

The concept of the 'moment' and its bearing upon
the existentialist understanding of history

A summary of a thesis submitted

by

James Richmond

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the requirements for the degree of Doctor
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The thesis takes as its starting-point the revolution of XXth. century theology against late XIXth. century liberalism as to the status and value of historical event. While XIXth. century liberalism regarded historical events as relatively unimportant channels for the delivery and illustration of timeless divine truths, recent and contemporary theology tends to regard historical events as all-important and crucial in and by themselves, and not merely because of the timeless truths abstracted from and mediated through them. Existentialist theology interprets this revived emphasis on historical event as implying the radical historicity and temporality of man, and expresses this interpretation by means of the concept, the 'moment', which designates a concrete, temporal-spatial, particular event within man's historical life, apart from which man does not become an authentic person and does not encounter truth. Further, existentialist theology stresses man, man himself, in his freedom and in his genuine becoming, as the only fruitful answer to the question, 'what is the meaning of history?', in contradistinction to answering it in terms of political, economic, sociological, and geographical laws, processes, and cycles. The thesis thereafter investigates the main works of three important existentialist theologians, Bultmann, Buber, and Kierkegaard, with a view to discovering those ways in which they interpret and employ this concept, the 'moment'. It discovers that in spite of divergences (which it analyses and evaluates), these three thinkers display a certain unity in their teaching on the 'moment', a unity which can hardly be understood as fortuitous. An attempt is made to understand this unity as springing from common roots in all three, and an attempt is made to indicate what these roots are. It is argued that while the facile and 'popular' explanation of this unity would stress the philosophy of existence as the background and seed-plot of the notions of history of Bultmann, Buber, and Kierkegaard, this is neither the only possible nor the most plausible explanation. This explanation ignores the common biblical background of Buber (a Jew) and of Bultmann and Kierkegaard (Christians). The thesis argues therefore that Buber's notion of 'historicity' and his use of the concept, the 'moment', spring mainly from his Hasidic interpretation of Old Testament revelation with its firm emphasis on the 'everydayness' of God's historic self-disclosure. Similarly, it /

derives Bultmann's emphasis on historicity and temporality and his use of the concept, the 'moment', from his conviction that the events of Christ's career mean the utter cruciality of particular, historical-temporal events and encounters within human existence. It derives Kierkegaard's postulation of the Moment from his conviction that the original Christ-Moment described in the New Testament implies a contemporary, identical Moment within human existence. Thus it is argued that biblical revelation generally and the 'eventful' ministry of Christ in particular necessarily imply the doctrine (and scandal) of particularity. Thus the conclusion is drawn that the Moment is a logically necessary and existentially most relevant category for theology. Behind the 'moment', it must be insisted, stands historic biblical revelation and the crucial events of Christ's life and death. Thus the 'moment' is not merely a category borrowed by theology from the system of concepts of the philosophy of existence, but a thoroughly biblical, Christian category without which biblical revelation and Christ's incarnation would lose their relevance for modern man. The unity of Bultmann, Buber, and Kierkegaard on the 'moment' is seen to centre mainly on their common assertions that the present 'moment' implies a distinction between primary (i.e. personal, historic, dynamic, temporal) revelation and secondary (i.e. propositional, 'informational', conceptual, ethical, social) revelation; that the 'moment' is the vital dislocating gap between a determining past and a chosen future, and is thus man's only assurance of authentic becoming, without which man would have no history; that the 'moment' faces considerable opposition from certain common elements, which are fully analysed; that the 'moment' implies a notion of revelation basically (if we may so express it) 'impartational', historical, and temporal, as opposed to one which is basically 'immanentist', and consequently regarded by existentialist thought as unhistorical, untemporal, and 'unworldly'. Yet it is admitted that the concept cuts sharply across certain strong traditional theological strands, and certain problems corresponding to these are therefore raised and fully discussed, to show how certain re-interpretations and re-evaluations require to be made if the concept, the 'moment', is to be fitted into the fabric of theology. Amongst these problems the following would seem to be of the greatest significance --- the problem of propositional theology, the tentative solution to which is suggested by the 'de-generalization' or the

'de-objectification' of dogmas; the problem of Church and community, in which the alleged weaknesses of existentialists on community are discussed, and an attempt made to assess the positive contributions of existentialism (in particular, by the special meaning it gives to 'historicity', and by the interpersonal encounter) to ecclesiology; the urgent problem of the two great divergent approaches to systematic theology, the ontological (as exemplified by the approach of Tillich) and the existentialist (as exemplified by the approach of Bultmann). These two approaches are compared and the conclusion drawn that the concept, the 'moment', favours the latter approach, which is evaluated against the biblical notion of historic revelation as basically an interpersonal encounter between God and man.

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by

JAMES RICHMOND

To be submitted to the Faculty of Divinity
in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
University of Glasgow.

October, 1960.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work necessary to produce this thesis, and the entire composition thereof, is my own work, and that where I have availed myself of the work of others, this has been fully acknowledged either in the text of the thesis, or in the foot-
:notes.

Signed

Date. *October... 1960*.....

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REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL
LAND OFFICE OF THE TERRITORY OF ARIZONA
AND
THE HISTORICAL
AND GEOGRAPHICAL
RECORDS OF THE TERRITORY OF ARIZONA
BY THE
COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE

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I N T R O D U C T I O N & P R E F A C E

INTRODUCTION AND PREFACE.

LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY AND THE HISTORICAL

In liberal theology the 'historical' as a theological category is depreciated. Liberals regard historical events as dispensable shells, through which are mediated nourishing kernels. The historical is quite relative. What was significant in the life and ministry of Jesus was that through him there came spiritual and ethical principles of vital importance for man's well-being. The principles were of vital importance, not the events in which they were manifested. In this view the 'historical' is thought of as merely accidental. Sometimes to describe something as historical implied that it was dated, conditioned, and sometimes even falsified.

For example, the Ritschlian definition of history is that "... the truth of history consists in the moral truths revealed through the teachings and examples of great men. Thus Jesus' teachings are of higher value than his action. His action is to be correlated with truth by finding in it motives or intentions which can be translated into moral principles or objectives. History has meaning as the laboratory in which truth is discovered; once the truth has been grasped and communicated to posterity, the history itself ceases to be of decisive importance. Mark tells Jesus' story to propagate the truths he learned from Jesus" (James M. Robinson, The Problem of History in Mark, London, 1957, p. 8). Speaking of Harnack's classic, What is Christianity ?,

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Rudolf Bultmann says, "It will be noticed how Harnack reduces the kerygma to a few basic truths of religion and ethics. Unfortunately this means that the kerygma has ceased to be kerygma: it is no longer the proclamation of the decisive act of God in Christ. For the liberals the great truths of religion and ethics are timeless and eternal, though it is only within human history that they are realized, and only in concrete historical processes that they are given clear expression. But the apprehension and acceptance of these principles does not depend on the knowledge and acceptance of the age in which they first took shape, or of the historical persons who first discovered them. We are all capable of verifying them in our own experience at whatever period we happen to live. History may be of academic interest, but never of paramount importance for religion" (Kerygma and Myth, London, 1953, p. 13). Speaking of the turn of the twentieth century, James M. Robinson says, "The century opened with the older generation still following the Ritschlian approach to God in terms of ethical idealism, and to Jesus as the historical fact exemplifying that ideal" (A New Quest of the Historical Jesus, London, 1959, p. 40). Georges Florovsky comments that people are interested rather in the 'eternal truth' of the Christian message, than in what they are inclined to call the 'accidents' of history ('The Predicament of the Christian Historian', Religion & Culture, London, 1959, p. 140). And he also agrees that theological liberalism, "... at least from the Age of the Enlightenment persistently attempted to disentangle Christianity from its historical context and involvement, to detect its perennial 'essence' ('das Wesen des Christentums'), and to discard the historical shells" (Florovsky, op. cit., p. 141). Because of this, "The historicity of Christianity was reduced to the acknowledgement

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of a permanent 'historical significance' of certain ideas and principles, which originated under particular conditions of time and space, but were in no sense intrinsically linked with them" (p. 141). From these we can form some kind of idea of the way in which theological liberalism regarded the historical.

MORE RECENT AND CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY AND THE HISTORICAL

The view of the historical here tends to be that the historical events themselves are crucial, decisive, and indispensable. Christianity is so rooted in history that to uproot it is tantamount to destroying it as a religion. In the events described in the New Testament God has so acted as to alter radically the character of history and of time. The historic Christian events brought something quite new into existence that was not there before. Time and history are indispensable for a truly human existence. The events of the New Testament affected not merely that time in which they happened, but all human time as such. These events show that our time is of a different quality than otherwise we might have imagined. The events of Christ demonstrate that what comes to us, what we apprehend and understand, come to us only in and through our time and history. The revelation of Christ can only be understood as the essential and inalienable historicity of man. Thus James M. Robinson writes of the theology of Bultmann that "... the kerygma must proclaim that God is encountered within one's historical existence" (The Problem of History in Mark, p. 18). And Professor John McIntyre writes, "It is now a theological

commonplace to emphasise the fact that Christianity is a historical religion. In this view we hear such statements as: 'God acts in history', 'God reveals Himself in history', 'The incarnation is the centre of history', and so on. The idea of history and ideas about history enter into most interpretations of the person and ~~work~~ of Jesus Christ and into almost all accounts of the theology of the Old Testament or of the New Testament, that is, into almost all of what is called 'Biblical Theology'. What is not always realized is that historical conceptions of this sort are unique to our time; that because of developments not only in theological thought concerning the subjects peculiar to itself but also in the fields of historical methodology and of the critique of historiography, our understanding and our interpretation of the historical element in the Christian faith are not the same as those of any previous generation" (The Christian Doctrine of History, Edinburgh 1957, p. 3). "... It has not been commonly realized that this conviction of the rootedness of Christianity in history commits the Christian exponent to a quite specific doctrine of history Just as God by His many actions in history ... in certain specifiable places and in definite historical times transformed all men's previous views on history but also history itself The impression too often given is that history is something in which things happen, a structure in which the events of Revelation and Redemption take place, a framework relatively unaffected by the action of God and man that occur within it" (McIntyre, op. cit., p. 11). These quotations from McIntyre's book sum up admirably the liberal position as to history and the modern revolution with regard to it. Professor Ian Henderson, writing of Bultmann's treatment of the historical, says this : "... bultmann has

been at pains to distinguish his position from that of the **old** Liberalism which reduced Christianity to a number of timeless truths. Over against such a view he insists that Christianity is basically an event. In Christ something has happened. And Bultmann goes on to emphasise the unique and universal reference of the Christ event. In Christ, God has done something which is of decisive importance not only for the life of St. John or St. Paul but for that of each of us and of all our contemporaries to whom the Christian gospel is preached to-day" (Myth in the New Testament, London 1952, p. 39). Florovsky gives much the same picture of modern theology. "Christianity is a religion of historians'. It is a strong phrase, but the statement is correct. Christianity is basically a vigorous appeal to history, a witness of faith to certain particular events in the past, to certain particular data. These events are acknowledged by faith as truly eventful. These historic moments, or instants, are recognized as utterly momentous. In brief, they are identified by faith as 'mighty deeds' of God, Magnalia Dei. The scandal of particularity, to use the phrase of Gerhard Kittel, belongs to the very essence of the Christian message. The Christian Creed itself is intrinsically historic..... Accordingly, it may be justly contended that 'the Christian religion is a daily invitation to the study of history'" (The Predicament of the Christian Historian, p. 140). Speaking directly of contemporary theological work, Florovsky continues, "... the essential historicity of Christian religion has been rediscovered and re-emphasised, precisely during the past few decades, and a fresh impact of this reawakened historical insight is strongly felt now in all fields of contemporary

theological research --- in Biblical exegesis, in the study of Christian history and liturgics, in certain modern attempts at the 'reconstruction of belief', and even in the modern ecumenical dialogue'" (Florovsky, p. 141). From all of this we can surely gather the revolution that has taken place in theological thought with regard to the historical element in Christianity, and also that the discussion of history occupies an important place in the non-theological sciences and disciplines.

THE QUESTION "WHAT IS THE MEANING OF HISTORY ?"

In view of this comparatively recent theological revolution, and in view of the universal importance ascribed to the quest for meaning in history, we must ask this question: what exactly can Christian thought contribute to the discussion based on the question 'what is the meaning of history ?' ? These terms themselves, and their interpretation, are so confused and ambiguous in contemporary discussion that an initial attempt must be made to distinguish between them in order that the ground may be cleared. Otherwise the Christian contribution would itself be involved in the confusion and ambiguity.

We may begin by making a preliminary observation; it does seem that Christian thought can contribute very little to the discussion if 'history' is equated with 'world-history', and if the key-term 'meaning' signifies any of the following traditional interpretations.

Christian theology can contribute little if by 'meaning' is meant tracing the hand of God, and so God's Justice and so on, in world- or universal history. Thinkers are now aware of what

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we might call the fragmentariness of history. McIntyre, conscious of blatant injustices in history, goes so far as to assert that there are elements in history 'meaningless' for God as for man. That is, there are moral unfairnesses and inconsistencies ultimately irreconcilable with the notion of God. If they were reconcilable with God they would lose their character as evil.[¶] The message of history, as Bultmann has reminded us, is always ambiguous. Professor Butterfield has mentioned some of these ambiguities in history and we shall consider them shortly below. And as Butterfield has pointed out, the futility of finding the hand of God in historical events is made clear by such a book as Voltaire's Candide, crammed as it is with the moral inconsistencies of worldly phenomena, of which the most significant is the Lisbon earthquake of 1775. But in the last analysis, what makes the glib and optimistic attempt to find the hand of God in history really futile is the Christian doctrine and scandal of particularity. Just because Christianity claims that God has acted in history in a particular land (Israel) or through a particular people (the Jews) or in a particular man (Jesus of Nazareth), this means that God has not acted or revealed himself everywhere or at all times or through all men in the same way. It is really the historicity of Christian revelation itself that makes the attempt to find the hand of God in universal history so hopeless. Paul Tillich is also aware of the great moral inconsistencies which the

[¶] For this, see McIntyre, op. cit., pps. 40 f.

history of man displays. "Early death, destructive social conditions, feeble-mindedness and insanity, the undiminished horrors of historical existence --- all these seem to verify belief in fate rather than faith in providence" (Systematic Theology, I, London 1953, pps. 298-9). And Tillich issues a warning that we would be wise to heed: "Faith in providence is paradoxical. It is an 'in spite of'. If this is not understood, faith in providence breaks down, taking with it faith in God and in the meaning of life and of history. Much cynicism is the result of an erroneous and therefore disappointed confidence in individual or historical providence"(op. cit., p. 298). Tracing the hand of God in world-history would therefore seem to be an unprofitable business for the historian.

Nor can Christian theology contribute a great deal if the question is meant in the sense, what is the pattern that runs through world-history ? A valid answer to a question of this kind presupposes a certain standpoint. It presupposes that the historian is suspended above, or above and at the end of history, in much the same way as we observe the pattern running through a carpet or tapestry by being suspended over it and observing it as a whole. But man cannot be thus suspended over the historical process. Besides, he cannot contemplate it as a whole since the pattern is not yet completely woven, since the carpet is as yet unfinished. It is observations such as these that form the spearhead of the Kierkegaardian attack upon the Hegelian attempt to trace Hegel's celebrated 'List der Vernunft'. But not only is the pattern of history incomplete from the point of view of the future, but also from the point of view of the past. Voltaire criticised Bossuet because Bossuet's universal history was not, Voltaire

contended, really universal; that is, it did not take cognizance of the whole of the past. The philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey becomes very relevant at this point. Dilthey realized that there are vast limitations in our knowledge of the past. For our knowledge of the past depends upon the survival from the past of hermenautical documents^{*} of a certain character. Since the content of these, compared with the totality of the events of past history, is fragmentary in the extreme, it is therefore senseless to speak of tracing a pattern in a whole which does not exist. But man's understanding of the past is further limited, according to Dilthey. He prefers to speak of historical interpretation as an art, just as Schleiermacher preferred to speak of divination. Historical knowledge is therefore not like mathematics, with results provable and demonstrable. There exist vast differences in this divination between individual historians, and agreement upon a generally accepted pattern in past history seems therefore something of a wild dream.

Nor again can Christian theology contribute much to contemporary discussion if by finding meaning is meant the attempt to find the causes of world-history and of world-historical events. In

^{*} Dilthey, *Erlebnisausdrücke*, meaning 'vital expressions' or 'expressions of lived experience'. For Dilthey's views on this matter, see H.A. Hodges, The Philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey, London 1952, pps. 131 f.

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practice, what such an attempt amounts to in the long run is what Bultmann designates historicism --- the attempt to interpret history in analogy with nature, concerning **itself** with causality. But this fails truly to 'understand' history because it leaves out the essence of history itself, which is man in his thoughts, desires, inner motives and ideals, in short, man in his peculiar human freedom. Instead of a valid understanding of history this method gives us a mechanistic sociology of history and historical eras. Croce and Barbara Ward are very critical of such historiographies, and Martin Buber (as we shall see in a later chapter) has this type of attempt in mind when he criticizes what he terms 'the quasi-biological thought of to-day'. In short, no understanding of the springs of historical events is possible without an analysis of the mainspring of history, which is man himself, in his concrete situation.

It is just as difficult for the Christian theologian to contribute something very worth while, if by finding meaning is meant the attempt to find and learn lessons in history. Herbert Butterfield's views (in Christianity and History, London 1949, Cap. 3, pps. 48 f.), are very interesting in this connection. Butterfield makes the point that a historical judgement from which we might learn lessons is an extremely long-term process. Thus, Butterfield points out, the military aggrandizements of Frederick the Great and Bismarck seemed, at the time, to be operating under the blessing of heaven. The curse and tragedy of what Butterfield calls Prussian militarism did not become apparent until later, until 1918, or was it 1933, or was it 1945 ? At any rate, the lesson we learn in an event when it is actually

occurring seems almost bound to be very premature. The good citizens of Frederick or the enthusiastic supporters of Bismarck hardly perceived the real evil in and the impending judgement upon their dependance upon military power. Thus judgements of world-history are premature. But even after a time are they true ? It can be doubted. Thus, historians today will hardly agree that it was Prussian militarism alone that gave rise to the tragedies of 1933 and 1945. What about the geopolitical, the economic, the ideological factors at work in German history in the past few generations ? In short, is the curse of Prussian militarism the only or even the main lesson we can discern in modern German history ? Thus, clear and obvious lessons are not so easily found in history as might at first be imagined. And an attempt to subsume various lessons deduced from a study of historical events under a general lesson meets with no greater success. Thus, not everyone will agree with Butterfield when he writes (op. cit., p. 60) that, "... Judgement in history falls heaviest on those who come to think themselves gods, who fly in the face of providence and history", and that a man who apes providence and blasphemes God "... brings more rapid tragedy on the world ... than the people who give half their lives to wine, women and song". Without denying that this is true enough, it is to be doubted that Butterfield learned this lesson from his study of historical events alone. Most probably he learned it from the Old Testament, and, applying it to history, found it not without validity. But this is different from an unbiased study of history yielding clear and unambiguous lessons so obvious that no demand is made upon our decision. Thus if the attempt to 'find meaning in history' is confined to learning

lessons in it, the attempt cannot be expected to yield many results commensurate in importance to the contemporary discussion of the meaning of history.

And finally, if by finding meaning in history is meant the discernment of the goal or purpose towards which universal or world-history is tending, there does not seem again a great deal which a specifically Christian theology can contribute. The objection here is that again a standpoint at the end of history is presupposed. The paradox is that we cannot stand at the end of a process which is still occurring, yet this method demands it. If it be supposed that a historian can find the goal of history, it must be clear that he does not find it merely from his historical studies. He comes upon it by his decision. Thus if the goal of history is for him the fulfilled Kingdom of God, he does not come upon this from his survey of present and past historical events, but only in his own personal religious decision for the as yet unfulfilled Kingdom. Thus his decision is paradoxical.

From this discussion it is clear that it is extremely difficult to contemplate past and present world- or universal history as an objective reality, and trace the just hand of God operating in it, or find a meaningful pattern running through it all, or find the causes which lie behind historical events, or find clear and unambiguous lessons from past events alone, or discern an obvious goal or end towards which the multiplicity and complexity of world-historical events are tending. In short, something much more than the mere examination of historical happenings is required. For this reason, we see that there is good justification for either the conscious rejection or the tacit ignoring of

the attempt to find meaning running through world- or universal history apparent in the thought of, amongst others, Bultmann, Croce, Dilthey, Collingwood, Buber and Kierkegaard.

