

able. Indeed, this volume furnishes an excellent representation of the work of one of the truly great scholars of our time, and provides a fitting tribute to him.

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Cullmann, Oscar, *Salvation in History*. Translated by Sidney G. Sowers *et al.* New York: Harper & Row, 1967. 352 pp. \$ 6.50.

Cullmann has for several years persistently engaged in a running debate with Rudolph Bultmann. His earlier book *Christ and Time* has met with heavy criticisms not only for the obscurity in which certain cardinal points have been left, but also from its general orientation, from which conclusions have been drawn that are distasteful to its author. This new book is an attempt to answer explicit criticisms and to clarify Cullmann's positions against implications which have been drawn from former obscurities.

If the tension between the "already" and the "not yet" in the NT and in the Christian message is maintained, we are not led to an antagonism between "salvation-history" and Christian existentialism. Indeed the two positions are complementary. To raise the essential question of continuity between the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith is to press beyond the position of Bultmann. The question is whether a sequence of events can be an object of faith as well as of assent. Cullmann answers with an emphatic affirmative. In faith the believer is overwhelmed by that in which he did not participate (p. 115). The events of salvation are *pro nobis*, but first they are *extra nos*.

In contending for the priority of salvation-history over revelation, the polemic is directed against Pannenberg, who according to Cullmann, subordinates salvation to revelation. We must press back behind the process of interpretation to get at the events. The historical must be separated from the interpretative and the mythological if we want to see how revelation occurs in history. The interpretation must come from the events themselves, "out of the naked events" (p. 96). This is repeatedly emphasized by Cullmann.

There is, however, a relationship to the facts that is independent of faith, a preliminary hearing (p. 71). There is a sequence of events which can be unfolded as history quite independent of whether the faith-encounter ensues or not. But when faith is present there is to the believer a coincidence of the historical and the theological (p. 71). Before this coincidence there must be the *Vorverständnis* of the acceptance of the objective reality of "a series of divine events." The discernment of this crucial sequence of events, selected out of history as such, is what constitutes faith. To the historian the sequence upon which faith depends is quite meaningless. Proper interpretation of the events is disclosed in and with the events themselves. The

supreme example of this is the resurrection of Jesus (pp. 102-123), where we are given the paradigmatic case of the coincidence and simultaneity of event and interpretation. Here the divine event is known through a proper interpretation of historically accessible facts, open to alternative interpretations. The essential ingredient of salvation-history, that which constitutes an event a "divine event," is beyond the range of historical knowledge. Thus there is a fundamental, *a priori* distinction between historical knowledge and salvation-historical knowledge of a divine event (p. 151).

Eschatological considerations are worked out from this viewpoint. The decisive events, *extra nos*, at the basis of the Christian faith constitute the mid-point of time. What is essential at the mid-point must come to its expression at the end. The eschatological consummation expresses the meaning of all history. "Light from the eschaton falls back upon the central portion of history" (p. 147). Thus the *eschaton* is anticipated in the central happenings of the Christ-event.

A note concerning the relationship between history and myth will clarify the position regarding faith. A distinction is made between what is historically controllable and what is not. The historically controllable is open to investigation by the historian. The historically uncontrollable does not admit of verification or of falsification. Cullmann is at pains to contend that the process of demythologization has already taken place in the NT, where myth is presented in narrative form, and historicized. A divine event is set in the midst of a cluster of historically controllable events and is pointed to by them, although itself is beyond historical control. The distinction between the two types of the historically uncontrollable is essential. We must distinguish between (1) what is presented as if it were identical with the historically controllable, namely the myths of the *Urzeit* which have been historicized, but which are beyond the range of the historian's control and, (2) the divine event which is, so to speak, hidden in a nest of historically controllable events but which is not reducible to any of them. However, those events indicate the divine event when viewed from the proper perspective. What is here defended is a realistic view of history and an epistemological dividing up of the field of such objective events between history and faith, with such a specification of the overlap or coincidence, as to make a claim for a relationship between faith and history which is historically defensible and theologically acceptable (= based upon faith).

It is with this paradox of the convergence of the historical and the theological that we may begin our questions concerning the book. It would seem that if the distinctively theological categories have been excluded from historiography (*e.g.*, transcendence, providence, miracle, God), it would be impossible, without revising the whole idea of an historical science, to speak of a convergence, indeed of a coincidence between them, except by giving up either the theological interest, or the naturalism of science for some other philosophy of historical methodology (Harvey, in *The Historian and the Believer*, has made this

quite clear). Bultmann's efforts have developed a view of "history" which will provide this point of coincidence. This has meant the application of a particular conception of history to the matters of interest to faith. What Cullmann requires is neither capitulation to the secular historian, nor a re-appraisal of the historian's science, but general independence of both theologian and historian with convergence at one central point, the point at which faith seeks for its ground in the world of what happened once upon a time.

