argued *in extenso* elsewhere that a non-inerrancy view of biblical inspiration is both philosophically and theologically "meaningless" (in the strict analytical sense of the term), and therefore constitutes at best an inconsistent evangelicalism; see my article, "Inspiration and Inerrancy: A New Departure," *Evangelical Theological Society Bulletin*, VIII, No. 2, (Spring, 1965).
8. Cf. Frederick Jackson Turner's epochal "Frontier Thesis"—that the frontier has been the single most important factor in shaping the American character.
9. *Christianity Today*, March 13, 1961, p. 24.
10. Cf. Montgomery, *The Shape of the Past* ("History in Christian Perspective," 1; Ann Arbor, Michigan: Edwards Brothers, 1963), pp. 150-51.
11. H. Paul Douglas, *A Decade of Objective Progress in Church Unity: 1927-1936* (New York: Harper, 1937), p. xiii.
12. *Ecumenical Review*, XVI (July 1964), 443.
13. Cf. the value for Protestant ecumenical thinking in such arguments as that of Boris Bobrinskoy, professor of dogmatic theology at the Institute St. Serge, Paris: "The starting (and finishing) point of all healthy ecclesiology seems to me to be the dogma of the Trinity" ("The Continuity of the Church and Orthodoxy," *Ecumenical Review*, XVI [October, 1964], 514).
14. Episcopal Bishop James Pike's reservations on the dogma of the Trinity are representative of the latter thinking.
15. —Norman Goodall's article, "Evangelicalism and the Ecumenical Movement" (*Ecumenical Review*, XV [July, 1963], 399-409), though helpful in some ways, suffers acutely from a generalized, broad-church interpretation of evangelicalism and from the author's personal alignment with the World Council critics of the conservative evangelicalism presupposed in the present essay.
16. I find William James' brilliant distinction between the tender-minded and the tough-minded especially applicable to ecumeniacs and evangelicals respectively. Cf. Herbert Feigl, "Logical Empiricism," in Feigl and Sellars (eds.), *Readings in Philosophical Analysis* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1949), pp. 3ff.
17. *Agape and Eros*, trans. Philip S. Watson (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), p. 35. That I am aware of negative elements in the Lundensian methodology can be seen in my *Chytræus on Sacrifice* (St.

- Louis, Missouri: Concordia, 1962), pp. 139-46, and in my essay, "Eros and Agape in the Thought of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola," *Concordia Theological Monthly*, XXXII (December, 1961), 733-46.
18. The words are Calvin's; see my former professor Francois Wendel's *Calvin: Sources et évolution de sa pensée religieuse* ("Études d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses, publiées par la Faculté de Théologie Protestante de l'Université de Strasbourg," No. 41; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950), p. 270. Dean Wendel's book has recently appeared in English translation.
 19. I am firmly convinced that the ecumenical efforts of Georg Calixtus (1586-1656) have been unjustly maligned; see my Strasbourg University dissertation for the degree of Docteur de l'Université, mention Théologie Protestante: "Cross and Crucible" (3 vols.; 1964), I, 283-86.
 20. See Yves M.-J. Congar, "Neuf cents ans après: Notes sur le 'Schisme oriental,'" and Anton Michel, "Schisma und Kaiserhof im Jahre 1054," both in 1054-1954: *L'Eglise et les églises . . . Etudes et travaux sur l'Unité chrétienne offerts à Dom Lambert Beauduin* (2 vols.; Gembloux [Belgium]: Editions de Chevetogne, 1954), I, 3ff., 351ff. In English, see Congar's article, "Ecclesiological Awareness in the East and in the West from the Sixth to Eleventh Century," in *The Unity of the Churches of God*, ed. and trans. Polycarp Sherwood (Baltimore: Helicon, 1963), pp. 161-63; and M.-J. Le Guillou, *The Spirit of Eastern Orthodoxy*, trans. Donald Attwater ("Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism," 135; New York: Hawthorn Books, 1962), pp. 90ff.