What answer therefore can Christian thought possibly give to the question 'What is the meaning of history?' ? The answer is imperative because, as we have indicated above, the modern theological revolution against the older liberalism implies that Christian thought has a quite unique doctrine of history, and that in some way God's revelation in Christ has altered not merely man's thinking about history but also history itself. It is my contention that Christian thought can only make a valuable contribution to the discussion if 'meaning in history' is treated in the following way. We must treat the question as 'what is the essentially historical ?' What makes history possible ? What is history ? What distinguishes history from, say, nature, the historical from the natural ? What is the essence of history ? What is the fundamental metaphysic of history ? What are the correct interpretations of the terms 'history' and the 'historical' ?

Treated in this way, I think ~~that~~ the question becomes fruitful from the Christian point of view. Certain recent and contemporary thinkers find the essence of history in man, and more especially in man's present. The specifically Christian thinkers interpret the Christian view of history as teaching that as God revealed himself in certain events within a certain Personal Life, meaning is given to man's existence within certain specific events at certain specific times. Thus the disclosure of meaning in both cases is discontinuous in time and frag-

/fragmentary in history. The quite specifically Christian doctrine and scandal of particularity is thus transferred from the Incarnate Life of Christ to the personal life of man. Thus, if it is so that Christianity teaches that through certain events in the history of the past there came something quite new and decisive, this alters time and history in their actuality by implying that through certain events and in certain times in our history there comes to us truth, revelation, authentic existence. Christianity therefore offers to persons in their time and history the possibility of meaningful existence.

This particularity of events, encounters, and times which is a necessary consequence of biblical revelation is expressed and dealt with by much modern thought by means of the common root-term the "moment". In this thesis an attempt is made to examine this term (and its implications) as used by certain thinkers, two of them, Bultmann and Kierkegaard, from the Christian tradition, and the third, Buber, from the Hebraic tradition. But all three, significantly, are within the tradition of existentialist philosophy. This thesis therefore tries to show that the historicity of biblical revelation in general, and more especially the historicity of the life and career of Christ, reveals clearly the essential and inalienable historicity of man qua man, and to demonstrate that this human historicity cannot be conceived or discussed without some category like the "moment", or its synonyms. We can therefore say that this thesis amounts to a detailed, critical examination of the fundamental theological and philosophical category of the "moment".

PREFATORY NOTE

This note is intended to give some outline of the plan of the thesis as a whole, discussing the sources which have been used and the question of originality. The thesis tries to offer an original discussion of and solution to the contemporary problem of history. It does so mainly by means of the category of the 'moment', and by linking up inextricably the historicity of biblical revelation as a whole and the historicity of Christ's Life and Ministry on the one **hand**, and the essential historicity of personal existence on the other. Discussion of historicity with this two-fold reference will be found more especially in the Introduction and in the concluding chapter.

It tries to offer a re-interpretation of existentialist thought from a new point of view, namely from the point of view of its use of the category the 'moment' (and its synonyms), with special reference to the works of Bultmann, Buber, and Kierkegaard. Bultmann's work has been discussed in chapter I, Buber's in chapter III, and Kierkegaard's in chapter IV. This has involved a detailed treatment and re-interpretation of the original sources, and an attempt to relieve the inevitable tedium of this work is offered by relating their teaching to wider theological and philosophical contexts. But we hope that the sheer weight of evidence which emerges from such a detailed examination of the sources helps to establish this category - the 'moment' - as a crucially important one with which theologians will have to come to terms in future work. In these chapters too an attempt has been made

to relate these thinkers to each other, to show where they are similar, where they differ one from another, and where their respective strengths weaknesses, and emphases lie. At the same time, we have tried to relate their work to the ongoing discussion of contemporary theologians.

The select bibliography shows most of the relevant works used in the compilation of the thesis, and the notes contain detailed references to works quoted and used in the text.

Then the thesis tries to demonstrate that the doctrine of the 'moment', derived as it is from the doctrine of Christ's Incarnation itself, does raise certain problems (already under discussion in contemporary theology) which demand discussion and elucidation. In dealing with these problems we have tried to advance contemporary discussion, not least by relating each to the key-concept of the 'moment'.

The main problems raised and dealt with within the thesis are these --- the problem of finding an experiential norm (chapter I); the problem of the doctrine of immanence (chapter II); the problem of Faith and Reason from the point of view of the Moment, in Kierkegaard (chapter IV); the problem of propositional theology (chapter V); the problem of the structure of Christian faith (chapter V); the problem of church and community (chapter V); and the problem of the two approaches to theology, the existentialist and the ontological (chapter V). Having made these preliminary observations, we are ready to turn to the first chapter, which concerns the use made by Rudolf Bultmann of the category 'the moment', and of the problems that this raises for our solution.

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When the question of finding meaning in history is raised, we are apt to think of the attempt to find a 'silver thread', a meaningful pattern, running through the centuries and the millenia. The interpreter of history stations himself at a point above the process, from which he can survey the panorama spread out below him, and from which he can observe, as a spectator, the significant strands in history which give meaning to the whole. This is the standpoint taken, on the whole, by historiographers whose works are analysed by Pitirim A. Sorokin in his book, "Social Philosophies of an Age of Crisis" (London 1952). Surveying the field of all known history, these thinkers are interested in whole eras, in cultures lasting several centuries or more, in the rise and fall of civilizations. And when we consider, for example, a work like Karl Jaspers' Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte, we find Jaspers' attention directed initially to the so-called Axial Era in the first millenium before Christ, and then subsequently to the attempt to delineate meaningful eras in world-history, culminating in the post-renaissance Technological Era. And when we find Christian theologians trying to find meaning and patterns which spans the centuries we see that they were trying to much the same thing. So in St. Augustine's De Civitate Dei we find him exposing the world-significance of the Roman Empire and the barbaric invasions of the fifth century. He is interested in the rise and fall of states and empires. Taking as his standpoint the future final consummation of last judgement and resurrection, he stands above and at the end of history, and looking down and back, tries in the light of his exalted perspective, to expose the significance

of present and past events. Oscar Cullmann too, in his Christus und die Zeit, taking the Christ-event as the mid-point of history, attempts to see the significance of events before that point and after it, in the light shed by the Christ-event itself. Therefore Cullmann finds within history a Heilsgeschichte, and speaks of the Heilsplan that runs through history.

But when we turn to the view of history expressed in Rudolf Bultmann's Gifford Lectures History and Eschatology, (Edinburgh 1957), we meet a sharp rebuff in the form of a stern prohibition. Standing over against the man who complains of the meaninglessness of the historical process as a whole, Bultmann rebukes him: "Do not look around yourself into universal history"(p.155). Behind this prohibition lies the whole background of existentialist thought, stemming in first place from Kierkegaard, with his scathing satire on the Hegelian disciple, who surveys from his lofty perspective the unfolding of the centuries according to Hegel's celebrated List der Vernunft.*

Bultmann raises the question whether there is in history a meaningful core, from which history gains its essence and its meaning. His blunt answer is that the meaning and core and essence of history are to be found in man. And in answering thus he believes himself to be at one with Burckhardt, Toynbee, Dilthey, Croce, and R.G. Collingwood.

* "...the historian... cannot take a stand outside history at an 'Archimedean point'", R. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 127.

There is more to Bultmann's position than is apparent on the surface. This concentration on human existence as of first importance is to be found in those thinkers of the existentialist tradition who make up Bultmann's philosophical background. The most obvious of these, Martin Heidegger, has admitted that the basic task of philosophy is to give an exposition of the structure of human existence, 'being-there', 'Dasein'. When we examine the contents of Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament, vol. I, we discover that the greater part of the book is devoted to the consciousness of the primitive church and to the elucidation of human existence prior to the revelation of faith and after it. It is this that lies behind the rhetorical criticism of Bultmann that he is not interested in theology but in anthropology. Dr. John Macquarrie, (in An Existentialist Theology, London 1955, p. 162), speaking of Heidegger, says: "The stuff of history -- if we may so speak -- is therefore existence, and that means possibility". On the same page, he gives Heidegger's definition of the German 'Historie' as "...the disclosure of man in his historic possibilities, and the more history understands possibilities, the more penetrating it is". And it does not matter the period of his career at which we examine Bultmann's works, we are forced to admit that with regard to the centrality of human existence, Bultmann is extremely consistent.

Bultmann is interested in the life of man. He points out that the life of man is made up not only of thought and actions (Collingwood) but also of reactions to 'Widerfahrnisse', encounters and happenings in the world about him. There is no possibility of man being anything but being-in-the-world. Man's life is directed to the future

for which he is responsible. What a man does in the present is revealed in the future. But what of the past? We must not think of our history as a present determined by our past which in turn determines our future. The past is determinative of course in so far as it brings us into our present situation and its problems which demand solution. For Bultmann the causal connection which might exist between past and future is broken by a lacuna - the present. Bultmann believes that the present is the moment of decision, in which a man decides what to accept and what to ~~r~~ject of his past, and what meaning the future is to have for him.* For Bultmann freedom exists in the moment of the present for man, and in it the future for him is open.

What **relevance** has the Christian faith at this point? Christianity holds that man does not possess the freedom necessary for a present decision. The Christian faith perceives that a man's past is something that fascinates him, with which he is, however

* R. Bultmann, Preaching: Genuine and Secularized, essay in Religion and Culture, London 1959, p. 242: "True preaching is that which preaches Jesus Christ as Lord, whatever its words and ideas. Thus it is crucial that he be present as Lord in the preached word itself, and that where this word resounds the end of the world be present to the auditor, in that it places before him the decision, whether he will belong to the old or to the new world, whether he will remain the old man or become a new man".

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unwillingly, in love. Relative freedom in the present he may have, but not radical freedom. Since man's existence is an ever-future one, man must ~~become~~ free from himself and also free for himself. Man's belief that he already possesses this freedom is a sign of his illusion. Man can neither possess nor earn this radical freedom, he can only have it as a gift (see History and Eschatology, Chapter X, especially pps. 150 f.).

There are those who minimize the differences between Bultmann's account of human existence and that given by existentialist philosophers. But at this point, in Bultmann's insistence upon man's lack of radical freedom for separating^A his past from his future by decision, the divergence of Bultmann from existentialist humanism is writ large. Bultmann writes (Essays: Philosophical & Theological, London 1955 p. 84), "In actual fact, man is not free to respond to the future, nor is he free in his decisions, for he has always in reality decided in favour of his past as it is. He remains involved in dread and sin, and in everything he does he gets more and more securely attached to them. Manifestly that is a judgement which can only be accepted as a self-condemnation. Whoever sought to accept it as an illuminating Weltanschauung would already have falsified it". "... It is only liberation from himself that can be man's true liberation. If he cannot free himself from the world and the past and himself, God can. And the way in which God does it is by forgiveness of sin. That means simply the obliteration of man's past, and taking him to be what he is not -- the man of the future; it means relieving him of dread and thereby making him free for the future" (Essays, p. 85).

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The relevance of Christian faith is that it holds that it is just this freedom that it receives as a gift. In ~~Christian~~ faith, man is freed from the bonds of the past, from the 'old man'. This message, we must note, proclaiming radical freedom for man from his past, is not a general idea or theory, to be apprehended conceptually or intellectually. It is a highly personal concrete word addressed to you and to me. This message of the gift of the grace of God is revealed in Jesus Christ. For the New Testament, Jesus Christ is the eschatological event. This means that in him God has set an end to the old world; the old world has reached its end for the believer in that he has come to his end as the old man and is now, by this gracious word in Christ spoken to him, a new man, a free man.* Bultmann would not have us think that God's eschatological event is something that belongs to the facts of past history. How could that be, when the end has to do with man's present life? No, God's eschatological event becomes present event ever again in the church's proclamation. The appearance of Jesus within the facts of history is the speaking of God's eschatological word, and is

* R. Bultmann, Preaching: Genuine and Secularized, in Religion and Culture, pps. 240-1: "This, then, is the content of preaching: the appearance of Jesus is the end of the old world and the dawn of the new Jesus' appearance is thus seen not as within history but as the END OF HISTORY. But the paradox of preaching is this, that the event which puts an end to history has occurred within history. The communication of this event ... is correctly understood only when it is understood as the call to see in this **appearance** the end of the world ... according to the New Testament at least, Christian preaching says that Jesus' **appearance** was not an event in the world but means the end of the world".

but the first in a series of such appearances, or eschatological events (History and Eschatology, p. 151).

This is also the standpoint of Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament, vol. I (in which see pps. 37 f.). The earliest Christian church is described there by Bultmann as the 'eschatological congregation' (p. 37). "By designating itself ... as the congregation of God...", says Bultmann, "the earliest church declared that it itself was the fulfillment of the hopes of the apocalyptists", (p. 38). Bultmann means by this that the earliest Christian community believed that the 'end of days' had come upon it. We read that "the earliest Church knew that it had been given the 'Spirit', that gift of the end of days which according to the Jewish view had departed from Israel with the last of the prophets but whose impartation was promised for the end of days" (p. 41). Bultmann quotes a typical primitive Christian prayer - "Let the Lord come, and let this world pass away" (p. 41). Of the Christ-event we read, "Jesus' having come was itself the decisive event through which God called His congregation (Church).... Jesus' coming itself was already eschatological occurrence" (p. 43). Of Jesus' preaching, Bultmann says, "... it is evident that Jesus has this conviction: This age has run out. The summary of his preaching in the saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the reign of God is at hand' (Mk. 1:15), is appropriate" (p. 5). Speaking also of the Resurrection, Bultmann writes, "For God made this event the eschatological occurrence, so that lifted out of all temporal limitation, it continues to take place in any present moment, both in the proclaiming word and in the sacraments" (p. 303).

that 'the appearance of Jesus within the facts of history is the speaking of God's eschatological word, and is but the first in a series of such appearances, or eschatological events' is so basic to Bultmann's view of the moment and so decisive in his whole thought, and raises so many problems, that we must now give it serious thought and discussion.

In the first place, we cannot help noticing at least a **superficial** resemblance between Bultmann's position and that of Paul Tillich in his Systematic Theology, volumes I and II. We find Tillich defining salvation as reclaiming from the old and transferring into the New Being (Sys.Theol., II, p. 192). When Tillich hastens to add that this must be understood primarily as meaning the fulfilment of one's existence, we see that there is in Tillich's thought a strand close to Bultmann's, namely the centrality of human existence in theology and history. So too Tillich defines regeneration, which means the 'new state of affairs', the 'new eon', brought by the Christ (Sys. Theol., II, p. 204). The material norm of systematic theology for Tillich is 'the New Being in Jesus as the Christ as our ultimate concern' (Sys. Theol., I, p. 56). For Tillich, Jesus is the Christ precisely because it is he who brings the new eon, the new reality. And the significance of the title 'Christ' as applied to Jesus lies for Tillich in the way it points, by contrast, to man's existential situation (Sys. Theol., II, p. 30). Here again we perceive the **centrality** of human existence in his thought. And another similarity between Bultmann and Tillich is of course that they are both concerned with a new existence, a new reality, a new life.

But where I feel these two part company is over the

content that they would give to the New Testament category 'ephapax', once-and-for-all. This matter is of such importance that I feel that Bultmann's theology must stand or fall by it.

What content then does Bultmann give to the term 'ephapax' ?² We note that it differs little from that given to it by Kierkegaard, whose views in detail we will examine in a later chapter. It does seem, that both Bultmann and Kierkegaard are agreed that the Christ-event witnessed to by the New Testament is but the first in a series occurring ever since, but indistinguishable in content from it! The Christ-event is number one in an identical series. Now Bultmann would not agree, nor, I think, would anyone, that the term 'ephapax' means that the Christ-event was literally unrepeatable, because unrepeat-:ableness is a quality that attaches to every past historical event, whether it be the murder of Caesar or something that happened yesterday. All history is literally unrepeatable. Nor would Bultmann agree that the Christ-event was 'ephapax', unique, because it revealed something from the mind of God that otherwise would have remained a mystery. Importance would then attach itself to the revealed truth and not to the revealer and his career; Christianity could then detach itself from hist-:ory and become a philosophy, which was was precisely the mistake of the XIXth century and early XXth century liberals. Bultmann would say that the Christ-event was 'ephapax', unique, because of its universal valid-

² Vide e.g. Rom. 6:10, Heb.7:27.

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/validity for salvation and its applicability to every life. Ian Henderson, in his Myth in the New Testament, (London 1952), pps. 44-45, writes: " ... on Bultmann's view ... the most important thing about Christ' death ... is that unlike the death say, of Julius Caesar, it has an all-decisive significance for your life and mine".* But the crucial point is here --- there is completely lacking in the theology of Bultmann (and in that of Kierkegaard before him) any difference between the impact of the Christ-event on the first witnesses of it in the New Testament and the impact of it today on you and on me. The two events seem, that is, to be essentially identical.

Now clearly we find a quite different story in the theology of Tillich. For Tillich the original Christ-event, described in the New Testament, is normative for us today. And it is so, it seems, in this way. Tillich comes close to Bultmann because he dislikes revelation thought of as knowledge about God or ~~about~~ divine matters, and because he regards it as the " manifestation of the ground of being in events, persons, and things. Such manifestations have shaking, transforming, and healing power" (Sys. Theol., II, p. 192). The disclosure of God in history means the experience of transformation and healing (Lat. *Salvus*, healthy, healed). When Jesus as the Christ manifested himself originally in history the salvation and revelation he brought then were final, complete, unchangeable. But revelation and salvation

* Cf. S. Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, (Princeton 1941), p. 345: "The eternal happiness of the individual is decided in time through the relationship to something historical".

as received by us living under the conditions of existence are always preliminary, fragmentary, and changeable. This seems to sum up Tillich's views as to the 'ephapax' character of the original Christ-event, indicating a decisive difference between that event then and our appropriation of it now. And this in turn gives a norm, a yardstick, against which we could measure our subjective experience, our appropriation of the benefits of Christ. The saving and healing in Jesus as the Christ are never relative; as the Christ, the bringer of the New Being, the new eon, he must transform every form of relativity in his healing and saving power. Therefore, every claim that there has taken place within existence salvation, healing, and revelation, fragmentary and preliminary though they must be, must be judged by the saving power in Jesus as the Christ. Thus the Christ-event is normative over Christian experience; it is by no means simply the first in a series of events in no way distinguishable one from another. The original Christ-event towers in completeness and in significance over all subsequent appropriations of its benefits. The difference between Tillich and Bultmann is obvious (see Sys. Theol. I, pps. 162 f.).

Now this difference between Bultmann and Tillich is naturally of great interest and importance in itself, especially for students of both theologians. But the difference has a wider area of importance, since it brings to our notice a larger problem, and one by which Bultmann's version of Christianity stands or falls --- namely, the question of a norm, and objective norm, which governs and rules our so-called subjective experience. To this larger and all-important question we now turn.

Bultmann's view of the meaning of the concept 'ephapax' --- that the original Christ-event is but the first in a series of events beside each of which the original is virtually indistinguishable --- is a view that could be described very easily as outrageously subjective. Is there no criterion by which our present experience of the Christ-event is judged and controlled? Is there not something which tells me in a given moment whether I am or not being addressed by the genuine Christian kerygma? Is the content of the original Christ-event identical with the content of what I appropriate in the moment of encounter and decision? Does the kerygma which encounters me in the moment carry within itself its own authentication, without reference to some external norm? Must I measure the validity or the authenticity of the kerygma solely by its concrete effect on me in the here and now? When we recall Bultmann's view of the 'ephapax' concept it does seem that ^{the} above questions must be raised, and that the student of Bultmann must give some kind of answer to them. The importance of such questions is well recognised in contemporary theology. Hermann Diem, in his Dogmatics, (Edinburgh 1959), chapter I, argues that it is just these questions that divide contemporary theologians one from another, and that nowhere is this divergence more apparent than in the rift between the Barthian and the Bultmannian camps.

In this section of our argument we shall demonstrate that if we reject Bultmann's view, an acceptable and constructive alternative is any thing but easy to find. Let us return then, first of all, to the views of Tillich. At the outset, we must not fail to recognise

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that a plain divergence exists between Bultmann and Tillich in that the one is an existentialist and the other an ontologist. What we mean by this is that while for Bultmann existential modes and attitudes are paramount, for Tillich ontological descriptions are basic. Tillich's ontological proposition that 'God is being itself' is rejected by Bultmann, because this seems to be speech about God apart from faith and history. Bultmann will not allow this, insisting that to speak of God rightly is to speak inevitably at the same time of man and his existence. Also if God is spoken of as 'historical' Bultmann interprets this as God as existentially relevant to man. Another preliminary objection that the disciple of Bultmann might make against Tillich's ontological propositions is that terms like 'being itself', 'ground of being', ~~are~~^{are} only meaningful when regarded against the context of man's perpetual state of having to become. It is not so easy, he might retort, to make purely ontological assertions about God without involving oneself at some point, in the existential. We mention this because, if valid statements could be made about God from philosophy, and an ontological description of God be reached apart from existence and history, we might manage to construct some norm or criterion for our subjective experience; but it is very doubtful if this can be done.