This is reflected in Cullmann's terminology. "Divine event" is actually a contradiction of terms, if the view of history makes such a co-ordination impossible. It is to be understood that the term "event" is being given a most unusual meaning. It is similar with the term "salvation-history." Cullmann is indeed quite aware of this (p. 77). The problem then would be to give a clear definition of what is meant by "history." Unfortunately Cullmann does not do this. What happens is that in different forms the paradox of the terms mentioned earlier in the paragraph is asserted in several different places throughout the book. So, it is claimed, scientific exegesis is a means of furthering faith, while faith cannot be dependent upon the probabilities of scholarship. No historical research can establish faith, but once faith has been established, it may be assisted and strengthened by historical research. By what means does what was irrelevant at one stage now become relevant? What is it that makes the difference? Since no reconstruction of historical methodology is contemplated, the answer would seem to be in terms of the analogy between salvation-history and history, as now one aspect of the ambiguous term is called into play, *salvation-history* for the initiation of faith, *salvation-history* for the relevance of the work of the historian. The thesis of the book could be expounded in terms of the capacity of a hyphen to do what a hyphen normally does, that is, to bind separable ideas together so that they can be used together as a unified conception.

Cullmann insists upon the objectivity of *salvation-history*. Thus two realities are distinguished: the reality of events *extra me*, and the reality of my relation to a series of events. If indeed one can only speak of events *extra me* when one has stood within the context which they make possible, in what sense are they *extra me*? That the objective events of *salvation-history* are objectively real is known only to faith. Divine events are beyond the range of the objective historian. Here Cullmann agrees with Bultmann. He then goes on to assert what to Bultmann is unnecessary, that we must be able to assert the objective factuality of such events. For Cullmann this is to be done on the basis of faith, which makes available facts of interest to the historian. Salvation is history and it is not history. In one sense, history is what is known by the historian to have happened. In another sense it is what happened but is not known to him. Cullmann's theology is dependent upon a dialectic between the two. It is a possibility that is seriously open to question.

A view of time that may be symbolized by a line is related to this

view of history. The figure is an unfortunate one, since it suggests that the future of time is to be seen in relation to quantitative similarity rather than qualitative difference to the present. The nature of the event which occurs at the "mid-point" of history requires a more dynamic conception of the reality of time than is possible by the quantitative notion of a time-line, especially as this is made a paradigm for the nature of eternity. Moreover it still remains to be shown that such a view of time is the one single principle for approaching the Biblical evidence. The Biblical attitudes are much more complex than such a simplistic approach recognizes.

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Eichrodt, Walter, *Theology of the Old Testament*. Translated by J. A. Baker. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967. Vol. II, 573 pp. \$ 7.50.

Since 1913 when H. Wheeler Robinson published *The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament*, the English-speaking world has been awakening to the theological content of the OT to such a degree that today there is avid expectation for significant works in this field. The OT theologies of Jacob, Vriezen, and von Rad were hardly off the presses in their French, Dutch, and German garbs when they were already being transferred into English. It was only right, therefore, that the work of Eichrodt, which had stood in a class by itself for 25 years, and had provided the seed-bed for the "rebirth of Old Testament theology," should also be given an English dress. It is interesting to note that while Vol. I, which appeared in 1961, is a translation of the sixth edition of *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, Teil I (1959), Vol. II is a translation of the fifth edition of *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, Teil 2/3 (1964). That Vol. I had already gone through an extra edition is indicative of the fact that it is there that Eichrodt develops his major thesis and has been forced to maintain the validity of his structure in the face of further research.

In his attempt at OT Theology, well described in Vol. I, Eichrodt is concerned to liberate the study of the OT from a superimposed systematization whose major categories are derived from philosophy or dogmatic theology, and from the hegemony of *Religionsgeschichte*. In order to do this Eichrodt dedicates Vol. I to the establishment of a concept native to the OT which may serve as a key for the unlocking of the OT treasure house. Instead of organizing his work under the traditional headings: God, Man, Judgment, Salvation, etc., Eichrodt conceives of the OT as dealing with a relationship and therefore uses the concept of the covenant as his key. It would have seemed more logical to organize this relationship under the headings God and the world, God and the nation, God and the individual. This would have been a consistently diminishing scale. But Eichrodt wishes to do justice to the OT. The Covenant is primarily between God and Israel as a people; therefore Vol. I explores the character of the Israelite religion.