 21. One of the most helpful guides through this bibliographical thicket has been provided by my good friend and Orthodox believer Ray R. Suput, formerly head librarian of the Garrett Theological Seminary and presently assistant librarian at Western Reserve University: "Eastern Orthodoxy in a Descriptive and Bibliographical Outline," *American Theological Library Association Proceedings*, XVI (1962), 116-35. It will be noted from this bibliography that of the quality literature in western languages, a large proportion is in French; this is explained by the fact that with the closing down of Orthodox seminaries in Russia following the Communist Revolution in 1917, émigrés founded the great Institut St. Serge in Paris, which (together with the more recently established St. Vladimir Seminar in New York and the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School in Brookline, Mass.) constitutes a focal center for present-day Orthodox theological activity.
 22. Florovsky's monumental work setting forth this theme is his *Puti russkago bogoslovija* (Paris, 1937). Interestingly, Florovsky's contention that in New Testament study Hellenistic elements must not be invidiously set against Hebrew characteristics (as Thorlief Boman and the Protestant Neo-Orthodox "biblical theology movement" have done) has received compelling support from philologist James Barr (*The Semantics of Biblical Language* [London: Oxford University Press, 1961]). Cf. my *Shape of the Past* (op. cit. in n. 10), pp. 43, 60.
 23. See Florovsky's article, "The Ethos of the Orthodox Church," *Ecumenical Review*, XII (1960), 189, 192. Cf. Vasil T. Istavridis, "Orthodox and Lesser Eastern Churches," in *Twentieth Century Christianity*, ed. Stephen Neill (London: Collins, 1961), pp. 92-94.
 24. Vitaly Borovoy, "The Meaning of Catholicity," *Ecumenical Review*, XVI (October, 1963), 31-32.
 25. Clément Lialine, "La Position spéciale de l'Orthodoxie dans le problème oecuménique," in 1054-1954: *L'Eglise et les églises*, II, 396.
 26. Bernard Schultze, "Latin Theology and Oriental Theology," in *The Unity of the Churches of God*, p. 199.
 27. Charles B. Ashanin, "Eastern Orthodoxy As a Theological Task," *Theology Today*, XVI (January, 1960), 490.
 28. A. Schmemmann, "Towards a Theology of Councils," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, VI (1962), 173.
 29. *Ecumenical Review*, XVI, 514-15.

30. Roger Mehl, "The Ecumenical Situation," *Ecumenical Review*, XVI (October, 1963), 9.
31. For an excellent treatment along these lines, see Le Guillou, *The Spirit of Eastern Orthodoxy* (op. cit. in n. 20).
32. Scripture calls the Holy Spirit not only the Spirit of the Father (Mt. 10:20) but also the Spirit of the Son (Gal. 4:6); in Jn. 20:22 Christ breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit"; and the sending of the Spirit to the New Testament Church is ascribed both to the Father (Jn. 14:16) and to the Son (Jn. 15:26; 16:7, 13-14). The fact that the *filioque* was added to the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed by the Synod of Toledo (589) must not be divorced from these biblical considerations.
33. Quoted in Sir Banister Fletcher, *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method* (15th ed.; London: B. T. Batsford, 1950), p. 245.
34. Christopher H. Dawson, *The Making of Europe: An Introduction to the History of European Unity* (London, 1932), p. 120.
35. I was privileged to study representative Eastern liturgies textually and musicologically under the sensitive direction of Professor H. Grady Davis at Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary during the summer of 1962.
36. For the Armenian, with parallel English text, see *The Divine Liturgy* (New York: Delphic Press, 1950).
37. G. Dejaifve, "Orient et Occident chrétien: deux théologies?" *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*, LXXXII (Janvier, 1960), 3-19. I have altered the author's terminology where the literal English cognates of French terms would mislead the reader.
38. Cf. Gustave Weigel, *Catholic Theology in Dialogue* (New York: Harper, 1961), pp. 125-26.
39. *American Review of Eastern Orthodoxy*, XI (March, 1965), 5.
40. A brief report of this consultation appears in the *Ecumenical Review*, XVI (October, 1963), 109-11.
41. See George Elias Zachariades, *Tübingen und Konstantinopel. Martin Crusius und s. Verhandlungen mit d. griech.-orthod. Kirche* (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1941), and cf. Montgomery, "Cross and Crucible" (op. cit. in n. 19), I, 105-106.