Tillich holds then, as we have seen, that the original historical Christ-event witnessed to by the New Testament is, in its original appropriation, full and final and absolute⁴ and unchangeable, and therefore normative for our subsequent experience and appropriation which is by comparison limited, conditioned, and fragmentary.*

* See Sys. Theol., I, pps. 148, 152, 153, 162.

If this is so, we must ask how one acquires information about this Christ-event ? Certainly not, says Tillich, by means of historical research; the so-called quest for the historical Jesus was a failure, as must be any attempt to give a foundation to Christian faith by the investigation of history (Sys. Theol., II, pps. 118, 121, 123, 130). Thus, if we rule out the historical approach, what is the alternative ? It does seem as though the only remaining one is that faith. Supposing a radical historical scholar doubted the factual existence of Jesus of Nazareth nineteen centuries ago, then is faith able to overrule his historical scepticism and assert that such a person really did exist ? Now Tillich believes that faith can do so. He holds that faith can guarantee the once-upon-a-time factuality of Jesus. "... The historical foundation of Christianity is an essential element of the Christian faith itself and ... this faith, through its own power, can overrule sceptical possibilities within historical criticism", (Sys. Theol., II, pps. 130 f.). At this point Tillich and Bultmann are one; for Bultmann too it is preposterous that purely historical criticism could give or take away from Christian faith. His position is clearly that Jesus Christ the Word of God comes to man again and again in the kerygma, and if this event happens now it must have happened then. But Bultmann will not allow the original Christ-event a larger content or a greater objective certainty than the event of the kerygma now; we apprehend the kerygma now existentially; the original kerygma was apprehended then in identical manner. The kerygma now is identical with the kerygma then; it is, it must be, self-authenticating. For Bultmann it is faith that guarantees the one kerygma then and now. There is no aspect of

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the kerygma which is apprehended non-existentially, and which then becomes a norm or a criterion for our here and now existential apprehension. We must now ask: what does Tillich mean by his assertion that faith can overrule scepticism in historical criticism?

We shall not quarrel with Tillich when he says that faith guarantees the evidence of the New Being in the Now (Sys. Theol., II, p. 131). Certainly faith is existential participation --- by faith we share in the existential benefits of the Christ. But we must insist that this proposition is not a purely ontological description of the Christ. For it is really an existential one. What we see the New Being to be is dependent in some measure upon what we see the old being to be, and that is derived from existential analysis. If so, we must renounce all talk of a purely ontological description of Christ which could be a norm for our here and now experience. For what is normative for our here and now experience is dependent to some extent upon our **analysis** of human existence. When Tillich goes on to say that "... faith guarantees a personal life in which the New Being has conquered the old being" (p. 131), we must be careful in our interpretation. To say that Jesus as the Christ is the bearer of the power of the New Being is again not to make a purely ontological statement nor to give a purely ontological description. For New Being can only have meaning in contrast with old being, and since we cannot have an idea of what old being is from the Christ alone, we can only derive it from analysis of human existence which is fallen and inauthentic. But here again existential analysis becomes normative. How can faith guarantee a personal, concrete life ? Certainly by participation, if this means

that we approach the Christ with our concrete old being and have this conquered and set right by the power of the New Being of which he is the bearer. But is this not tantamount to admitting that what we can know of this Life which bears the power of the New Being is confined to those elements of it which are relevant to our concrete here and now existence? That is, the New Being which conquered then must be identical with the New Being which conquers now, no more, no less. And if this is ^{so}, what has happened to the normative function attributed to the original Christ-event? It can hardly be normative if we can only approach ^{it} with our estranged and fallen existence. In what sense therefore can Tillich's account of the Christ-event be different from and more satisfactory than Bultmann's account of the kerygma, every point of which can only be approached existentially? If objective knowledge gained by the critical historian cannot give nor take away from our faith, then exactly what type of objective knowledge can become a norm or a criterion for our here and now appropriation? Of course it is possible to answer: The hearing and appropriation of the Apostles, but this is presupposed by and included in the kerygma itself.

Having failed to find so far in Tillich any objective norm by which we could measure our experience, we must pursue the matter further. Faith can guarantee the evidence of the New Being in the now and also therefore the personal life in which this New Being has appeared. But what is this New Being? It is, says Tillich, "the picture of him in whom the New Being has appeared" (p. 132). We can agree with many of the statements that Tillich makes about this picture. No special trait can be verified in it with certainty; the picture is two-

/two-fold, being made up of the life which appeared and the reception of it by the first witnesses; to be safer though, we must insist that the picture is made up of one element, the account of it given by the first witnesses; behind this we cannot go to the life which 'actually' appeared. We cannot ²separate two elements out because we can only know of this life from the apostolic accounts. We agree too that this picture is perceived by participation if this means that every aspect of it has existential reference and relevance. But does faith guarantee this picture? Yes, says Tillich, it guarantees it as "... the adequate expression of the transforming power of the New Being in Jesus as the Christ" (p. 132). If this picture of the Christ is merely effective in transforming human existence (fallen and inauthentic) then it would seem to be no different from the kerygma of which Bultmann speaks. The same could be said of it. We encounter this picture only by participating in it, when we encounter the New Being which it conveys, which overcomes and corrects our old being. Bultmann insists that the kerygma is properly appropriated when we allow it to affect our existence; every point of the kerygma must be appropriated existentially. Are there elements in Tillich's picture which must be appropriat^aed, or which can be appropriated, nonexistentially? I think not. If the picture or the kerygma contained two types of elements, existential and nonexistential elements, how could we approach the latter class if both Tillich and Bultmann rule out the approach of historical criticism? We conclude therefore that the picture of Christ who is the bearer of the power of the New Being, (or, in short, the kerygma of the apostles), can only be approached and appropriated by existential, concrete, here and now participation, which rules out the possibility of there being any extra-

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/extra-kerygmatic norm or criterion which objectively criticizes, controls or judges our subjective appropriation of the power of the New Being.

Tillich is certainly aware of the acuteness of this problem in modern theology, but seems unwilling to take up Bultmann's radical and seemingly dangerous position. It seems to me that this unwillingness leads to a contradiction which runs through Tillich's theology, (to which we shall have to return in our concluding chapter). The contradiction is this: For instance, while wishing to maintain the normative-objective function of the Christ-event, he completely abandons this position when he deals with the Resurrection. The Resurrection, says Tillich (see Sys. Theol., II, pps. 181 f.), cannot be an objective-normative event in the past because it simply cannot be indicated as an historical event in space and time by historical research. It's certainty as an event is created by our subjective appropriation of the Christ's existential victory. Because the New Being in the Christ overcomes the old being in us now, we become certain that old being was conquered once by the New Being in Jesus as the Christ. This is the opposite of maintaining that our present experience is stabilized and controlled by the original Christ-event. When Tillich says that "... this event (i.e. the Resurrection) happened first to some of his followers who had fled to Galilee in the hours of his execution; then to many others; then to Paul; then to all those who in every period experience his living presence here and now", the idea of a past objective event with a normative function seems to have been abandoned. Our present experience of the power of the New Being creates the certainty of the victory of the

New Being's power in the past. Thus, says Tillich, (Sys. Theol., II, p. 179), "It is the certainty of one's own victory over the death of existential estrangement which creates the certainty of the Resurrection of the Christ as event and symbol; but it is not historical conviction or the acceptance of biblical authority which creates this certainty". There can be no distinguishing between the event then and the event now, they are identical and to the original event and our present appropriation of it can be applied the symbol, Resurrection, (op. cit., p. 181). At the same time, and here we come to the heart of the contradiction, Tillich seems to take up an opposite and contrary position. He is forever using the term 'participation in.....' (see op. cit., pps. 204 f.). We participate in, 'enter' (p. 204) the objective reality of the New Being which, says Tillich, precedes our subjective participation. And when Tillich writes that "the subjective consequences are fragmentary and not the basis for claiming participation in the Christ", (p. 204), it is hard indeed to see what he means. If we rule out of court 'subjective consequences' how could we possibly be aware that we were participating with our old being in the power of the new? Tillich argues that we could only claim participation in the Christ on the basis of our faith --- the faith which accepts Jesus as the bearer of the power of the New Being. How could our faith possibly do such a thing except by constant reference to our having participated in the power of the New Being with our old being, i.e. without consequent reference to subjective consequences? So the contradiction in Tillich's theology becomes apparent.

So Tillich speaks also of Justification. Justific-

/ Justification, "in an objective sense, is the eternal act of God" (p. 205). But by what means can the unjustified man perceive an eternal act or offer of God ? Surely he can become aware of such a reality only when God justifies him in his actual, here-and-now fallen state and accepts him as he is ? And when Tillich writes (p. 205) that Justification, like Regeneration " ... is first an objective event and then a subjective reception", this contradiction in his thought becomes very apparent.

Tillich wants to find some objective controlling and normative basis for Christian faith which would enable him to reject the out and out subjectivism of a thinker like Bultmann. Yet his own treatment of terms and concepts like 'participation', 'Resurrection', 'Regeneration', 'Justification' will not allow him to do so. It still seems as though one really must accept Bultmann's position in full --- that is, to admit that we can find no factor outwith the kerygma which can be apprehended nonexistentially, and which could become normative for our present experience. The only alternative is to argue that the Christian faith, the knowledge of God and of ourselves, can be gained in some way that by-passes our history and existence, against which all appropriation and subjective consequences may be judged. But I think that an examination of Tillich's theology demonstrates the extreme difficulty, if not **the** impossibility of doing anything like this.

One further comment about Tillich requires to be made. Such statements as 'the believer enters into a pre-existent objective reality greater than his own subjective appropriation', seem to be,

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(and we shall return to this in the concluding chapter), in the last analysis, at least partly ecclesiastical statements. It is true, as the book of Job points out (Job 15:7), that we are not the first men to be born --- we take our place in that vast procession of believers which stretches back to Abraham. Others have believed and decided and have been renewed before us. For this reason there is within the Church, of which the Church appoints herself editor, a great mass of confessions and lives. But it is one thing to point to the wisdom of consulting the biographies of the saints, and quite another, as Kierkegaard was well aware, to exalt this mass of recorded experiences as normative for our present appropriation. For there is a sense in which, (as we each one face our concrete historical existence waiting to be realized), we really are the first to be born. Tillich's talk of participation seems to be then, in part at least, a reading back from the collected experiences of the individual members of Christendom. But we shall have to re-examine this matter more fully in our concluding chapter.

If we find it impossible to find in Tillich's theology an objective norm, nonexistentially approachable, then can we find such a norm elsewhere? If Bultmann's position seems dangerous and therefore untenable, can we find an alternative position elsewhere. Bultmann's position has been attacked and discussed in so many places it is difficult to decide on a starting-point. But we can find a possible alternative in Mr. H.P. Owen's Revelation and Existence (Cardiff 1957, especially chapter 7, The Historical Element, pps. 111 f.).

Now Owen plainly dislikes Bultmann's view of the "moment" -

that in it eternity crosses time whenever God speaks to man through an encounter, and that the present encounters which Christians enjoy were made possible by the past events of Christ's life and death (Revelation and Existence, pps. 117-8). He dislikes these statements not because they are not part of Christianity (he admits that they are), but because Bultmann has made them the distinctive offence of the Gospel (op. cit., p. 118). This, says Owen, they are not, because such assertions could just as easily be made of Old Testament events (op. cit. p. 118). For Owen the distinctive offence of the Gospel lies in the statement that "the eternal God himself entered time and took time into his own nature --- that he himself entered Historie and made it Geschichte" (op. cit., p. 118). Owen can only give meaning to **this statement** by interpreting it by means of the thought-system of the Epistle to the Hebrews.* At the conclusion of his earthly ministry, Christ entered Heaven taking with him his earthly work which is continually re-enacted there; the work that he did here he continually offers before his Father's throne in the heavenly places (op. cit., pps. 116, 133). This is certainly a myth, says Owen, but one that can be believed by members of the Church, the Body of Christ animated by Christ's Risen Life, where the myth is lived out (op. cit., p. 133). Therefore the Bultmannian language that says that God CAN transform existence must be rejected in favour of the statement that God HAS transformed it; the language that says that God CAN make time historic must be rejected in

* Important references to Hebrews can be found in Owen, op. cit., pps. 116, 117, 133.

favour of the statement that God HAS made it historic (op. cit., p. 133). And this is available in the Church as first-fruits. It is this belief, says Owen, that the natural man finds scandalous, and which constitutes the distinctive Christian offence. Now certainly, if this were so, we would have something objective by which to measure our concrete experience --- Christ's risen, perfected, fulfilled, victorious, objective life made available in the Church, beside which our own participation would be fragmentary, or, as Owen puts it, mere 'first-fruits', which in this context means much the same thing, (op. cit., p. 133).

It seems to me that if natural man objects to Owen's account of the specifically Christian Gospel, he can hardly be blamed for doing so. It does seem to me that natural man could raise at least three objections to Owen's version of the kerygma.

First, he could point out that Owen's doctrine implies the denial of truly historical and temporal existence; Owen's view seems to mean that authentic existence can only be realized within the context of the Church's worship and life. Admitted that the Church has an important part to play in the achievement of authentic existence (Bultmann would clearly not deny this), what then about the world and existence-in-the-world? Is existence-in-the-world completely cut off from the achievement of authenticity? If it is held (as it is by Bultmann and Heidegger and other existentialist thinkers), that man qua man is always and everywhere historical and temporal, then Owen's ecclesiastical view would appear to be unsatisfactory. It might of course

be said that the Church and its life represent a scandalon to belief; but ecclesiastical history is so appallingly ambiguous that one must hesitate ~~to think~~ ~~saying~~ that ecclesiastical scandals are within the will of God. This type of assertion seems to me to be very dangerous.

Second, he could point out that Owen's account of Christianity, and especially his account of the Christ-event is meaningful only if one accepted the thought-system^{of Hebrews}, and especially its reliance ~~on~~ Platonis^C dualism. But surely it cannot be held that the distinctive offence with which the Gospel confronts modern man is the Platonic 'two worlds' system of thought?

Third, the natural man could point out that Owen's account of Christianity would seem to demand of him understanding and acceptance of the Judaistic thought-system centering on the sacrificial rites of the Jerusalem Temple. Certainly the author of Hebrews has this in mind when he writes of Christ entering into the Holy of Holies to offer a perpetual sacrifice (Hebrews, chapters 9 and 10). Here there is a dualism presupposed again --- this time between the two sides of the Veil in the Jerusalem sanctuary. Hardly anyone would say that the Hebrews christology was meaningless. No doubt, when it was first conceived by the author, it was a magnificent attempt at re-mythologization; no doubt also, to its original recipients, it was intensely meaningful, and conveyed to them, by means of its concepts, the essence of the kerygma. But this is a very different thing from supposing that its concepts form part of the enduring fabric of the Christian faith, and that acceptance of its thought-systems, (Platonic and Judaistic),

is obligatory on contemporary hearers of the kerygma![#]

It seems then, that if Owen finds it difficult to accept Bultmann's account of the encounter in the moment because it is thoroughly subjective, his own suggested alternative seeking after a type of objectivity is also unacceptable. We turn now to a subject just as important --- to Owen's views on the possibility of finding objective certainty in the judgement of the past.

The impossibility of erecting the Christian faith on the more or less approximate results of historical research has never found clearer or more incisive expression than in the works of Kierkegaard. Owen recognizes this (op. cit., p. 128). Owen concedes that if the New Testament is examined objectively, the result of this is that what is reported there is only more or less probable (op. cit., p. 128). Because of this, the purely historical approach to the Gospels yields only a very low degree of or a very high degree of uncertainty. Historical knowledge, says Owen in agreement with Kierkegaard, can never be more than approximation-knowledge (op. cit., p. 128). Let us suppose that the subjective approach, faith, possesses certainty. What then is the relationship between the two approaches, the objective historical

[#]Implicitly this raises the question of whether a book like Hebrews is capable of being demythologized (i.e. existentially interpreted) if we reject Owen's type of interpretation. To this question we shall return in our concluding chapter.

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approach on the one hand, and the subjective approach by faith on the other ? Owen's quite astounding answer is that faith may infuse the historical approach with its own certainty, and make more or less probable facts objectively certain (op. cit., pps. 129-30). We must be careful in stating our own position here. The view we have outlined is that because we experience the power of the Jesus Christ event now, it must have happened then. To use Owen's terminology, this certainty which **faith** confers is subjective --- it cannot be given apart from faith. Or it might be better to say that the certainty which faith yields is inter-subjective. But Owen is explicit that faith confers upon the biblical events not merely significance but objective certainty.

What meaning can this assertion possibly have ? Certainty is objective, I should say, when it can be freely demonstrated by one person to another, the ~~human~~ requisite intelligence alone being granted. Thus, one mathematician can demonstrate to anyone with the requisite intelligence that $2 + 2 = 4$. This is so true that no one would question it, and it remains true apart from the emotions and experiences of those involved in its demonstration. But when historical science deals with New Testament narratives it is a very different matter. If an historian agreed that it was more or less probable that a certain Jesus of Nazareth lived who used language indicating that he was God, neither Owen nor any other theologian would be able to demonstrate to him that this was objectively certain. If he attempted to do so, he would soon discover that the certainty he possessed was closely linked with his personal faith, and that for this reason was radically subjective certainty, or that it was inter-subjective in relation to his

fellow-believers. Certainly the historian would deny that this certainty was objective, because it cannot be freely and universally demonstrated and communicated.

Indeed, when we examine Owen's position further, we see further dubious qualities in this so-called 'objective certainty'. For example, philosophy and objective thought are forbidden by Owen to examine this objective certainty which faith confers on historical probabilities (op. cit., p. 130). Philosophy cannot by its very nature examine how faith and the historical approach are related to each other, or how the former acts upon the latter. All that Owen can say is that the subjective element may 'infuse' the objective approach with certainty. The only language we are allowed to use is metaphorical --- the action of faith upon the objective approach is compared with the action of light in infusing or pervading the air. Now this may be so. But if so, all talk of objective certainty must be given up. For how could the certainty so achieved be objective if the means by which it is achieved cannot even be discussed by means of ordinary philosophical or historiographical language? That within the 'Christian circle' (as Tillich calls it), theologians can and do use language which is meaningful amongst themselves is undeniable, but the certainties so discussed are, rightly speaking, inter-subjective, or objective only within the circle. Owen's use of the term subjective seems to be very different from the use of the term in the world at large.

If faith possesses, as Owen asserts, certainty, why is this not sufficient for the believer? His attempt to find objective

certainty cannot have as its object communication to others. Certainty cannot be imparted apart from faith itself. Does the attempt not therefore indicate that faith alone is unable to bear the burden? When we remember that it has been pointed out that Bultmann has been trying to apply the principle 'by faith alone' to belief just as Luther applied it to life, Owen's alternative does seem to be something much less than 'sola fide'.

Further, from an examination of this seventh chapter of Owen's book, we see that Owen is working with a definition of history which Bultmann would categorically reject at the outset of the discussion. Speaking of Mk. 8:27-29 (St. Peter's Confession at Caesarea Philippi), Owen asks, "Did St. Peter utter this confession as, when, and where St. Mark relates?" (op. cit., p. 121). And in another place he argues that it is probably right that 'Christ really did rise from the dead', but that a personal acceptance of the risen Christ makes this wholly certain (op. cit., p. 131). And when Owen in this chapter searches for objective certainty, it is quite clear from the context that he means certainty that 'such-and-such a biblical event really did happen' (op. cit., pps. 129-30). In that case, Owen obviously means by history, history 'wie es eigentlich gewesen'. And it goes without saying that Bultmann would reject any such definition (as would Dilthey, Collingwood, Croce, and others). History, 'wie es eigentlich gewesen', can assure us that Jesus died, but never that Jesus died for me.

It is also clear that Owen himself is well aware of the unsatisfactoriness of his own proposition that "Faith bestows

certainty upon facts WHEN and BECAUSE it perceives a divine significance in them" (op. cit., p. 129). In fact the proposition becomes futile when Owen admits that disagreement is inevitable about the certainty and significance of different parts of the Gospel story (op. cit., pps. 130-1). In some cases the objective probability may be lacking and in others the requisite faith may be lacking, so that disagreement becomes inevitable. It is astounding to read however that Owen holds that although disagreement about details in the Gospels may be inevitable, what remains is sufficient to allow us to assert that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself'. For one thing, this Bultmann would never deny, so that one wonders why this statement (op. cit., p. 131) is included in the book at all. But what is the definition of details? Is the story of the Virgin Birth a detail, or the story of the Ascension, or the traditions of the Empty Tomb? Agreement on these points seems a long way off! And if we see, (as many of us do), significance in the stories of the stilling of the storm, the cursing of the barren fig-tree, the healing of the Gadarene demoniac, does this significance bestow objective certainty on the facts as reported by the evangelists? This is surely to enter the sphere of the most violent controversy, in which objective certainty seems left far behind. How on earth does one's faith 'infuse' or 'pervade' the various degrees of probability or improbability which attaches to these stories?

Many would question too Owen's statement that "... faith can discern certainty in the synoptic narrative and not in the apocryphal gospels because the former possesses a purely objective prob-

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/probability which the latter altogether lack" (op. cit., p. 130). The trouble with this is that many scholars would not draw such a firm distinction between the two types of story, and there is also the view that in certain Gospel stories the transition is actually being made from one type to the other. This is a further radical invalidation of Owen's principle. It is perhaps a little unfortunate that Owen chose to examine Mk. 8:27-29, a synoptic passage much beloved of the form-critics, Bultmann and Dibelius. Thus, when Owen asks whether this incident really did happen as reported, he seems to be unaware of how the form-critics assaulted the 'wie es eigentlich gewesen' conception of history. Thus the 'happenedness' of Mk. 8:27-29 can only be discussed against the background of the consciousness of the early Church. And this is without doubt a purely historical question, and no amount of faith in the risen Christ can affect the validity or the invalidity of the answer given to it.

But those who desire some empirical norm by which the authenticity and validity of the Kerygma may be judged are by no means exhausted by thinkers like Tillich and Owen. The desire seems to be so powerful in modern theological discussion, that we meet it again in the work of someone who is far from being unsympathetic towards Bultmann and his central concerns --- in the work of Dr. John Macquarrie, in his latest book, The Scope of Demythologizing, (London 1960). The general aim of this work is to show that no matter how fruitful Bultmann's new approach to the Christian faith is, there is yet a limit which is reached, beyond which we dare not go, a limit which has been set by Bultmann him-

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/himself (op. cit., p. 11). The book demonstrates how this limit is met with within certain spheres each of which Macquarrie analyses and discusses most competently, spheres like those of exegesis, dogma, kerygma, philosophy, language, and so on. But here our special concern is with how a limit to the existential method is met with in the sphere of history. Therefore our concrete concern here is with Macquarrie's third section, DEMYTHOLOGIZING AND HISTORY, op. cit., pps. 58-101.

Macquarrie gives a masterly summary of the existentialist approach to history under several propositions whose general fruitfulness and value in modern theology he does not challenge (op. cit., pps. 81 f.). The first is that "Historical reflection has for its subject-matter human existence in the world" (op. cit., p. 81); the second is that "In historical reflection, the reflecting subject participates in a peculiar way in the object of his reflection" (op. cit., p. 83); the third is that "The function of historical reflection is to provide a self-understanding" (p. 86); the fourth is that "Historical reflection is concerned primarily with possibility" (op. cit., p. 88). Each of these propositions are discussed in turn.

But the 'limit' we have been speaking of is reached because Macquarrie fears that if the method based upon these propositions is pushed too far certain very undesirable results would emerge. In short, Macquarrie fears that if this approach to history is followed to the end of the line we would have a radical "subjectivizing" of history (op. cit., p. 91). He asks, "How can we know that it is a

GENUINE possibility that is being set before us, unless it can be pointed out in history ?" (op. cit., p. 90). On the same page he asks, "How can we know what can be done except on the basis of what has been done ?" This question is important because its implication is that a certain knowledge of Jesus objectively pre-exists our existential experience of the kerygma. Yet Macquarrie rejects completely (as we have seen Tillich does too) the notion that "faith can be made to depend on historical research" (op. cit., p. 92).

His fears make him make certain demands. He demands "a minimal core of historical factuality which cannot be reasonably doubted" (op. cit., p. 93). This minimum that he demands is "simply that there was someone who once exhibited in history the possibility of existence which the kerygma proclaims" (op. cit., p. 93). Talk of following Christ, he says further, might be ridiculous "... if there were no assurance that the possibility of Christian existence has been fulfilled by someone under the conditions of 'real' life" (op. cit., p. 93). Theologically expressed, "the minimal assertion is that the 'Word became flesh and dwelt among us'..." (op. cit., p. 93). We must not "throw out the objective-historical altogether" (op. cit., p. 93), as the existentialist approach to history might seem to tempt us to do. The precise nature of Macquarrie's fear is expressed by him thus: "Because human existence is not pure possibility but always possibility conditioned by facticity, we need some empirical anchor if we are to recognize any possibility as a genuine one and be assured that we are not being invited to chase after a chimera" (op. cit., p. 95). Existentialist theology in its approach to history needs therefore

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" ... the assertion that there really was this kind of person, that this possible way of life has actually been exhibited in history" (op. cit., p. 95). And Macquarrie does not hide the fact that it is really 'objectivity' he is after when he writes, "The objective fact which is of importance is that around nineteen hundred years ago this kind of life was concretely manifested and shown to be a genuine possibility of historical human existence" (op. cit., p. 97). The limit of demythologizing in the sphere of history has thus been reached for Macquarrie in that he "would like some assurance that in a world which seems so inhospitable to it there HAS BEEN a life of this kind --- that the Word has become flesh" (op. cit., p. 101).

These views are obviously so important and far-reaching that they deserve the most careful discussion that we can give them. First, we must point out that all talk of 'historical objectivity' comes up against the insight, which I consider an 'assured result' of modern theology, that there can be no direct observation of the past. Therefore, as we pointed out when discussing Tillich's position, all that we can know of the life of Christ is strictly confined to the apostolic accounts in the New Testament which itself is kerygmatic in nature. Thus, all searching for objective factuality comes up against this hard and insuperable truth.

Next, we note that a sceptical or objective historian need hardly deny that nineteen hundred years ago one Jesus lived, that he preached, taught, provoked the Jerusalem authorities, was executed by

them, after which his followers were scattered. Macquarrie hints as much, (op. cit., p. 93 f.), when he points out that nowadays Christ-myth theories, (theories holding that there never actually was any such person as Jesus), are left with hardly an advocate, except those who are really political and ideological propagandists. Macquarrie claims that the Gospel writers were not indifferent to objective historical factuality by pointing to the "plain factual assertion about the past" that " ... In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea.....&tc." (in Lk. 3:1 f.). * Now this, I feel, no historian worth his salt would dream of denying. For to deny this is surely to sink to the level of the propagandist who is so prejudiced that he would assert that no Jesus of Nazareth ever lived! But ^{it} is not without significance that these words from Lk. 3:1 f. contain no offence. That is, they certainly anchor something empirically within history, but they certainly do not proclaim Jesus' link with the Father, they do not assert that in him the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, or that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself (II Cor. 5:19).

The whole point about the ~~lives~~^{life} of Jesus in the Gospels is surely that they are bluntly ~~biographical~~^{un-}biographical -----

* Op. cit., pps. 94-95.

they are not for instance interested in Jesus' personal appearance, in his family background and heredity, in his inner psychological development, points of **great** import to the biographer or the novelist ----- but rather that they are kerygmatic. That is, above all else they proclaim Jesus' intimate link with God, that they challenge man to believe that the career of the Son is meaningless without the presence and power of the Father; in short, that his life was transparent to God.

If this is the hard core of the life of Jesus, then the crux of the matter is here: can we be assured objectively that this really did happen in the past? Now it does seem to me that Macquarrie can be interpreted as implying that we can. He seems to suggest that before we can go on to assume the fruits of the life of Christ into our own existences, we must be assured that we are not chasing after a chimera; that is, we must be assured that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (op. cit., pps. 93, 101), that "this kind of life was concretely manifested" and that "there really was this kind of person" (op. cit., pps. 97 and 95 respectively), that "there was someone who once exhibited in history the possibility of existence which the kerygma proclaims" (op. cit., p. 93).

On the face of it, there does not seem to be anything particularly unreasonable about these demands. But on a second examination, my difficulty with these demands is this. If we can be objectively assured of these things apart from and prior to our own existential participation or appropriation, it seems to me that God and the action

of God must lie open and plain upon the face of history, available to any academic historian. For when Macquarrie introduces the concept 'Word' into the discussion he simultaneously introduces the concept 'God', for the point about the Word is that it is the 'Word of God'. Similarly, when he uses the concepts 'kind of life', 'kind of person', he again implies the concept 'God'; for surely the type of life displayed by Jesus is one in which although he possessed full humanity, his unity with God was not broken. Again, when he introduces the concept 'possibility of existence' he again simultaneously introduces the concept 'God'; because Jesus' type of existence was one in which the ambiguities and temptations of a fleshly existence were overcome, just because the ground of Jesus' existence was God, or the power of God! And it is in these things that Jesus' existence was significant and unique, in his unique link with and manifestation of God.

When we see this clearly, we must immediately ask: can the objective historian assure us, before our Christian appropriation takes place, or before we actually hear and respond to the kerygma, that there actually was a life in which God was manifested, in which God had revealed his power active in the production of a 'certain type' of existence? Now I do not think that he can; this is my difficulty in finding an objective-empirical assurance of the type Macquarrie seems to want.

Surely the objective historian cannot perceive these things because of his scientific methodology alone. If he asserts that he is able to perceive them in his assessment of the past events

recorded in the Gospels, then surely he does so only because he has already decided that in the Jesus proclaimed in the kerygma the power of God was indeed manifested, as Tillich would express it, in overcoming an old type of existence (old being) and replacing it with a new kind of being (New Being).

I repeat, only because the historian has decided. For it is clear to me that concepts like 'God' or the 'power of God' are not universally available to historical methodology as such, but only to the decision of Christian faith. Other 'explanations', (or we might say rationalizations), of the life of Jesus than 'God' are possible (or the presence or power of God); so also are other explanations why the evangelists wrote this or wrote that, or ascribed this or that to Jesus. Our decision in faith may of course prevent us from accepting these, but this does not mean that objectivity is not left behind. If this scientific objectivity is ruled out, then it seems also that the 'empirical anchor' for which Macquarrie pleads (op. cit., p. 95) is denied us. So it does seem again that however **unsatisfactory** and subjective Bultmann's position seems to be, we must come back to it if we wish to utilize the existentialist attitude to history. I say this because I suspect that if we ~~were~~ to accept an empirical anchor of the type Macquarrie seeks, this might almost completely invalidate the four existentialist propositions which Macquarrie has given us (op. cit., pps. 81-88). These four seem to me to hang together logically, and I find it hard to see how we can logically go along with them so far, and then draw a limit, paying them off when embarrassing, much in the same way as we pay off a no longer necessary taxi-driver. For I suspect that scientific objectivity, and the

historical methodology which it implies, are in the last analysis incompatible with the existentialist approach to history. An empirical anchor, fixing a Jesus of Nazareth of some kind or another in the history of the past, is not likely to be denied us, I think, by the so-called objective historian, however sceptical he may be. But in placing the 'historical factuality' of Jesus beyond all reasonable doubt, such a historian, I feel, has done very little indeed for the kerygma. For the Kerygma is interested in a Jesus in whom God is manifest, in a Jesus whose life is transparent to the Father, in a Jesus whose existence is maintained by the power of God. But this can never be approached objectively, but only by faith, by decision, by personal participation. Surely Paul Tillich is right when he writes (Sys.Theol., I, p. 151), "The being of Jesus as the Christ is determined in every moment by God. In all his utterances, words, deeds, and sufferings he is transparent to that which he represents as the Christ, the divine mystery. While the Synoptic Gospels emphasise the active ~~maintenance~~ of this unity against demonic attacks, the Fourth Gospel emphasises the basic unity between Jesus and the 'Father'. In the Epistles the victory of the unity over against the powers of separation is presupposed, though sometimes the toil and burden of this battle is indicated. However, it is never a moral, intellectual, or emotional quality which makes him the bearer of the final revelation. According to the witness of the whole New Testament and, by anticipation, also of many passages of the Old Testament, it is the presence of God in him which makes him the Christ. His words, his deeds, and his sufferings are consequences of this presence; they are expressions of the New Being which is his

being".

It should now be clear that in attacking Bultmann's position from three directions, those of Tillich, Owen, and Macquarrie, that these three lines in the last analysis converge, and give the appearance of a single attack. For it is clear that in their own ways, and with their own terminologies, all three writers are really demanding the same thing --- some kind of objective norm derived from an historical knowledge of the Jesus of the past. They do this, I think, because of the radical and seemingly dangerous 'subjectivity' of a historical position like Bultmann's. But it should be equally clear from our examination of their criticisms that it is, to say the least of it, extremely difficult to suggest an alternative view --- to suggest an objective norm or criterion from an examination of the past which could judge and control and stabilize and criticize our own hearing of and response to the kerygma. But more important still, it is hard not to conclude that if an objective basis for Christian belief is sought out with the kerygma, the significance and value of faith in God is violated, the existential relevance of the Christian faith greatly diminished, and the whole existentialist approach to Christianity as an historical religion perilously undermined.

We have given so much space to this discussion because upon it depends the validity of Bultmann's views on meaning in history, and the validity of his notion that Jesus Christ becomes present again and again as eschatological event in preaching and in the sacraments.

The point that we have reached is that God's decisive event happens again and again. This eschatological event is not generally perceived and objectively apparent, but is a highly personal concrete experience or encounter which happens in a 'moment' of time.^x This 'moment', so integral to Bultmann's theology, as it was to Kierkegaard's thought, is, and this is the central conviction of this thesis, basic to an understanding of Bultmann's theological project, and much other existentialist theology besides. There is hardly a concept so common in Bultmann's writings. As a concept, it is of course not confined to Bultmann. We know that it is to be found in the works of Hamann,^{xxx} who was a potent influence on Kierkegaard, in whose thought the concept is of course absolutely basic and indispensable. One of Kierkegaard's motives in writing the Philosophical Fragments, (as we shall see in the chapter on his thought), was to introduce the concept, the 'Moment', into thought and theology. The word occupies an important place in the ontology of Martin Heidegger in his Sein und Zeit (Tübingen 1927, 6th edition 1949). And since it is acknowledged that Bultmann is philosophically indebted to Heidegger, we should keep this fact in mind throughout our discussion of Bultmann's use of the word. According to Dr. Macquarrie^{xxx}, the Augenblick in Heidegger is the 'authentic present' in which there is disclosed the past

^{xx}"We cannot demonstrate to anyone that God's revelation is there in Jesus Christ", Bultmann, Essays, p. 113.

^{xxx}See "J.G. Hamann", by R. Gregor Smith, London 1960.

^{xxxx}in An Existentialist Theology, London 1955, pps. 194 f.

(in the sense of facticity) and the future. The Augenblick is a moment of decision, and in the resolve to which he is called by conscience, man's past, present, and future are brought together, and his self is unified. This concept, the moment, is also to be found in the thought of Martin Buber (see chapter III), and also in the thought of Karl Heim, who has been strongly influenced by Buber. As for Kierkegaard (a detailed discussion of whose views we will reserve until chapter IV), we may say at this point that it was the 'momentless' of his age which he truly dreaded. As Mr. H.J. Blackham^{*} says of him, "Kierkegaard had the vision of the tendency of the age which reached its limit in an unlimited panorama of abstract infinity, unrelieved by even the slightest interest, a sea of desert". If we apply these words to the temporal process in particular, the same words might have been written of Bultmann.

We must now make a few preliminary remarks about Bultmann's use of the word 'moment' itself. In his earlier Marburg essays, the word Augenblick is placed within quotation-marks, as though he were aware that he was using it in a quite special sense, (cf. Kierkegaard: in both Philosophical Fragments and Concluding Unscientific Postscript the word Moment is printed with a capital letter). But when we move from, say,

^{*} Six Existentialist Thinkers, London 1952, p. 34

a 1931 Marburg essay to his Gifford Lectures^{*} of 1955, it is interesting to find the word unquoted, as though in the intervening period he had worked it thoroughly into the context of his thought, as though it had won a familiar place there.

It is interesting to find in the Gifford Lectures^{**} that Bultmann has given a lightning-sketch of historiography where he distinguishes sharply between thinkers who are aware of this crucial present, the moment, and those who are not; he shows approval of those who do, and disapproval of those who do not. In his works there is, of course, a whole complex of terms closely linked with the moment, such as 'here and now', encounter, 'from time to time', concrete event, 'again and ever again', repeatedly, and so on.^{***} Naturally our discussion will concern these terms too.

Our method in this chapter will be to select some of the more typical and important usages of this concept, the "moment", in the works of Bultmann from his essays of the early nineteen thirties down to his recent works such as the Gifford Lectures and his Jesus Christ and Mythology (London 1960); we shall classify them by arranging them^{*} History and Eschatology, Edinburgh 1957.

^{**} in chapters IX and X.

^{***} One interesting and important synonym for the moment is the 'now', discussed in Kerygma and Myth, edited H.W. Bartsch, E.T., London 1953, pps. 114-116.

under categories, which will have the additional advantage of making comparisons between Bultmann and other thinkers easier. If we do this, the following categorization would seem to be demanded by the material before us.

(1) IN THE MOMENT COMES SELF-UNDERSTANDING AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

Bultmann, agreeing with his former Marburg colleague, romance philologist Erich Auerbach,^{*} says that the whole of personal life can be contained in a 'moment'. This reality is formed subconsciously and results from the sum total of all our experiences, our hopes, our tentative interpretations of our life^{***} and its encounters. This reality is not a metaphysical substance, (Bultmann rejects any interpretation of human existence in terms of substance). Although formed apart from consciousness, it may attain to consciousness in 'moments' of reflection. Here we have a 'moment' in which comes self-knowledge through reflection, (History and Eschatology, pps. 107-8).

^{*}See Auerbach's MIMESIS : Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur, Bern 1946; Eng. Transl., MIMESIS : The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, Princeton 1954. See especially his last chapter where Auerbach discusses such modern realist writers as Proust and Virginia Woolff.

^{***}It is hardly necessary to point out that for Bultmann our interpretations of life remain always tentative; for him it is axiomatic that we are always 'on the way'. Our self-understanding needs repeated correction from fresh encounters.

Bultmann also holds that in the 'moment' we become conscious that being is an unknown quantity, but it is only in the 'moment' that we have this knowledge; we can neither retain nor possess it (Essays, p. 7). Behind Bultmann's view here is very probably the conviction that for most of our time we 'read off' the nature of being, the nature of our being, from our experience of other people. Thus, for us most of the time being is not an unknown quantity at all, because we simply conceive our being as a concrete example of the general rule --- human nature in general. There is no doubt in the minds of most of the existentialists as to the invalidity of this procedure. It is in the 'moment' that we are made aware of this fallacy --- in it we are given a glimpse of the mysterious quality of being; we see that it is not something we have as a lasting possession; it is 'ever before us'.

For it is the 'moment' that reveals our existence as one threatened by insecurity; in the 'moment' insecurity breaks in upon a man (Essays, p. 8). The same contrast as above presents itself. Most of our time is spent upon building up a certain security. In our world security seems a good and desirable thing. It takes various forms --- social (politics and economics), emotional (stoicism and the techniques we employ to prevent dialogue and encounter), intellectual (acceptance of ideologies and thought-systems constructed by others), moral (strict duty-doing and conformity to established norms of behaviour and attitude), religious (pious formalities and lip-service subconsciously designed to keep the Unknown at bay). Thus we can see the relevance of Bultmann's view. Our fortifications are pierced from time to time by the occur-

/occurrence of the 'moment' which discloses to us our inner insecurity. Insecurity, the disclosure of the unknown quantity of being, is not in Bultmann's view something which must be excluded at all costs, but something that belongs to the 'essence' (if we may use such a question-begging term in an existential^{ist} context) of existence, something that makes human existence truly human. Thus again the 'moment' is one of self-knowledge.

Because the 'moment' is one of self-knowledge, it is a commonplace to read in Bultmann that in it man can either lose or gain his real (genuine, authentic)* existence (Essays, p. 17). Without the moment we remain sunk in ignorance of the basic insecurity of human existence. " ... The genuine life of man", writes Bultmann, "is always before him; it is always to be apprehended, to be realised" (History and Eschatology, p. 140). " ... The future is open in so far as it brings the gain or loss of our genuine life, and thereby gives to our present its character as moment of decision" (op. cit., p. 141). Nor is the moment of self-knowledge a different one from the eschatological moment

*German, eigentlich; this is an Heideggerian category. So is self-understanding, Selbstverständnis. They have been discussed in Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology, pps.39 and 65-6.

in which God discloses himself to man in Christ. For Christian faith is itself a self-understanding. The gift of faith is also simultaneously an understanding of the self. For Bultmann then, existential self-understanding is something that a man cannot learn in the abstract. He can only learn it here and now in the moments of encounter (Kerygma and Myth, p. 203).