42. See George A. Hadjiantoniou, *Protestant Patriarch: The Life of Cyril Lucaris (1572-1638)* (London: Epworth Press, 1961). John Meyendorff, in his essay, "The Significance of the Reformation in the History of Christendom" (*Ecumenical Review*, XVI [January, 1964], 175-76), argues that Lucar really suffered at the hands of a corrupt, "latinizing tendency" in seventeenth-century Eastern Orthodoxy; obviously, however, the conflict cut deeper than this, and Meyendorff makes rather too much of an effort to pass over the distinctive motif-contrasts between Orthodoxy and historic Protestantism.
43. John Meyendorff, "The Meaning of Tradition," in *Scripture and Ecumenism: Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and Jewish*, ed. Leonard J. Swidler ("Duquesne Studies. Theological Series," 3; Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1965), p. 51 (Meyendorff's italics). Along the same line Professor Panagiotis Bratsiotis of the University of Athens speaks appreciatively of "le pieux agnosticisme des Pères grecs" ("La Signification du dogme dans la théologie orthodoxe," in 1054-1954: *L'Eglise et les églises* [op. cit. in n. 20], II, 205).
44. For material to follow (though not for the over-all interpretation of it!) I am much indebted to Dr. George Lindbeck of Yale, an official observer at the Second Vatican Council, under whose excellent tutelage I was privileged to study contemporary Roman Catholic theology during the summer of 1961. Cf. with the ensuing discussion, G. C. Berkouwer, *The Second Vatican Council and the New Catholicism*, trans. Lewis B. Smedes (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1965), which offers an interpretation intermediate between Lindbeck's and mine.
45. Roger Aubert has stated that Catholic exegetes could theoretically on this basis remain in full fellowship with the church while denying all

biblical miracles but the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. If it is argued that the encyclical *Humani generis* (1950) seems to restrict the liberty permitted by *Divino afflante Spiritu*, one need only consider Jesuit Gustave Lambert's well-received interpretation that *Humani generis* does not function in this manner (a conclusion likewise reached by Count Begouen, the eminent French anthropologist—see James M. Connolly, *The Voices of France; a Survey of Contemporary Theology in France* [New York: Macmillan, 1961], pp. 189-90), and at the same time observe such recent Roman Catholic biblical scholarship as Miles M. Bourke's paper, "The Literary Genus of Matthew 1-2" (*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, XXII [1960], 160-75), where in a manner strongly reminiscent of Loisy, Bourke uses the fact that the infancy narrative parallels in literary genre a haggadic commentary to dispense with the historicity of many details of the biblical account. How different in approach and tone is this New Shape biblical research from the uncompromising older Catholic scholarship—which even prohibited unauthorized reading of books claiming that the inspiration of Scripture extends only to faith and morals (*Casus Conscientiae, propositi a Card. de Lugo* [2 vols., 6th ed.; Romae: Typographia Pontificia in Instituto Pii IX, 1913], II, 409-12, casus 171 bis)!

46. James M. Robinson, "Interpretation of Scripture in Biblical Studies Today," in *Ecumenical Dialogue at Harvard: The Roman Catholic-Protestant Colloquium*, edd. Samuel H. Miller and G. Ernest Wright (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 105.
47. Father Tavard's *Holy Writ or Holy Church* (New York: Harper, 1959) opposes the objective "Old Shape" Roman Catholic "two source theory," which regards Scripture and tradition as equally valid but *distinct* sources of the church's doctrine.
48. George Tavard, "The Meaning of Scripture," in *Scripture and Ecumenism* (op. cit. in n. 43), pp. 70, 72-73. Interestingly, Tavard relates his position to Calvin's doctrine of the "interior testimony of the Spirit"—a consideration that should perhaps offer Calvinists a sleepless night or two!
49. See Vernon Grounds' recent analyses of the instability of the Roman Catholic doctrinal and magisterial authority: "Rome's Tempest in Theology," *Christian Heritage*, XXVI (April, 1965), 6-7, 13-15, and "The Ironical Paradox in Catholic Theology," *ibid.*, XXVI (May, 1965), 6-7, 31-32.