(2) WHAT COMES IN THE MOMENT CAN BE GRASPED BUT NOT POSSESSED.

Bultmann quotes Gogarten with approval to the effect that 'sonship' (relative to God) is not a quality naturally and universally possessed by man qua man, but something that man can only grasp again and again in 'moments'. Sonship is the goal of history, and for this reason must happen within history and **nowhere** else (History and Eschatology, pps. 153-4).^{*} Bultmann is quite clear in his theology as a whole that we can never have knowledge of God as a lasting possession or as a permanent insight (see Essays, p. 7). Rather this knowledge has to make its way against temptations from within man's being, which give him the illusion of being master of his own destiny. Therefore Bultmann

^{*}According to Bultmann of course the specific paradox of the Christian doctrine of history is that the end or goal of history has already happened within history. Thus this doctrine is offensive because it does not think of history as linear and progressive.

views the sphere of human existence as a battlefield in constant motion and turmoil, between the 'momentary' disclosure on the one hand, and elements from within existence on the other, which oppose it and try to stifle it.

Bultmann gives a list (see Essays, pps. 7 f.), to which we can add from elsewhere in his works^{*} of elements in existence which can easily become opponents of the insights of the 'moment'. This list is as follows. The cares of daily life; Bultmann's view here probably is that there is nothing essentially evil or inauthentic about everyday cares. They are indispensable to life in the world. Everyone takes on worldly responsibility, of work, family, earning a living, of security for one's dependants. Thus we have in the teaching of Jesus, " ... your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things" (Mt.6:32). The cares of daily life are in fact dialectical^{*} in nature.

^{*}According to Bultmann, the relationship of the believer to the world is always dialectical. Worldly things are necessary, but the believer's attitude is to be as though he was in fact not immersed in them, so that genuine eschatological existence is a possibility. These things are not to assume an importance which thwarts the believer's eschatological life before God. Hence we have Bultmann's fondness for St. Paul's description of life in I Cor.7:29 f. as the life of "...one who participates in the life of the world but does so with an inner aloofness --- 'as if (he did it)not'"; (Theology of the New Testament, pps.351-2). For references to the believer living authentically as 'one who.....but yet as if not', see Essays, pps. 86, 112, 150, 154, 181, 228, 270; also Theology of the New Testament, I, pps. 182, 240. These references all refer primarily to I Cor. 7:29 f. This^{*} undoubtedly one of the keys to understanding Bultmann's views on history as eschatological existence. And it underlies the above discussion on the potentially inauthentic elements in daily life.

Inseparable^a as they are from human life, and good in their place, when a man becomes so immersed in them that the 'moment' cannot break through, they become evil and give rise to inauthentic existence. Another such element is 'wishes'. Another is 'plans'. Plans are concrete orderings of the future without which life in the world would become impossible. Like cares, plans are dialectical; they may or may not exclude the 'moment', they may allow or forbid the possibility of authentic existence. 'Crazes' are listed by Bultmann, so are 'pleasures', which give rise to an unending circle of pleasures. The existentialist in Bultmann becomes apparent when he lists false forms of community, living together. These become inauthentic when they overcome genuine freedom and isolation. There may be an echo here of Heidegger, who has demonstrated the constitution of human existence by the voice of the impersonal mass of human beings, das Man.^{*} The 'moment' would seem to presuppose a certain degree of reservation and independence^{***} where the person is not sunk in the mass,^{***} where he can be aware of the nuances of truly personal existence. And of course all existentialist thinkers are aware of this tension, potential or actual, between person and society, person and community. 'Action and Work' are listed too by Bultmann. A false emphasis on these would seem to overcome that certain passivity, recept-

^{*}See Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology, p. 91.

^{***}"Real belief lies in the preservation of detachment in the actual concrete situations of life --- a detachment which makes decision and action of real import, because in it man thinks and acts as a free agent", Bultmann, Essays, p. 10.

^{***}For a typical existentialist treatment of the dangers of false forms of community, see Karl Jaspers, The Individual and Mass Society, in Religion and Culture, (essays in honour of Paul Tillich), London 1959, pps. 37 f. Cf. Jaspers, Man in the Modern Age, London 1951, pps. 40f.

/receptivity which the 'moment' presupposes. Thus work is also dialectical in nature, capable of being regarded as an end and not a means, and capable of becoming evil. 'Moralistic security through duty-doing' is also condemned by Bultmann. By our fulfilment of the demands of a code we build up a defence against the intrusion of a crisis into our existence, against a moment of guilt, judgement, cleansing, and renewal.*

Another element listed by Bultmann in this connection is a false belief in God (see Essays, pps. 8 f.). This is a well-constructed belief, or as Bultmann prefers to call it throughout his works, a Weltanschauung, with which one is armed against the demands of the 'moment'. But real belief in God, to the contrary, and we shall return to this subject often again in these pages, is achieved in the

*Cf. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, I, p. 264: "... man's effort to achieve his salvation by keeping the Law only leads him into sin, indeed this effort itself in the end is already sin ... Sin is man's self-powered striving to undergird his own existence in forgetfulness of his creaturely existence, to procure his salvation by his own strength". "The way of works of the law and the way of grace and faith are mutually exclusive". "... through the Law man is led into sinning".

'moment' and only in the 'moment'. Another element is self-will, which sets itself up against the intrusion of God into life. As we have said, Bultmann thinks of the sphere of existence as a battlefield, and in this instance the battle cause is 'not what I will, but what thou wilt' (Essays, p. 7).^{*} Extreme suffering can also oppose the 'moment' and this insight is discussed in section (8) of this chapter.

As we have seen, the disclosure of the 'moment' always involves a self-understanding. This also, says Bultmann, cannot be possessed or retained. This is because our apprehension of the self-understanding depends upon our understanding of the imperative involved by it in the concrete situation (Kerygma and Myth, p. 204). Here we have an **analogy**. The analogy is between the interpersonal encounter on the one hand and the God-man encounter on the other. Thus the self-understanding to be gained in the 'moment' is compared by Bultmann to that understanding given in the encounter with another in love and trust. This latter, we know, can only be kept pure and fresh by the concrete

^{*}It is, I think, crucial to grasp this element in Bultmann's thought that emphasises that there is constantly going on in man a conflict between authenticity and inauthenticity. Behind Bultmann's whole view of the 'moment' is the conviction that the knowledge of and the belief in God "... has to keep on making its way in the face of all temptations which continually arise out of man's being..." (Essays, p. 7). This is exactly analogous to the conflict which we shall analyse in chapter III in the thought of Buber --- the battle which follows from the intrusion of the 'Thou' into the It-world, which says Buber, is covered by a 'crust'. See chapter III.

connection with the other being maintained. If it be severed, it is only a matter of time until the understanding vanishes. In similar fashion, our existential self-understanding depends on our repeated encounter with the Word of God which relates us to God in Christ. Thus Bultmann is fond of quoting "His compassions fail not, they are new every morning", as an invitation to man concretely to relate himself to God again and again (Kerygma and Myth, p. 204). Here then we have another reason why the knowledge of God and of one's self cannot be retained or possessed. Unlike other (conceptual or scientific) knowledge, this knowledge depends for its survival upon a concrete historical act of the whole man. Thus man's supreme ethical counsel is to relate himself in this way or to open himself towards relation; temptations are continually rising out of man's own being militating against the fulfilment of this counsel. Thus this existential knowledge cannot be possessed or retained. It can only be momentarily glimpsed insofar as man overcomes considerable temptations and immerses his total being in history, orientating it towards being over against himself.

Bultmann's views here on revelation and knowledge will cause many searching questions to be asked, and many doubts to be raised. Is it true that what comes in the 'moment' cannot be possessed or retained? For example, classical theology, both Protestant and Catholic, have emphasised a deepening of awareness, of spirituality; in short, that there is a certain 'progress' in the Christian life. But if we take Bultmann's views seriously, it seems as though after a 'moment' has occurred, there is dire danger of relapse into the 'status quo ante'. What, it may be asked, is the value of a 'moment', of an experience, if,

after it has passed, there is little or nothing of it to be retained ? In other words, can there be much value in a purely 'momentary' insight or awareness ? Another objection is possible. If it be granted that there are significant 'moments' in existence in which disclosures are made to us, what is the connection between these disclosures and memory ? We can remember, can we not, what was disclosed to us in the 'moment' ? If not, what possible significance can it have ? And here is yet another objection. There are experiences through which men pass to emerge altered.* It is for this reason that we have the phrase 'the discipline of suffering'. Is it not this that lies behind the Apostle's question to the Galatians 'Have ye suffered so many things in vain ?' (Gal.3:4)? In short, is the value of the 'moment' not to be doubted because it seems transitory and evanescent ? It is to these questions and to this type of objection that we must now address ourselves.

Our method shall be this. First, we shall enquire if Bultmann's view of revelation and revelatory knowledge is so peculiar, and if not, where similar views may be found. Second, we shall take up the question of the communication between the Church and world, and

* Cf. II Cor. 11:24 f.

enquire whether Bultmann's view does not mean that the Church cannot validly communicate its ethical and social insights. Then third, we shall examine the place of memory in theology and in the Christian life.

First, is Bultmann's view of revelation and revelatory knowledge so peculiar; if not, where can we find similar views? We may begin by looking at Paul Tillich's discussion of revelation, trying to show how similar his view is to that of Bultmann.* Tillich refuses to allow any separation between revelation and salvation. Revelation comes in the presence of a salvatory power which shakes, transforms, and heals (Sys. Theol., I, p. 143). "Revelation mediates knowledge --- a knowledge, however, which can be received only in a revelatory situation" (op. cit., p. 143). This revelatory situation he defines as 'through ecstasy and miracle'. Bluntly, " ... the knowledge of revelation cannot

*At various points in this thesis comparisons are made between Tillich and Bultmann, in which close similarities are indicated. Thus we do try to show that both of them belong to the 'existentialist tradition'. But this is actually a half-truth. For we must recognize that there is a vast divergence as well as a great similarity between Tillich and Bultmann. The relation between these two thinkers will be dealt with in our concluding chapter, but at this stage, we may make the following comments. Bultmann is an existentialist. Tillich cannot be called an existentialist without strict reservation. There are, I am convinced, two strands in Tillich, the ontological and the existentialist. Thus, from the point of view of the second strand, Tillich does make use of existentialist analyses, and is aware of the great contribution that existentialist thought can make to theology. Thus we find him throughout both volumes of his Systematic Theology using the concepts of concrete revelatory event and encounter. But it is strictly this second (existentialist) strand in the thought of Tillich that we are discussing and utilizing in the discussion to follow. But we ought not therefore to forget the first, the ontological Tillich, which we shall encounter and with which we shall compare the existentialist Tillich in our concluding chapter, q.v.

be separated from the situation of revelation" (Syst. Theol., p. 143). Tillich means that the knowledge so gained is not analogical to our other knowledge, say, of the natural world. We are therefore prohibited from simply adding this piece of knowledge to our other pieces of knowledge^x (so that, for example, in certain circumstances our items of knowledge gained through revelation could contradict items gained in scientific research). Our revelatory knowledge gains its validity from the ecstatic situation through which it was given. It follows of course from this that the knowledge gained through ecstasy and miracle, in contrast with our knowledge of nature, is generally and universally incommunicable. It can be grasped only by those who have themselves participated in this ecstatic-miraculous situation. Since revelatory knowledge comes through ~~a~~ shaking-ecstatic-miraculous situations, the nearer we are to them temporally, the more we grasp the knowledge such situations convey. And the converse is also true.^{xx} Thus Tillich says, "Knowledge of revelation is knowledge about the revelation of the mystery of being to us, not information about the nature of beings and their relation to one another" (Syst. Theol., I, p. 143). Here we are reminded of a celebrated statement of Kierkegaard, to the effect that "No knowledge can have as its object the absurdity that the eternal is historical --- the object of faith is not the teaching but the

^xBuber terms these 'items of information'; see our discussion of Buber in chapter III.

^{xx}This is what lies behind Bultmann's conviction that knowledge of God and of ourselves depends on repeated encounter.

teacher" (Philosophical Fragments, transl. by David F. Swenson, Princeton 1936, p. 50). Thus for both Tillich and Kierkegaard, revelation does not mean abstractable, propositional, and possessable knowledge which one can retain permanently and communicate universally, but knowledge of the way in which God, the Other, comes to us; that is, in and through our time and history, through ecstasy and miracle, through a temporal condition granted by God himself(Kierkegaard). Thus revelation is always knowledge of our historicity.

It is from this point of view that Tillich criticizes another widely held view of revelation, namely that one that makes revelation an ecclesiastical propositional commodity, imposable by authority (Syst. Theol., I, p. 161).[¶] The point about such ecclesiastical authority is that it causes a separation between the revelatory event and those who are asked to receive it.^{¶¶} Tillich points out that these ecclesiastical authorities are opposed to the participation of believers in the situation, and in so acting they are handling revelation as though it were their property! Presumably it would be Tillich's view that the office of ecclesiastical authority is to point men to their historicity, and to those conditions within their history under which God discloses himself, rather than purvey information and propositions about divine

[¶]It will be clearly seen in **what follows** that Tillich's criticisms of ecclesiasticism are not unlike Kierkegaard's.

^{¶¶}In our concluding chapter we argue that the ecclesiastical over-emphasis on revelation may invalidate the truths of man's essential worldliness, historicity, and temporality.

matters by their authority. This would be ^{my} own view, though I should prefer to say that the Church's commission is to remind men of the 'momentary' character of their time, and to proclaim that God can only be met with in and through their time and history.

What ought not to be forgotten is that if it is held that revelation is information which could be abstracted from the situation, transmitted, communicated generally, and even imposed, then the 'moment' in which we received this information would be secondary, only relative in importance to the information which it conveys. But since the XXth. century revolt against the XIXth. century liberal view of history^{*}, it is very doubtful indeed if this is possible.

Kierkegaard, discussing the question of what a contemporary of Christ might do for one of his successors (Philosophical Fragments, pps. 86 f.), gives a suggestive description of what this service might be. All that he could do is to state, 'I believe that so-and-so has taken place, although I know that it is a folly to the understanding and an offence to the human heart'. That is, without faith on the part of the listener, the related fact would be nonsensical. Belief, without the condition^{given} by God in the Moment, is impossible.

^{*}See our discussion of XIXth. century liberalism in the Introduction and in the concluding chapter.

Here again we see that revelation is not information or propositions directly and generally communicable. In much the same way, Tillich (Syst. Theol., I, p. 123) suggests that if an individual asserts that he has been grasped by a revelation, and if he wished to communicate the content of this, and if he were to try to communicate the content in general, the communication could only take the form of a report of what he asserts he has received. But, Tillich points out, he would fail to communicate the revelation, because he ^{who} could receive it as revelation would require himself to have been grasped by the revelation as well. We grasp mathematical or chemical knowledge, but Tillich's terminology reverses this order; he speaks of the 'power of revelation to grasp...' (Syst. Theol., I, p. 138). This brings out well the difference between the two types of knowledge. This power to grasp, says Tillich, is attributable to the Word of God, which is not a word of ordinary language, a word imparting information. Thus for (the existentialist) Tillich the content of revelation is not information, nor propositions, nor abstractions from the concrete situation, but is inextricably bound up with the situation, with the 'moment' itself. Thus for Tillich as for Bultmann what comes in the concrete experience can be grasped but not possessed.

Second, we go on to discuss the relationship between the Church and the world, and the form of communication possible between the one and the other. If it is true that what comes in the 'moment' is so non-possessable and incommunicable, what then about the Christian insights which the Church proclaims to the world? Can the Church not abstract these insights from concrete situations, write them, and print

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them, distributing them as the Church's witness in the affairs of the world. This is what the Church does in relation, to example, certain ethical spheres, such as war and disarmament, divorce, economic aggression and injustice, ~~and~~ race relations, and so-on. Are not these revelations in so far as they are meant to represent the will of God in relation to certain vital spheres of existence ?

H. Richard Niebuhr¹, in his book, The Meaning of Revelation (New York 1941, pps. 93 f.), defines revelation as "that part of our inner history which illuminates the rest of it and which is itself intelligible". He quotes Professor Whitehead, "Rational religion appeals to the direct intuition of special occasions and to the elucidatory power of its concepts for all occasions.....the special occasion to which we appeal in the Church is Jesus Christ. But from that special occasion we also derive the concepts which make possible the elucidation of all the events of our history". Niebuhr writes (op. cit., p. 94), "Revelation means the point at which we can begin to think and act as members of an intelligible and intelligent world of persons". He offers the following definition of revelation, "when we speak of revelation we mean that something has happened to us in our history which conditions all our thinking, and that through this happening we are enabled to apprehend what we are, what we are suffering and doing, and what our potentialities are" (op. cit. p. 138). The value of revelation is stated thus, "What is otherwise dumb fact becomes related, intelligible and eloquent fact through the revelatory event. To the extent that revelation furnishes the practical reason with an adequate starting-point it

may be said to be validated"(op. cit., p. 138). But so far very little has been said about the content of revelation. So, and perhaps most significantly of all, Niebhur defines that: "Revelation means God, God who discloses Himself to us through our history as our knower, our author, our judge and our only saviour" (op. cit., p. 152).

These are very impressive statements which will require careful consideration, because they do seem, on the face of it, to contradict in part at least the 'momentary', ecstatic-miraculous view of revelation which we have outlined above. One point had better be made clear at once. This doctrine of momentary revelation does not mean that all the events of our history are elucidated. We have (in the Introduction) already pointed out that many thinkers are impressed by what we have called the fragmentariness of history. That is, even though there are moments of revelation and elucidation, elements do remain which have a positive character of evil and of injustice, elements which do not have meaning and significance for God himself, and which cannot therefore be fitted into some over-all pattern. A thinker like McIntyre would hardly share Niebhur's confidence that the revelation we are given in history "make possible the elucidation of all the events in our history" (op. cit., p. 93). Just because Christianity finds meaning given in some events and not in others, it implies the fragmentariness of history.* It is not clear from Niebhur's discussion of revelation that

*Bultmann rigidly distinguishes his doctrine of history from that of pantheism, where, he says, "... the meaning and goal of history are to be seen in each successive moment" (Kerygma and Myth, p. 116).

he takes seriously this doctrine of fragmentariness.

And then secondly, I think the contradiction we have indicated on the previous page is only an apparent one --- it is actually based on an ambiguity in the use of the word 'revelation'. For there are, I think, two senses in which we can use it, and I should like to call these the primary and the secondary. In the primary sense, the word means the revelation by God of himself. This is the meaning that the word has in our above discussion of the views of Bultmann, Kierkegaard, and Tillich. This is the primary meaning of the word --- the disclosure by himself of God's nature in so far as that nature can be apprehended by the believer. In this primary meaning of the word, revelation is, of course, 'momentary' (Bultmann), ecstatic-miraculous-shaking (Tillich). Nieb^hur does in fact recognise this; he does so when he writes that "Revelation means God.....who discloses Himself to us through our history....."(op. cit., p. 152).

But there is also the secondary meaning of the word. This meaning refers to the fact that the revelation of God does have repercussions for our thinking and understanding and apprehending. God's disclosure of himself alters our relationship and attitude to the world around us. It does supply us with concepts and insights. Thus God's disclosure of himself has important consequences for us with regard to ethical and political and social subjects.* But we must understand that

*It is, I think, a fair criticism of Bultmann that he does not always draw this aspect of revelation out enough. He concerns himself almost wholly with revelation in the primary sense of the word. As we shall see in the concluding chapter, this causes difficulties when we come to examine his attitude, for example, to the church.

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these insights, these concepts, derive from the 'momentary' disclosure. They are parasitic upon and derivative from that experience, and are, as Tillich rightly insists, inseparable ultimately from it. Niebuhr is right when he says that "Revelation means God.....", but the thinking and the practical reason which he also mentions are strictly dependent upon the content of the revelatory event. I am convinced that the primary and the secondary meanings of the term 'revelation' must be kept strictly apart. Much theological confusion can result from failure to do so.

That Tillich recognizes this distinction there can be little doubt. He distinguishes between the 'Word of God' on the one hand, and 'information about divine matters' on the other (Syst. Theol., I, p. 138). Of this information Tillich points out that although it would be perhaps of ethical interest, or of cognitive interest, it would lack all the characteristics of revelation, which he holds to be the power to grasp, to shake, to transform (Syst. Theol., I, p. 138). Tillich succinctly defines his attitude to this matter thus: "If the Word as a medium of revelation is not information, it cannot be spoken apart from revelatory events in nature, history, and man" (op. cit., p. 138).

It follows from the above arguments that the correct procedure for the fulfilment of the Church's task is not to present ethical or social insights as her gospel, buttressed with apologetic material designed to show the reasonableness and efficiency of Christian insights

in practice.³ Rather the Church's task is to point men to the correlation in time which is revelatory (Tillich), to the occurrence of a 'moment' of disclosure in their time and history (Bultmann), which may yield an insight rich in quality, but which is not itself a mere insight. This is, I think, what existentialist theology has to say about the Church's proclamation to the world.

Third, let us turn to the argument from memory. Can it not be said that the value of a 'moment' is just that its content can be remembered by the experiencing subject? Surely what is disclosed is not so evanescent that it vanishes immediately from memory after the conclusion of the 'moment'? In order to answer these questions, let us examine what three thinkers have to say about history and memory; first, John McIntyre (The Christian Doctrine of History, Edinburgh 1957, pps. 104 f., History and Memory), then Kierkegaard, and then Bultmann.

According to McIntyre, (op. cit., pps. 104 f.), there are, roughly, three functions exercised by memory in regard to history.

The first is that it affords a man transcendence over the temporal flux,

³See a book like L.H. Marshall's The Challenge of New Testament Ethics, London 1950, which seems to be little more than a commendation of the teachings of Jesus with regard to their efficiency in building up a sound and happy society. But the effect of such liberalism soon becomes apparent. Thus, the Soviet Union between the wars took a similar line to Jesus with regard to sex and divorce from motives of political common-sense and expediency, while despising Christian theism. This is the direct effect of separating primary and secondary revelation.

enabling him to survey this past,* enabling him especially to perceive the necessity exercised by the past, and thus his partly, at least, determined future: moreover, memory enables a man to see that the past did not happen with the force of necessity, and thus in the present memory (in Dr. Niebuhr's phrase) serves as the 'fulcrum of freedom for man in history'.^{xxx} The second function of memory in relation to history, according to McIntyre, is that memory supplies man generally with an enormous mass of accumulated wisdom and information. Here there is wide gulf between the thought of McIntyre and the thought of Bultmann. With this kind of interpretation Bultmann will certainly have nothing to do! If this view is held, then the theology of encounter would seem to have been left far behind. This is a liberal view of revelation, a separation being made between what is disclosed and the disclosure-event. We have already seen that the validity of the former depends on experience of the latter, of the 'moment'. And revelation does not consist of information. Existentialist theology does not mean by this

*This is admitted by Bultmann --- "In so far as the history from which I come is operative in my past, the recollection of that history also belongs thereto". Also, "Of course memory plays an important part in human life, but it has existential significance only when I make my own particular past present through recollection", Kerygma and Myth, p. 115, Bultmann to Schniewind in a discussion of memory.

^{xxx}It was of course Kierkegaard who pointed out that recollection and examination of the past has value in demonstrating that the past 'happened', but by happening, by coming into being, showed that it did not need to happen. The study of history is thus for Kierkegaard the study of change. We shall take this up again in chapter IV on Kierkegaard where we shall examine the work of Barbara Ward; it will also be discussed in our concluding chapter.

that we ought to ignore past written wisdom, but it does mean, as we shall see when we come to look at Bultmann's view of memory, that what we encounter in past writings is not informative wisdom in the abstract, but a person from whose experience the 'wisdom' is distilled and recorded. That is to say, this second point of McIntyre's does not seem to me to be sufficiently aware that the interpretation of past documents and records involves in the last analysis an intersubjective encounter.*

The third function of memory in relation to history made by McIntyre is that memory supplies man in general and the Christian in particular with the mighty acts through which faith is created, this memory in concrete terms being the Bible. There is here obviously an even wider gulf apparent between this kind of view-point and the whole theology of Bultmann. For Bultmann totally rejects the view which holds that our relationship to biblical events depends on memory. Writing to Schniewind in the Entmythologisierung debate, Bultmann says: "I cannot regard the reproduction of the events of the years 1 - 30 as the equivalent of the eschatological encounter".** This is because memory "... in so far as it reproduces facts of the past in their purely worldly actuality ... can imperil and even destroy 'historic' existence, as Nietzsche

*This is, as we shall see in chapter III one of the corner-stones of Buber's doctrine of man's relation to the past through written records. Nor should we fail to hear in it a clear and direct echo from the philosophy of Dilthey.

**Kerygma and Myth, p. 115.

showed in Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben....."^x

Bultmann rejects this point of view because if accepted, it would invalidate and make redundant his whole notion of encounter. For memory, in the ordinary sense, recalls past events in their external factuality and thus **attempts** to see past history 'wie es eigentlich gewesen'. This^{is} partly what Bultmann means by 'events in their purely worldly actuality'. Ordinary memory tries to see **an** event 'scientifically', that is, in its interconnections with other events in the world, or as one of a causal series. Bultmann holds that these events cannot be the concern of the theologian simply because memory, thus understood, can try to recall them without the process of existential encounter occurring. Bultmann's positive view of memory we shall attempt to approach from the standpoint of Kierkegaard's teaching on the theological significance of memory.

We shall deal with Kierkegaard's view of the Moment in greater detail in chapter IV. It suffices therefore to say here that for Kierkegaard the decisive Moment of existence is one of disclosure of the Paradox, that is, God in temporal form. But God is thus perceived only because He himself grants the necessary condition. But the disclosure is such, says Kierkegaard, that the learner, the believer, " ... will never be able to forget the Teacher",^{xx} that is, God himself, the content

^xop. cit., p. 115.

^{xx}Philosophical Fragments, pps. 12-13.

of the Moment. To forget the Teacher, says Kierkegaard, means that man returns to his former state, that is, the state preceding the New Birth. The condition was a 'trust' for which the learner would always be required to render an account. Thus the learner must completely 'appropriate the condition', and 'profoundly apprehend the Truth'.^x

Now the main point about Kierkegaard's view of memory is that the truth remembered by the learner is not mere 'insights', or concepts, nor mere information about divine matters, but God himself, originally disclosed in the Moment. Kierkegaard is clear about this: "When the Teacher is gone from the disciple in death, memory may bring his figure before him; but it is not on this account that the disciple believes, but because he received the condition from God, and hence is enabled to see, in memory's trustworthy image, the person of God".^{xxx} Nothing could be plainer; in the Moment the believer encounters the person and presence of God; memory then functions existentially in mediating a re-encounter with the same God as actuality. It is from this Kierkegaardian view that we now examine Bultmann's view of memory.^{xxx} The core of Bultmann's position is that memory, properly and existentially understood, so penetrates past events recorded in documents, that

^xPhilosophical Fragments, pps. 12-13

^{xxx}op. cit., p. 53.

^{xxxx}As we shall see in chapter IV on Kierkegaard, Bultmann's doctrine of the 'moment' is, in many respects, derivative from that of Kierkegaard.

what is met with is not an external happening in a world of happenings, but the interpretation of it, and the interpreter's understanding of existence as a challenging possibility for my own life.[✱] Thus for Bultmann the proper function of memory is to reproduce past events in such a way that they always have existential relevance for me in that they confront me with a decision for or against a certain understanding of my own personal existence. Thus the theological or religious function of memory is not to remember the physical attributes or interrelations of happenings like an earthquake or a motor-car accident, but always involves the process of interpersonal encounter on the level of the understanding of existence.

This is the core of Bultmann's position on the theological function of memory. Is it the right one? At least this can be said for it. It does seem to be a Christian one, that is, produced by the proper interpretation of biblical events. Thus, it is undeniable that the proper attitude to take up to the record of a biblical event is not sheer **surprise** or mere interest. If I read the story, for example, of St. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus^{✱✱}, the proper response

[✱] Bultmann to Schniewind: " ... the historian's personal encounter with the past ... takes place not by his reproducing the events of the past in memory, but by his encountering **in those** events of the past (as his own history) human existence and its interpretation The recollection of the kerygma ... as a sacramental event ... re-presents the events of the past in such a way that it renews them, and thus becomes a personal encounter for me", Kerygma and Myth, p. 115.

^{✱✱} Acts 9:1 f.

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for me to make is obviously not to be stunned by the un-naturalness of the account, nor to try to conjure up again the event as it might well have appeared to an onlooker, but obviously to so enter into the narrative, that sharing Saul's existential attitude to Christianity, I may also hear the Lord's voice speaking to me demanding of me decision for an understanding of myself as a creature of God and a follower of Christ. It is for these reasons that Bultmann will have nothing to do with any theory of memory which indicates that its function is merely to reproduce the past 'wie es eigentlich gewesen'; within such a view there is little room for encounter and the 'moment'. It is certainly because of his great loyalty to the notion of encounter that Bultmann insists on interpreting memory in this existential way. Thus he writes to Schniewind, "I am deliberately renouncing any form of encounter with a phenomenon of past history in order to encounter the Christ proclaimed in the kerygma, which confronts me in my historic situation".*

It is now time to **recapitulate**. Our starting-point in this section was Bultmann's view that what comes in the 'moment' can be grasped but not possessed or retained. We have examined some of the sources of this, and concluded that the doctrine will raise criticism and doubts. In order to see what lies behind the doctrine we have proceeded in four ways. First, we saw the large part played in its

* Kerygma and Myth, p. 117.

production by Bultmann's analysis of human existence as the sphere in which authenticity was constantly challenged by dialectical elements which, although inseparable from life in the world, yet contained the possibility of becoming inauthentic and evil when man was so attached to and absorbed in them that the 'moment' has no chance of occurring. In face of this existential situation, man is obliged to maintain an inner independence or aloofness which recognized the secondary quality of these elements and their importance.* Second, we have seen that Bultmann's view of revelation as 'momentary' is not so peculiar; it is to be found in the work of other thinkers in the existentialist tradition; and in particular we looked at the thought of Kierkegaard and Tillich. There we found the extreme difficulty of separating off and making independently relevant the disclosed (as concepts or mere insights) from the disclosure-event. Third, we applied this to the business of the Church's witness in the world, and discovered that the main link between Church and world was not ethical or political or apologetic (in the bad sense of the word), but ~~was~~ kerygmatic. Fourthly, and finally, we enquired whether it was not possible to retain and possess revelation of God and the understanding of the self through memory. We compared John McIntyre's views on this with Kierkegaard's and Bultmann's and found it deficient in several

* Here again is the relevance of the understanding of man in I Cor. 7:29 f. in the thought of Bultmann.

directions. From an examination of memory as an existential function we saw that the 'content' of the revelatory 'moment' (as strictly personal) was such that by definition it could not be recollected in the usual way, and thus possessed and retained in anything like the same way as mathematical knowledge or chemical formulae could be remembered. Thus we concluded that revelatory 'information' could not be retained and possessed by means of memory --- although memory could mediate an encounter from which certain insights are derivative. All these factors then lie behind and are relevant to Bultmann's conviction that what comes in the 'moment' cannot be possessed and retained, and must be kept in mind when the doctrine is assessed or evaluated.

This doctrine is, as we shall see, a far-reaching and all-pervasive one in Bultmann's thought. We shall meet with it again; for example, when we come to deal with Bultmann's views on the 'Weltanschauung'. Then, after we have discovered Buber's and Kierkegaard's views on this same matter, we shall have to make a final assessment of it when we come to deal, in our conclusions, with the wider problem of propositional theology as a whole.

(3) THE 'MOMENT' IS ONE OF DECISION WHICH AUTHENTICALLY RELATES THE PAST TO THE FUTURE IN THE PRESENT.

We have already seen that the 'moment' is the decisive focal point, the fulcrum, between the past and the future. The 'moment' is decisive because it dislocates the determining causal connection between the past and the future. In the 'moment' we are called upon to decide whether we are to choose the meaning of the future, or simply allow the past to determine it for us.^x

The responsibility which fills the 'moment' is not only directed to the future, but also to the heritage of the past in the face of the future.^{xx} With reference to **decision**, Bultmann says that Christianity involves the concept of the voice of God --- a voice directed to a concrete being-in-the-world, and in time, which comes to him in the 'moment', demanding obedience, which requires decision and action, which in turn involve the preservation a certain detachment.^{xxx}

^x History and Eschatology, pps. 141-3.

^{xx} op. cit., p. 143.

^{xxx} Essays, pps. 9-10; cf. again the understanding of existence in I Cor. 7:29 f.

Such a decision cannot fall under the criticism of science (because it cannot be totally derived from the natural happening that may lie behind the occurrence of the 'moment'), and in it man can lose or gain his real existence.* As we have already seen, the Christian faith regards the 'moment' as the point at which an end is set to man's history as the old man, and the point at which begins man's history as a new man, a free man. The Christian faith regards this freedom of man from his old, inauthentic self, as the gift of God's grace, gifted only in the 'moment' of decision, and not a general immanent quality, universally possessed.**

This is the merest outline of Bultmann's views on this matter, yet even so brief an outline demands certain comparisons and comments. This view of the structure of past, present, and future is to be found beneath the immediate surface of all of Bultmann's thought. We must not fail to grasp here, for instance, that this present 'moment' of decision is actually that geometric point at which Bultmann finds meaning in history --- it is at this point that meaning is available, and nowhere else. At this point man can exist (Lat. *existere* = to stand out from... nonbeing, nature, &c.) in a sense in which no other entity can exist.

* Essays, p. 17.

** History and Eschatology, p. 151

That is, man is unique because he can choose his way of existence, rather than have his form and essence determined for him, say, by natural law. We can see this more clearly in relation to so-called naturalistic interpretations of history. By these Bultmann means theories which regard man in analogy with and merely as a sphere of nature.^{xx} Nature is dynamic only in accordance with certain laws which govern it. It is unthinkable that nature should behave out of accordance with these laws; if it seems to do so, that is because we have mistakenly identified laws, or because the laws under which nature operates are as yet undiscovered. Historical naturalism regards history as a similar process --- there are laws which describe the causal connection between the events which constitute history, and this leads to the notion of the predeterminism of historical happenings. Now Bultmann will have nothing to do with such theories. He makes a most definite distinction between history and nature.^{xxx} The difference between the two is that although both are temporal, history is constituted by human actions (p. 139). His more detailed criticisms of historicism (history understood in analogy with nature) are that it understands history as a natural process, and regards as its task the "establishment of facts ... and finding out the laws of their connection"; historicism has also taken over the idea of evolution which is a biological concept.^{xxxx} Bultmann points out that modern

^{xx} See History and Eschatology, chapter VI, Historicism and the Naturalisation of history, (The Abandonment of the Question of the Meaning in History), pps. 74-90.

^{xxx} op. cit., p. 139.

^{xxxx} op. cit., p. 78; cf. Essays, pps. 99-100, where Bultmann criticizes another illegitimate importation into anthropology from biological science. This is the interpretation of man as merely the instance of a general rule, as a specimen of a genus of natural beings.

natural science, developed in the XIXth century, took over man as the subject of its enquiries; it dealt with him as 'real' only in so far as he was part of the world of 'sense experience'; any existence of man apart from this world was ignored; anthropology became biology. History then becomes the study of all the factors (e.g. geographical, social, and economic) which constitute man.* We see in Bultmann's rejection of all such views the importance he attaches to man as a creature with the possibility to choose his future self, a possibility realizable in the freedom gifted to him in Christian faith, in the decisive 'moment' between past and future.

Other theological thinkers in the existentialist tradition are also strongly opposed to interpretations of man which regard him as a mere thing in the natural process without a future of his own. For example, Paul Tillich, in dealing with the XIXth century existentialist protest against the Hegelians, states that what the Hegelians failed to see absolutely was that existence was the sphere of estrangement and not reconciliation, dehumanisation and not 'the expression of essential humanity'. For Tillich, unredeemed existence "is the process in which man becomes a thing and ceases to be a person". In history man is

* History and Eschatology, p. 8; a modern substitute for the study of history in this sense tends to be more and more sociology, which might be termed a morphology of history.

threatened by self-destruction and meaninglessness. Apart from Christian faith, Tillich is aware of the danger of historicism also.*

We are reminded here of Bultmann's philosophical background in the philosophy of existence, and of how other thinkers there are keenly aware of this problem of historicism, in which man is regarded as becoming in accordance with inescapable law or causality, in much the same way as an acorn becomes an oak tree. H.J. Blackham, dealing with the philosophy of Heidegger,** uses a key-phrase, 'brute existence'. This brute existence in Heidegger is a 'night' out of which I come by means of my activities and projects ('Entwurf'). This brute existence can only be given intelligibility and value by personal existence. Blackham describes this brute existence and the consequent meaninglessness in this way: "Dread is the experience of Nothing. What happens ?..... This is an experience of brute existence denuded of meanings, the high-tension power of raw actuality; it uncovers the marvellousness of pure 'is-ness', contingency, which reason covers up and is therefore a revelation of Being, and renews the wonder of philosophy and gives a new impulse to the 'why' of science.***

* Syst. Theol., II, p. 28.

** Six Existentialist Thinkers, London 1952, p. 102.

*** op. cit., p. 104.

Blackham analyses 'brute existence' again, "The experience of Nothing, then, is an eclipse of the intelligible world and a precipitation into what-is, which recovers the pristine wonder which first raised the question of Being. But Being is not what-is, brute existence, any more than it is the intelligible world".[¶] What then is this 'brute existence' if it is not that to which meaning must be given by means of the discovery of laws, and out of which man must stand^{¶¶} in his personal existence?

We have already referred to Dr. Macquarrie's analysis of Heidegger's 'Augenblick'. Macquarrie writes: "The moment differs from the inauthentic present in this, that it is not a bare present but carries with it a disclosure of the past (what has been, the limitation of facticity) and of the future (what can still be, the possibility that remains open)".^{¶¶¶} He writes thus of Heidegger's present decision: "The unification (i.e. of the self) is brought about because in resolve past, present, and future, the threefold structure of existence as temporality, are brought together".^{¶¶¶¶} Heidegger's 'decision' is thus defined: "Resolve looks to the future ... and the resolve is accomplished in the authentic present, the moment of decision in which both past and future are disclosed".^{¶¶¶¶¶} The significance of the present 'moment' situated

[¶] op. cit., p. 105.

^{¶¶} Lat. *existere* = to stand out from....

^{¶¶¶} An Existentialist Theology, p. 194.

^{¶¶¶¶} op. cit., p. 195.

^{¶¶¶¶¶} op. cit., p. 195.

between past and future is described thus by Macquarrie: "Because man is temporal in this way, he is also historical (geschichtlich). History is possible for him because his temporality is not just that of a being within time (Innerzeitigkeit), but rather a being constituted by past, present, and future in such a way that at any given moment not only the present but the past and future as well are disclosed to him and are real to him".*

It will be seen that the similarities between Bultmann and Heidegger here are obvious --- the threefold distinction of past, present, and future; the decisive character of present resolve, decision; the unification of the temporal and historical self in the present 'moment'. As we shall see presently when we look at Kierkegaard's views on past, present, and future, it seems fairly certain that both Bultmann and Heidegger have been influenced by Kierkegaard here, but whether Bultmann has been more directly influenced by Kierkegaard or by Kierkegaard through Heidegger, it is impossible to say. Yet there is a radical difference between Bultmann and Heidegger here which ought not to be overlooked. In the theology of Bultmann the authentic unification of the self within the past-present-future structure, and the possession of

*op. cit., p. 160.

the freedom, the radical freedom, to choose the meaning of the future from a range of possibilities, is possible only by the gift of radical freedom in the 'moment' of God's grace in Jesus Christ. This does constitute a serious difference between the two in the matter of man's temporality.

Another theme in this connection which links Bultmann to other thinkers in the existentialist tradition is of course the importance which he gives to decision, resolve. The 'moment' for Bultmann is always a 'moment' of decision. 'Decision' is such an important theme in the existentialist thinkers, that we could hardly omit even a brief reference to it here. Perhaps we may limit ourselves to Heidegger. Blackham writes thus of Heidegger's decision: "Dasein, then, being possibility, exists by projecting itself, and these tentative projects are interpretations, not conceptual but existential".^x He describes the relation between decision and concepts in Heidegger in this way: "These existential interpretations of human existence (Entwurf), realised possibilities, are not in themselves intellectual conceptions, they are forms of human being; but all forms of knowledge derive from them".^{xxx} This thread of 'decision' runs of course all the way through Bultmann's study of history in the Gifford Lectures.^{xxxx} He quotes the

^x Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 92.

^{xxx} op. cit., p. 93.

^{xxxx} History and Eschatology, see pps. 146, 152, 153, 135, &c.

example of Dilthey and Heidegger with approval in their emphasis on decision,^x he instances decision as the proper response to the Christian proclamation,^{xx} he states that man's freedom from himself is always realised in the freedom of historical decisions,^{xxx} he instances the Christian category of sonship and agrees with Gogarten that it can only be grasped over and over again in the decisions of life,^{xxxx} he shows approval of Collingwood when Collingwood defines thought as "an act of man in his entire existence, as an act of decision".^{xxxxx} The concept of decision in the present 'moment' is an obvious point of contact and comparison between Bultmann and the existentialist thinkers, and also a point in Bultmann's doctrine of history where he seems indebted to his philosophical background.