50. Meyendorff, "The Meaning of Tradition," op. cit. (in n. 43), pp. 45-46.
51. Robert A. Nelson, "Scripture, Tradition, and traditions: Some Reflections on the Montreal Discussion," *Ecumenical Review*, XVI (January, 1964), 158-59.
52. We have already cited the most significant of these to appear in 1964 (n. 46) and 1965 (n. 43). In the former, James M. Robinson, one of the leading American advocates of the post-Bultmannian "New Hermeneutic," ties radical Protestant biblical criticism to New Shape Catholic developments, and Krister Stendahl of Harvard hits the "Western interpretation" of Paul's "introspective conscience"—an interpretation that falsely(!) draws Luther and Paul together by stressing the necessity for radical, conscious conversion from conscious sin. In the 1965 Duquesne volume, Albert C. Outler and Markus Barth hit the "traditional" Protestant doctrines of Sola Scriptura and biblical inerrancy ("It is unwise in any form whatsoever to speak of the 'absolute authority of the Bible.' For the Bible is in no wise an absolute. . . . It is relative to the Holy Spirit"—M. Barth), and Robert McAfee Brown points out that Karl Barth "delivers us from what can be a very perverse notion of *sola Scriptura* that would assert that we go to the Bible and to the Bible alone, as though in the process we could really bypass

- tradition. He delivers us from a kind of Biblicism that is content to rest simply with a parroting of the vindication, 'the Bible says . . . , the Bible says . . . ,'
53. Irrefutable decimations of the analytically meaningless existential-encounter theologies have been provided by Frederick Ferré, in his *Language, Logic and God* (New York: Harper, 1961), pp. 94-104, and by C. B. Martin, in his paper, "A Religious Way of Knowing," contained in *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, edd. Antony Flew and Alasdair Macintyre (London: SCM Press, 1955), pp. 76-95.
 54. Rolf Hochhuth, *The Deputy*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, intro. Albert Schweitzer (New York: Grove Press, 1964).
 55. Some, of course, have; see *The Storm over The Deputy*, ed. Eric Bentley (New York: Grove Press, 1964).
 56. Cf. my *Shape of the Past* (*op. cit.* in n. 10), pp. 76-78.
 57. Solovyov's remarkable tale was recently printed in an abridged version in *Christianity Today*, IX (January 29, 1965), 21-27. Another superlative literary portrait of runaway spiritual power is contained in C. S. Lewis' novel, *That Hideous Strength; a Modern Fairy-Tale for Grown-Ups* (New York: Macmillan, 1947).
 58. This is precisely the history of several of the former German pastors who contributed autobiographical essays to *We Are Now Catholics*, ed. Karl Hardt, trans. Norman C. Reeves (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1959); the drabness and forbidding atmosphere of low-church Protestant worship had much to do with their conversions to Rome.
 59. Every evangelical reader of this essay should begin by studying carefully Bo Giertz's little booklet, *Liturgy and Spiritual Awakening*, trans. C. A. Nelson (Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Book Concern, 1950), which demonstrates the integral connection (rather than disharmony) between scripturally-grounded liturgy and evangelical conversion experience.
 60. In his Preface to Hochhuth's *The Deputy*, Albert Schweitzer writes that the German Protestants did virtually nothing to stem the Nazi atrocities because they were "unorganized" and "impotent", and that their guilt came "by simply accepting the terrible, inhuman fact of the persecution of the Jews." The Roman church, as a well-organized, supranational power, was at least in a *theoretical* position to bring pressure on the Third Reich.
 61. It is noteworthy that the Roman church and the Protestant Episcopal church have been able most effectively to bring their Southern constituencies into line with Christian desegregation measures.
 62. I have developed this point *in extenso* in my invitational paper, "The Theologian's Craft: A Discussion of Theory Formation and Theory Testing in Theology," which will be delivered (D.V.) at the 20th Annual Convention of the American Scientific Affiliation, to be convened at King's College, Briarcliff Manor, New York, August 23, 1965.
 63. Hermann Sasse, "Crisis of the Ecumenical Movement," *Christianity Today*, V (April 10, 1961), 6.