Another point of contact between Bultmann and his existentialist background is his concern with the future. According to Bultmann, man's relation to the future is that he is responsible for it; this responsibility is inseparable from his responsibility over against the past in face of the future.^{xxxxxxx} The responsibility for our future

^x op. cit., p. 146.

^{xx} op. cit., p. 152.

^{xxx} op. cit., p. 152.

^{xxxx} op. cit., p. 153.

^{xxxxx} op. cit., p. 135.

^{xxxxxxx} op. cit., p. 143.

resides in the present. One of Bultmann's key-terms in his understanding of history is 'historicity' (geschichtlichkeit). He means by this that man's understanding of himself must always be as ^{of} someone future; when man's genuine, authentic self is mentioned, he must mean by this his future self, the self offered to him as ^a gift (of God) by his future. Other interpretations of history are approved or rejected by the touchstone of their attitude to the future; so historicism is rejected because it sees past, present, and future in a causal series, as a determined continuity, instead of the future being regarded as open.^{xx} The similarity between Bultmann's thought here and the 'Augenblick' of Heidegger can be demonstrated by comparing a quotation from Bultmann's Gifford Lectures with several quotations from Blackham on Heidegger. Thus Bultmann writes: "... the present is the moment of decision, and by the decision taken the yield of the past is gathered in and the meaning of the future is chosen; ...this is the character of every historical situation; in it the problem of meaning of past and future are enclosed and waiting, as it were, to be unveiled by human decisions".^{xxx} In similar vein Blackham writes of Heidegger's attitude to the future: "Dasein is seen to be an existence already found in the world in the

^x op. cit., pps. 109, 121-2, 150, 151.

^{xx} op. cit., p. 141.

^{xxx} op. cit., p. 141.

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condition of becoming, and therefore facing an open future with the power to be, and bound up with other beings encountered in the world".* 'Care' is also an attitude related to the future: "Care (Sorge), then, is the structure of the mode of existence of one who exists by anticipating what he will be in a world in which he is found and to which he is bound".** Here then is another point in Bultmann's doctrine of history where he seems indebted to his existentialist background --- his interpretation of man as a being orientated towards the future.***

Bultmann's stress on man's future is not only of historical or of philosophical interest, but has also important doctrinal repercussions, shown, for example, in his interpretation of central New Testament themes. We can illustrate how this works out from the case of one traditionally troublesome doctrine, the doctrine of Justification. It seems clear that a great many of the traditional interpretations are unsatisfactory, and fail to do justice to the New Testament. For example, the traditional Reformed doctrine that Justification means simply that God quite irrationally takes the sinner to be that which he is not, has been described as a forensic fiction. In the Roman Church,

*Blackham, op. cit., p. 95.

** op. cit., p. 95.

*** Blackham on Heidegger, op. cit., p. 101: "History is thus only objective in being subjective: it is a specific product of a man orientated towards the future".

in reaction to Luther's view, stress has been laid on the infusion of sanctifying grace in the Sacrament of Penance, in order to make the sinner worthy of forgiveness; this has been said to be meaningless in that forgiveness, as a free gift, has been emptied of content. In certain (extreme) Wesleyan circles, exaggerated stress on personal sanctification or holiness, interpreted moralistically, has been seen to fall short of the New Testament's specific statements that Justification is by divine grace. If none of these give a satisfying meaning to the New Testament concept of Justification, it does seem that the doctrine, interpreted from the standpoint of Bultmann's analysis of man's historicity, does just this. If man's existence is not substance,^{*} but is rather temporality (Zeitlichkeit), then any theological doctrine must reckon with the structure of this temporality. In his doctrine of forgiveness, Bultmann does just this. For Bultmann, justification, or forgiveness, means the obliteration of man's past by God; it means taking him to be 'what he is not' only by taking him to be the man of the future.^{**} With this can be linked Bultmann's teaching on the genuine or authentic self. Justification means the offering of the future to man as a gift. It means the offering to man of his genuine self, the man that he ought to be, and the man he can become in the future by

^{*}As we shall see more especially in chapter II, Bultmann's rejection of the category of substance is one of the most far-reaching elements in his theology over against orthodoxy.

^{**}History and Eschatology, pps. 150-1; cf. Essays, p. 85, pps. 178 f.

repeated decision for God's grace. This interpretation, it seems clear, does justice to the New Testament concept and preserves its unmerited character; it does justice to man's historicity and temporality, and flows directly out of Bultmann's view as to the significance of history --- that in history there is the possibility of a 'moment' in which God sets an end to man's history as the old man and gives him a new beginning, a new history, as a free genuine man; in this 'moment' the past is linked authentically to man's future.

This discussion of the structure of man's temporality as a past and a future separated decisively by a present 'moment' would be incomplete without even a brief mention of Kierkegaard. In his Philosophical Fragments^{*} Kierkegaard is aware that man's temporal structure is that of a decisive present between a past and a future. He is aware of the dangers of historicism --- the regarding of man's past as determining his future. Thus he tries to persuade us that there is no inevitability about the past. This is because, he says, the past " ... came into being", and by so doing proved that it was not necessary.^{**} What he means by 'coming into being' he explains as " ... becoming is an actuality brought about by freedom".^{***}

^{*}One of the main purposes of Kierkegaard in writing the Philosophical Fragments, as we shall see in chapter IV, was to present the Moment as a theological category.

^{**}Philosophical Fragments, p. 63.

^{***}op. cit., p. 64.

Of course there is a certain immutability or inevitability about the past "... in .. that ..its actual 'thus' cannot become different; but does it follow from this that its possible 'how' ~~could~~ not have been realised in a different manner ?"^{*} So he finds freedom in the becoming which actualised the past, because the opposite view would completely obliterate man's future as possibility. "If the past had become necessary it would not be possible to infer the opposite about the future; but it would rather follow that the future was also necessary".^{**} Thus necessity is an enemy of man's authentic becoming: "If necessity could gain a foothold at a single point, there would no longer be any distinguishing between the past and the future".^{***} Necessity's intrusion would mean that there was no lacuna between past and future, no dislocation in the causal connection between past and future. For this reason Kierkegaard was opposed to to his generation as 'a prophesying generation',^{****} one that believed that the future could be inferred from the past.

One of the great values of the study of the past is, for Kierkegaard, the discovery of freedom and becoming in it. "The immutability of the past has been brought about by a change, namely the

^{*}op. cit., pps. 64-65.

^{**}op. cit. p. 63.

^{***}op. cit., p. 63.

^{****}op. cit., p. 64; as we shall see in chapter III, Buber is likewise opposed to 'prediction' for the same reasons.

change by which it came into being; such an immutability does not exclude all change, since it did not exclude this change".* The past is a demonstration of change and becoming for Kierkegaard: "...if the past is conceived as necessary, this can happen only by virtue of forgetting that it has come into being".*** All that is required though to defeat the absolute reign of causality is a present 'moment' in which free change is a possibility: "All change is excluded, subjecting the concept to a temporal dialectic, only by being excluded in every moment".*** But if the possibility of the 'moment' be allowed, then inevitability, (determinism,) in its absolute sway between past and future, is broken.

The 'moment' then, a key-concept in the theology of Bultmann, is a 'moment' in which a man's past and his future are authentically related through freedom, which is a gift of God.

* op. cit., p. 63. ... is an occasional event, not ... by the word of forgiveness
*** op. cit., p. 63. ... which he encounters in ...
*** op. cit., p. 63.

(4) IT IS IN THE 'MOMENT' THAT FREEDOM AND TRANSCENDENCE EXIST : THUS
FREEDOM IS AN EVENT.

We have seen that in Bultmann's view the eschatological event becomes present reality again and again in the 'moment'. Since freedom is given by this event, freedom can never be a possessable quality, but can only become a reality over and over again.^{*} It is only in the 'moment' that one can be detached from tangible things so that life may follow the pattern of God's will.^{xx} It is typical of man's situation for Bultmann that man is subjected to the pressure of various motive forces. Responsive to every and any motive force, man cannot be his authentic, genuine, self. But in the 'moment' man stands as himself above the pressure of these motive forces.^{xxx} But this does not mean that freedom is conferred so that man may act motiveless, without following a 'nomos'. Rather, freedom is conferred that enables man to act in accordance with that 'nomos' which man understands and affirms

^{*} History and Eschatology, p. 152; cf. Preaching: Genuine and Secularized, in Religion and Culture, London 1959, p. 239: "Freedom is not a natural attribute of man, but is an occasional event, and it occurs only when man is freed from himself by the word of forgiveness and so becomes open for the demanding question which he encounters in his neighbour".

^{xx} Essays, p. 7.

^{xxx} Essays, p. 7.

as his 'nomos', a 'nomos' through ~~the~~ ^{of which} fulfilment, man realises and becomes himself.* Freedom conferred in the 'moment' is not only freedom from motive forces and from oneself, but also always freedom for what my particular 'nomos' demands, through which I attain to my genuine existence.** Bultmann asks whether radical freedom is not in reality identical with insecurity.*** Man's present situation is produced by constraint, so that real freedom can only be gifted to him. Thus, "the Christian view of freedom indicates that freedom is not a quality, but can only be an event at any given time".****

No discussion of Bultmann's views on freedom would be adequate without reference, however brief, to Bultmann's essay, The Significance of the Idea of Freedom for Western Civilization, in Essays, pps. 305 f. In this essay Bultmann shows concern over the dehumanizing tendencies of our modern world, with its science and technology, and its political,

*Essays, p. 307. So Bultmann interprets Jesus' protest againsts legalistic Judaism in The Theology of the New Testament, vol. 1, London 1952, pps. 11f. In Jewish legalism " ... obedience .. that .. man owes to God and to his demand for good is understood as a purely formal one; i.e. as an obedience which fulfils the letter of the law, obeying a law simply because it is commanded without asking the reason, the meaning, of its demandobedience cannot be radical, genuine obedience so long as man obeys only because it is commanded --- so long, that is, as he would do something else if something else were commanded, or, rather, would not do the thing in question if it did not stand in the commandment.... ". Thus the Jewish legalists did not understand the obligation to affirm and understand a 'nomos' as one's own, as one that was the only way to authentic existence.

***Essays, p. 307. We note here that 'freedom' in Bultmann is almost invariably freedom for as well as freedom from.

****Essays, p. 310. What Bultmann means here is probably that man's connections with the ~~cares~~ and securities of the world, because dialectical, are tenuous; thus he lives and must live in insecurity to prepare himself for the 'moment'.

*****Essays, p. 310.

economic and cultural organisation. In face of all this, he sees that the sphere of man's freedom is shrinking rapidly. Where then, does man's freedom reside ? Bultmann's answer to this question is two-fold. First, by reflection on history and on tradition.^x History is the story of past possibilities which can become present possibilities for us, and thus history is the story of freedom. And second, by understanding the profound truth that "true freedom is only to be found in constraint".^{xx} This restraint Bultmann finds in the transcendent God addressing man and liberating him.^{xxx} There is no absolute freedom, freedom to act in accordance with no 'nomos' at all. Freedom can only occur by means of a voice speaking to us, offering us our genuine self as a gift. Apart from this, there is only submission to various authorities. But the hearing and obeying of such a voice presuppose a radical humility and openness, without which man remains unreceptive to the word of the grace of God.^{xxxx}

Apart from this, there is no guaranteed recipe for lost freedom. There is only reflection of history and tradition (with their testimony to human possibilities), radical humility and openness, despair over our own capacities to attain to our possibilities ---- perhaps we

^x Essays, p. 310.

^{xx} Essays, p. 322.

^{xxx} Essays, pps. 323 f.

^{xxxx} Essays, p. 322.

can paraphrase all of Bultmann's thought here and say that in the 'moment' where these all converge, freedom can be gifted, freedom for a new history, freedom to be our genuine selves and thus freedom for our future, freedom from our old selves, and freedom for the other, which is love.

This notion of freedom is not a freedom from history, but a freedom for history. It is a freedom for the beginning of the new. Because this is so, the is unique in that he can stand at the end of history and, in this sense, can speak of history being at the eschatological event, marking the 'end' of history, even though it is within history.^{*} The paradox of history in is just that the end of history happens now, again, 'moment'. The 'end' of history (both 'telos' and 'moment') could be encountered by God in the 'moment' and here: "Since human life is lived out in space and time with God can only be a specific event here and now".^{**} Bultmann defines it

* History and Eschatology, pp. 151-2.

** Kerygma and Myth, p. 196.

(5) IN THE 'MOMENT' GOD ENCOUNTERS MAN.

This aspect of Bultmann's thought has been dealt with and presupposed through~~y~~out this chapter. This is the 'moment' that gives significance to history, marking the end of the old history and the beginning of the new. Because this is so, the Christian believer is unique in that he can stand at the end of history and look back; only in this sense can man speak of history being fulfilled --- because the eschatological event, marking the 'end' of history has already happened within history.^{xx} The paradox of history in the Christian view is just that the end of history happens now, again and again, in the 'moment'. The 'end' of history (both 'telos' and 'eschaton') is that man should be encountered by God in the 'moment' and be renewed by him. Thus: "Since human life is lived out in space and time, man's encounter with God can only be a specific event here and now".^{xxx} Similarly, "Christian faith ... believes that God acts upon us and addresses us in the specific here and now".^{xxxx} Bultmann defines faith thus: "Faith ...

^{xx} History and Eschatology, pps. 151-2.

^{xxx} Kerygma and Myth, p. 196.

^{xxxx} op. cit., p. 197.

can only be an event occurring on specific occasions, and it can only remain alive when the believer is constantly asking himself what God is saying to him here and now".* Thus God's disclosure of himself to man is strictly 'momentary'.

This is an emphasis of theology in the existentialist tradition. Paul Tillich, in a very fine passage, makes similar points to Bultmann's in a lightning sketch of the biblical 'Heilsgeschichte'. Tillich tries to show how the disclosure of God must always be in and through time and history, that there cannot be any such thing as a suprahistorical or metahistorical revelation. "... Revelation and salvation cannot be separated. Moses must remove his shoes before he can walk on the holy ground of a revelatory situation; Isaiah must be touched by a burning coal for the sake of expiation before he can receive his vocational revelation; Peter must leave his environment and follow Jesus before he can make the ecstatic statement that Jesus is the Christ; Paul must experience a revelation of his whole ~~being~~ being when he receives the revelation which makes him a Christian and an apostle".** This list could be described as a list of decisive biblical moments. There is another

*op. cit., p. 198.

**Syst. Theol., I, p. 161.

passage in Tillich has a startling similarity to Bultmann's thought on man's historicity: "Historical revelation is not a revelation in history but through history. Since man is essentially historical, every revelation, even if it is mediated through a rock or a tree occurs in history. But history itself is revelatory only if a special event or a series of events is experienced ecstatically as miracle".* Tillich's meaning is important here. In Bultmann also the notion of historicity does not mean that disclosure takes place merely in history. For all knowledge, mathematical, physical, metaphysical, is acquired in history.** But existential knowledge is realised not merely in but through historical events, and in such a way that what is disclosed can never lose its original connection with the disclosure-event. This is, in fact, one definition of historicity which will be presupposed and elaborated throughout this thesis.

*Syst. Theol., I, p. 134. The reader is again reminded that here again we are comparing Bultmann with the existentialist Tillich; as noted before, the distinction between the two strands in Tillich's theology, the existentialist and the ontological, will be indicated in the concluding chapter.

**We can illustrate the difference between scientific and existential knowledge by pointing out that when a chemical experiment has been concluded and results obtained, these can be tabulated and utilized without reference to the disclosure event, i.e., the experiment. But this is quite impossible with existential knowledge, which always has reference to the event in and through which it was originally disclosed.

(6) THE NATURAL ENEMIES OF THE 'MOMENT' ARE WELTANSCHAUUNGEN, MYSTICISM, IDEAS, PROPOSITIONS, PROGRAMMES, INSTITUTIONS.

Bultmann dislikes the 'Weltanschauung' because its possession can be a flight from historicity, an escape from decision, an escape from the enigma of the 'moment', an escape from man's real existence. A 'Weltanschauung' masks the insecurity which in Bultmann's view is the hallmark of genuine existence. And obviously, Bultmann is opposed to the 'Weltanschauung' just because it can be owned, possessed, permanently retained, and applied and applied inauthentically over and over again.*

Bultmann objects just as strongly to mysticism. In mysticism, history is denied and by-passed.** Mysticism, being ^{supra} ~~meta~~historical, also implies flight from the enigma, from the claims, from the decision of the 'moment'.*** The trouble with traditional mysticism, from Bultmann's point of view, would seem to be that it includes only a half of the genuine Christian (dialectical) relationship to the world. Mysticism perceives the secondary quality of worldly

* Essays, p. 8.

** op. cit., p. 19.

*** op. cit., pps. 9, 19, 97-8, 106, 112, 153.

affairs and projects inherent in Christian eschatology. But it moves from this recognition to the implication that the world is to be denied. It includes within itself the Pauline 'as though one did not have' while rejecting the Pauline 'having' integral to the Pauline paradox (I Cor.7:29 f.). Mysticism seems to imply that we are neither of this world nor in this world. And just because it fails to affirm the world, it fails to see the relevance of the love which is demanded in the 'moment' in the world of time and events. Thus facing the believer is an either/or: " ...either a mysticism which would like to make a tangible reality of the non-mundane transcendent in ecstasy, or a dialectical relation to the world such as Paul describes in the well-known words.... (I Cor.7:29-31)".^{*} In the development of early Christianity, in the West, a "new relation to the transcendental world" is worked out, " ... developing within ecclesiastical Christianity in asceticism and monasticism and giving Catholic piety its peculiar character, while in Protestantism it leads to the dialectical relation to the world of taking part in the commerce and the affairs of the world with an inner detachment. Inside Christianity, as outside, the new relation to the world becomes operative in mysticism.....".^{**} And the failure of mysticism is this. Only those who live dialectically related to the world

^{*} Essays, p. 228.

^{**} op. cit., pps. 228-9.

as St. Paul enjoins, are free to love.* For the man who has faith is freed by it from over-involvement in worldly cares and concerns. He has not denied nor rejected the world as has mysticism, but has affirmed it in such a way that he can be free to turn away from it in order to love, for the world becomes a new place for the believer in that it appears as a sphere producing situations demanding 'love' from him.** This 'love' is not an immanent emotion, but a concrete response demanded from the believer in a concrete situation at a specific time --- in the 'moment' of encounter.*** Enmeshed and caught up in worldly cares, concerns, and plans, man finds this turning-aside impossible. Thus mysticism, by rejecting the world, fails to appreciate the Pauline paradox, and fails to meet the demand to love which comes out of the 'moment' of encounter.

But this concrete and 'momentary' response which is love can also be stifled by what Bultmann calls programmes, organisations, and

* op. cit., p. 86.

** op. cit., p. 112.

*** The decision demanded of me, according to Bultmann, is " ... my decision to live for the person I am meeting as my 'neighbour' at that particular time. This living for one's neighbour is called love, and it is a love which unites the two people who meet at a given time" (op. cit., p. 155). For further references to Bultmann's fondness for the understanding of existence as in I Cor. 7:29 f., see Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, I, pps. 182, 240, 351-2; Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology, pps. 138-9; H.P. Owen, Revelation and Existence, p. 46. A full interpretation by Bultmann of the implications of I Cor. 7:29 f. is to be found in his essay, Preaching: Genuine and Secularized, p. 241, in the Tillich 'Festschrift', Religion & Culture.

institutions. These, he holds, can easily become a cloak for lovelessness, stifling the cry for help from a concrete 'thou' encountering me in the 'moment' (Essays, p. 16). Again, man is dialectically related to these programmes and organizations just as he is to worldly cares and plans. Organizing and programming are necessary to life, even to that aspect of it which concerns love and benevolence. But here again, man's existential obligation is to organize, but to do so as if "he did not". The difficulty about this doctrine in our time is of course the development of the welfare-state which assumes responsibility more and more for the needy and the troubled in society. Bultmann realizes this and is convinced that the more "love" and "benevolence" are taken over by the state, the less opportunities there will be for 'momentary' encounters on the personal level demanding love and care.* It seems then as if the solution to this dilemma is to realize that a great deal of institutional and organized 'love' is merely a substitute for human apathy, and also that situations will never die out that demand a human, I-Thou response for which there are only inauthentic institutional substitutes. After all, 'love' is not merely a matter of providing cash, shelter, food, and so-on; perhaps individuals with a superfluity of these need an I-Thou response as much as, or more than any.

*"....We have to consider how the organization which is carried out, and which can effect the welfare of **the individual**, actually impoverishes the life of the individual and similarly of society. The more the elimination of want and need is made a matter for the state, the more human love and mercy is made to die out" - Bultmann, Essays, p. 317.

In the same way, an idea of God, a proposition describing God and his act, a religious Weltanschauung which we use to interpret the world, may delude us into thinking that we really believe in God^{*}: the possession of the idea, proposition, or Weltanschauung may blind us to the existence of the real God who confronts us only in the 'moment'.^{**}

But does that mean, it may be asked, that Bultmann is forbidding all possibility of a Weltanschauung? Bultmann believes that it does not, and does offer a criterion by which genuine Weltanschauungen can be differentiated from false. A Weltanschauung can be genuine only when it emerges again and again in the midst of varying kinds of encounters and 'moments'. This means that a genuine one must be closely linked up to a personal history, it must have an existential reference, and for this reason we can say that a Weltanschauung is legitimate the more it expresses historicity: that is, the more it helps a person to come to grips with his personal existence, with the encounters and 'moments' of

^{*}Cf. "In truth, strange as it may sound, preaching is secularized when the sermon or instruction presents doctrinal statements which are to be believed. Doctrinal **statements** have the character of general truths, which one can hold to be true. But holding something to be true is not believing it Believing in Christ does not mean holding high ideas about his person to be true, but believing in the Word, in which he speaks to us, through which he wants to become our Lord", Bultmann, Preaching: Genuine and Secularized, op. cit., pps. 239-40.

^{**}Essays, p. 8. Cf. Preaching: Genuine and Secularized, op. cit., "Christian preaching is **not** the propagation of a philosophy it does not pronounce general truths, for which one can speculate, which one can discuss. It is authoritative direct address, transmitted through men and demanding faith". Genuine Christian preaching must " ... really strike the hearer in his concrete situation.....", (p. 238).

his life.^x A Weltanschauung must always refer to a self-understanding.

This last ^{point} of Bultmann's is of the first importance, and we must therefore give it more consideration. We note how his views on the undesirability of Weltanschauungen are ^{in accordance} with his teaching that what comes in the 'moment' cannot be retained as a possession. Such a possession would be a Weltanschauung. There is here a clear parallel to my point of view given above with regard to primary and secondary revelation. We maintained that no confusion must be made between the two types of revelation. Thus a Weltanschauung is typically secondary revelation. And just as we said that the validity of the secondary depended on the experience of the primary, thus a Weltanschauung, to be valid, depends on the 'momentary' self-understanding which it enshrines. The Weltanschauung, to put it another way, can never lose its connection with the situation which gave rise to it, and thus can never have an independent existence of its own. This means that it is possible to criticise Bultmann's view of revelation and make the fatal mistake of confusing the secondary, Weltanschauung-type of revelation ^{with} ~~from~~ the primary,

^x History and Eschatology, pps. 148-9.

'momentary' type.

Thus there is a truth that we can in fact possess and retain after the experience of the 'moment'.^{*} This is that in time and in history, in a 'moment' there is given a disclosure of God and of one-self: that it is in coming to grips with our existence-in-the-world that God discloses himself and ourselves to us. It is the insight that we are essentially temporal-historical creatures, bound indissolubly, if we would be authentic, to our history (to its events and people and encounters), and to our time (to its 'moments'). This then is the Weltanschauung that is ours after the experience of the 'moment', which is the criterion of every other Weltanschauung, philosophy, or theology that we encounter. To investigate their validity we must ask: How far does this point man to his time, as the sphere where God and himself are to be met; how far does this help man to realise his own radical historicity ?

The present writer remembers Professor Karl Jaspers say in the lecture-room, "The philosophy of existence knows of no truth that a man may purchase for twelve francs, put in his pocket, and lay on his desk".

^{*}Unless we were able to do so, we would be existential schizophrenics, inhabiting ~~two~~ different spheres at the same time, but without there being any connection whatsoever between the two. We shall discuss this matter again when we come to consider, in chapter III, Buber's view as to the relationship between the world of Thou and the world of It.

This, the dislike of 'systems' and 'propositions' and Weltanschauungen, is a very familiar theme amongst existentialist writers and thinkers. But of Bultmann, it cannot be said that he believes that there is no possessable truth ---- there is one, the radical historicity and temporality of man.

But there is another reason for Bultmann's dislike of the Weltanschauungen which men hold to be true. This is because a Weltanschauung represents a general understanding of human existence, and my existence a mere instance or example of the general rule.* It is an "axiom" of existentialist thought that there is no such general understanding of human existence. There is about what happens in my existence a special quality which is peculiarly mine.** The sphere proper to general rules and classes is, of course, the sciences, and we have already seen how Bultmann is opposed to the understanding of history in analogy with nature. Thus we ~~can~~ say that there is ^{no} general description of human existence, except that man is historical and temporal.

We have already noted Bultmann's aversion to mysticism.

If mysticism is 'the direct apprehension of God by the soul', its danger

* Essays, pps. 78-79.

** When Bultmann writes (Essays, p. 79), "I have MY life to live, as I have MY death to die", we can perhaps hear an echo of Heidegger's category 'Jemeinigkeit'.

for Bultmann lies in that it is direct. In mysticism disclosure thus takes place in history (it must) but not through history; mysticism thus radically ignores man's historicity and temporality. Thus it is common to find mysticism being depreciated in the existentialist thinkers. Thus H.J. Blackham writes of man's attempted escape from his concrete situation "in mysticism or positivism or intellectualism" as being the "ethical tension at the heart of Jasper's philosophy".* Paul Tillich is also well aware of the dangerous character of mysticism. "Mysticism", writes Tillich, "liberates from the concrete-sacramental sphere and its demonic distortions, but it pays the price of removing the concrete character of revelation and of making it irrelevant to the actual human situation. It elevates man above everything that concerns him actually, and it implies an ultimate negation of his existence in time and space".** Barth recognises this indifference of mysticism also towards our actual existence-in-the-world: "Muein (*μύειν*) means to close eyes and mouth;... ..mysticism is the higher consecration of man, which he secures by exercising towards the external world, both passively and actively, the greatest possible reserve".***

* Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 52.

** Syst. Theol., I, p. 156.

*** Church Dogmatics, 1:2, Edinburgh 1956, p. 319.

Bultmann holds that mysticism and Weltanschauungen are both opposite to a belief in God.* For they both imply a flight from historicity, from 'the enigma and the decisive question' (Essays, p. 8) of the 'moment', and therefore from the insecurity which Bultmann holds to be the hallmark of authentic existence. In these, man tries to master himself, to possess himself, to gain security for himself. All these add up to man's belief in himself, which is the opposite of real belief in God.*

This phrase 'flight from historicity' is important, and links Bultmann's thought here with that of other existentialists, of whom we will consider briefly Heidegger and Kierkegaard. Heidegger is certainly aware of the popularity of this flight into inauthentic existence: "Heidegger describes the process by which each one in a necessary conformity to established usages, judgements, and opinions, is assimilated to the general forms of human existence. This is the great alibi, the proof that all the time I was in respectable company, the flight from personal responsibility, the escape into anonymity I gain the solidity and the assurance of this massive existence, and I reinforce it with my own acquiescence. To resist and break with this mode of existence in order to realize other possibilities would create ^{a crisis}

* Essays, p. 19:

in my own personal life. There is in me the strongest tendency to avoid the issue, to take refuge from my original situation, the human plight, in the comfort and assurance of this anonymous and approved mode of existence. And that is what leads me to misinterpret my situation, virtually to think of myself as a thing in a world of things, as a given substance with certain properties, and thus to take refuge from myself as existing solely in my relations and in my acts as possibility, as having to choose and project myself".* This passage illustrates those themes which are common to Bultmann and the existentialist thinkers ---- the flight from historicity, from insecurity, the escape into anonymity rather than be oneself, a flight and an escape which find their expressions in the possession of a Weltanschauung and in mysticism.

"The escape into anonymity rather than be oneself" ---- these words remind us necessarily of Kierkegaard's The Sickness unto Death.** This sickness for Kierkegaard is despair, and this despair can assume a triple form.*** One can be in despair (a) at not being conscious of having a self (despair improperly so-called); in despair (b) at not willing to be oneself; and in despair (c) at willing to be oneself. This sickness Kierkegaard believed to be universal. "At any rate, there has

* Blackham, op. cit., p. 91/149.

** transl. by Walter Lowrie, Princeton 1951.

*** op. cit., p. 7.

lived no one outside of Christendom who is not in despair, and no one in Christendom, unless he be a true Christian, and if he is not quite that, he is somewhat in despair after all".^{*} Kierkegaard was opposed to the anonymity of his age just as he would have been to ours: " ... That man's life is wasted who lived on, so deceived by the joys of life or by its sorrows that he never became aware and in the deepest sense received an impression of the fact that there is a God, and that he, he himself, his self, exists before this God, this gain of infinity, which is never attained except through despair".^{xx} Moreover, he was shocked by the organised anonymity of his age. "And, oh, this misery, that so many live on, and are defrauded of this most blessed of all thoughts; this misery that people employ them about everything else that they heap them in a mass, instead of splitting them apart, so that they might gain the highest thing, the only thing worth living for....".^{xxxx} He asks his contemporaries whether **they** shall be remembered as long as the world stands, " ... or without a name^{xxxxxx} thou didst cohere as nameless with the countless multitude".^{xxxxxx} Kierkegaard, like Bultmann was also aware that anonymity was closely linked with intellectualism and mysticism. "The self thus leads a fantastic endeavour after

^{*} op. cit., p. 32.

^{xx} op. cit., p. 40. It will be noticed how closely Kierkegaard, like Bultmann after him (and probably influenced by him), links the disclosure of God with the disclosure of the self.

^{xxxx} op. cit., p. 41.

^{xxxxxx} anonymity.

^{xxxxxx} op. cit., p. 41.

infinity,* or in abstract isolation,** constantly lacking itself, from which it merely gets further and further away".*** The results of this are inauthenticity and lack of the conviction of temporality. Kierkegaard re-iterates the occurrence of anonymity in his contemporaries, he never tires of teaching the frequency of those occasions when his contemporaries lost their selves " ... by having become, instead of a self, a number, just one man more, one more repetition in this everlasting 'Einerlei'".**** "By seeing the multitude of men engaged in all sorts of worldly affairs, by becoming wise about how things go in the world, by getting engaged in all sorts of worldly affairs, such a man forgets himself,***** forgets what his name is,***** (in the divine understanding of it), does not dare to believe in himself, finds it too venturesome a thing to be himself, far easier and safer***** to be like others, to become an imitation, a number, a cipher***** in the crowd".*****

*intellectualism.

**mystical type of experience.

***op. cit., p. 48.

****op. cit., p. 50.

*****i.e. does not relate himself to worldly affairs dialectically.

*****anonymity again.

*****i.e. does not realise that insecurity is a precondition of authentic existence.

*****op. cit., p. 51.

I think that the Kierkegaardian influence on Bultmann comes out clearly also in Kierkegaard's dislike of Weltanschauungen:

"A thinker erects an immense building, a system, a system which embraces the whole of existence and world-history, &c. --- and if we contemplate his personal life, we discover to our astonishment this terrible and ludicrous fact, that he himself does not live in this immense high-vaulted palace, but in a barn alongside of it, or in a dog-kennel, or at the most in the porter's lodge he can get the system completed by means of a delusion".^x Beside this quotation from Kierkegaard

himself, we may perhaps place these from Blackham on Kierkegaard:

"There is a natural disposition, chronic in some ages, to escape from existence into the aesthetic and the intellectual, and to find in these pre-occupations a dispensation from the decisions and experience which form and mature the personal self".^{xx} This is a perfect description of the flight from historicity and from decision by means of a Weltanschauung. "One who lives in the intellectual, claims to rise above the world of change and chance,^{xxx} to regard and judge everything from the point of view of the eternal, with detachment, to put everything in its place in the system,^{xxxx} co-ordinated and understood....does not live....

^xop. cit., p. 68.

^{xx}Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 10.

^{xxx}cf. mystical experience.

^{xxxx}cf. a Weltanschauung.

..does not act,.....does not believe".^x

These Weltanschauung-like beliefs, opposed by Bultmann and Kierkegaard, are of course Christian points of view, which a man holds uncritically just because they represent the drift of thought of his day; in short, what we call nowadays, ideologies. There is an excellent account of ideologies to be found in Alan Richardson's Christian Apologetics.^{xx}

A very brief look at what Richardson has to say about ideology in our present situation may demonstrate how relevant the views of Kierkegaard **still** are. Thus ideologies, for Richardson, are " assumptions, based not so much upon rational reflection as upon the general social drift and economic developement of the times.....".^{xxxx}

Richardson differentiates ideology from philosophy: "Ideology differs from philosophy in that, since it is accepted uncritically and is not articulated intellectually, it is in no sense the product of conscious reasoning; it operates at the level of group suggestion rather than at that of individual thinking".^{xxxxx}

Richardson is aware of how recent critics of Christianity have fastened on to it in its inadequate and

^xop. cit., p. 10.

^{xx}London, 1947, especially chapter III, Christianity and Ideology, pps. 65-84.

^{xxxx}op. cit., p. 66.

^{xxxxx}op. cit., p. 66.

Weltanschauung-like forms, and have exposed it as superficial: "Religion is represented as being nothing more than the epiphenomenal and transitory product of an ... undeveloped social order, arising from the unfilled desires which such a social order fails to satisfy; it will therefore pass away when a just and mature order of society has been achieved".* Richardson is at pains to express our indebtedness to all those writers (and especially those Marxist ones) who have brought the importance of this concept to our notice. This uncritical, propagandist, acceptance of the Christian faith is not the belief of the 'moment', the belief which comes through regeneration and transformation, through ecstasy and miracle. Bultmann, like Kierkegaard before him, is most keenly conscious of the great perils one faces from the clamour of beliefs which one faces in society.** That Bultmann is fully aware of the dangers of ideological Christianity is apparent from an examination of his essay, Forms of Human Community, (Essays, pps. 291 f.; see especially p. 296 passim), where Bultmann expresses his dislike of ideological National Socialism, and quotes with approval Gogarten's condemnation of the State's exploitation of the techniques of propaganda.

* op. cit., p. 70.

** Essays, pps. 7 f.; Bultmann is closely linked here with the existentialist background of his thought, cf. Karl Jaspers, The Individual and Mass Society, essay in Religion and Culture, pps. 37f.; also Karl Jaspers, Man in the Modern Age, London 1959, pps. 40 f.

(7) THE SCRIPTURES BECOME THE WORD OF GOD IN THE 'MOMENT' : SO THE WORD OF GOD IS AN EVENT.

Bultmann holds that the 'Word of God' is not a natural, evident, generally discernible quality possessed by Scripture, nor is it the substantial content of Scripture. For Bultmann the 'Word of God' is something that 'happens'. Scripture may become the 'Word of God', in the concrete 'moment', in the concrete here and now of encounter.³² Bultmann speaks of the Word of God as God's 'act', and in accordance^{with} his well-known definition of God's act, this means that Scripture as the Word and act of God is always simultaneously hidden and revealed. For Bultmann there is no such thing as an objective miracle. There must always be the possibility for man to believe that an alleged miracle of God is nothing of the kind. That it is an authentic miracle is a confession that man can make only in faith, and without this faith man can only conclude that no miracle has occurred. God's act therefore is always both revealed and concealed. It is not otherwise with God's Word, which is God's act, in Scripture. That it is God's act is not objectively discernible because it requires faith to perceive that this is so, and

³² Kerygma and Myth, p. 201.

since faith is unpossessable and unretainable but only gifted in the 'moment', Scripture can only become the Word of God in the historic 'moment'. When this happens, this is the 'moment' of revelation.

It is hardly necessary to point out here that this links up very closely with Bultmann's views on hermeneutics.^{*} Bultmann deals with certain hermeneutical rules which apply to the interpretation of all texts (not excluding the text of Scripture). "The interpretation of biblical writings is not subject to conditions different from those applying to all other kinds of literature".^{***} Since interpretation always presupposes a relationship to the subject-matter of the text, so the understanding of Scripture must presuppose a relationship to the subject-matter, namely, the action of God. Now Bultmann believes that such a relationship, or a pre-understanding, exists in man's enquiry about human existence; or, as Bultmann prefers to say, in this enquiry there is an 'existentiell' knowledge of God.^{***} But this knowledge or awareness is present not just in any enquiry about human existence, but in the right one, in the relevant one. Bultmann claims to have found such a right enquiry in the philosophy of existence, and especially in

^{*}Treatments of hermeneutics by Bultmann will be found in The Problem of Hermeneutics, Essays, pps. 234-261; in chapter VIII of History and Eschatology, pps. 110 f.; and in the last essay in Kerygma and Myth, Bultmann replies to his critics, pps. 191-211.

^{**}Essays, p. 256.

^{***}We shall analyse this pre-understanding in great detail when we consider Bultmann's relation to the doctrine of immanence in chapter II.

the work of Heidegger. This is because he believes that Heidegger's analysis of existence makes explicit the understanding of existence which is given with existence itself. Without such an analysis and its own Begrifflichkeit^{*}, the interpreter has not the same relationship to life possessed by the writer and thus fails to grasp his meaning. Thus Scripture fails to become the Word of God, and the 'moment' does not occur.

Here we may indicate an important similarity between Bultmann and the thought of R.G. Collingwood.^{**} Bultmann quotes Collingwood: "The historian's thought must spring from the organic unity of his total experience, and be a function of his entire personality with its practical as well as its theoretical interests".^{***} Surely the meaning of this in the last analysis is that unless the biblical interpreter is grappling with the same questions and problems as the same questions and problems as the writer, then he must fail to grasp the writer's meaning? I should like to push this discussion a little further. If it be true that revelation comes only in the specific 'moment', and if the writer records this only in the concrete 'moment' of his experience, then it follows that his meaning can be grasped only in the same kind of 'moment'.

^{*}system of concepts.

^{**}The Idea of History, Oxford, 1949.

^{***}from Collingwood, op. cit., p. 305; quoted by Bultmann in History and Eschatology, p. 133.

This means that the interpreter of the Bible must be grappling with the same kind of problem or question, and be aware of his past and his responsibility for the future, as was the original writer, for the same kind of 'moment' to re-occur. If so, we would seem to be justified in talking of hermeneutics as the preparation for the ^{recurrence} ~~re-occurrence~~ of 'moments'.* Therefore Scripture, an historical text, cannot be the Word of God in any substantial or continuous sense; it is something that can only become such a Word, given the existence of certain important and irreducible hermeneutical conditions.

*There are hints of this doctrine in the work of both Dilthey and Bultmann. Thus Bultmann writes of the philosophy of Dilthey: "Perhaps it may be said that eschatological perfection is, so to speak, distributed among the several moments of the psychical experiences from which each work originates, and that these moments recur in the understanding soul", History and Eschatology, p. 125. Cf. H.A. Hodges, The Philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey, London 1952, pps. 137 f., quotes from Dilthey's Gesammelte Schriften, VII, pps. 213-5: "The sequence of scenes in a play enables us to relive the fragments from lives of the characters who appear. The narrative of the novelist or historian, which follows the course of events, produces a re-living process (ein Nacherleben) in us. It is the triumph of das Nacherleben that, in it, the fragments of a process are filled out ... that we think we have a continuity before us".

(8) THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES ARE PERCEIVED ONLY IN THE 'MOMENT': THUS THEY ALSO ARE EVENTS.

Bultmann's view here is that attributes like omnipotence or omniscience are not to be conceived as objectively perceivable and provable substantial qualities of the Deity. They are 'abstractions'^{xx} from God's utterance and act manifested in the 'moment'. God's all-powerfulness, all-knowingness, are such that we can never possess knowledge of them, retain it, and continually re-apply it. The divine attributes are 'events'.^{xxx}

It^{is} this view which prompts Bultmann to say that while enduring the captivity of a Russian prison-camp, the attribute of the divine sovereignty is not something objectively and obviously apparent. Thus, while in this situation, it is not easy to say "Terra ubique domini". Thus sovereignty is not a possessable dogma, but is something that we see (by faith) happening in the 'moment' of enigmatic and risky decision, when the whole of existence is at stake.^{xxx}

^{xx}We shall re-open this discussion when we deal, in our concluding chapter, with the whole problem of propositional theology.

^{xxx}Kerygma and Myth, p. 207.

^{xxx}op. cit., p. 198.

And it was for this reason that in the list of elements which I analysed earlier which rise up and militate against the insight of the 'moment' I have included 'extreme suffering'.

Bultmann identifies the 'moment' revealing God's omnipotence with the 'moment' in which God forgives man's sin by his grace.* Man is enslaved to himself and to his past, and God's Word of forgiveness breaks man's bonds with his old self and his past and frees him for the future. The only thing which can do this, says Bultmann, is the power of God's omnipotence. Bultmann is obviously reluctant to separate an attribute of God out, and consider it in abstraction. For him the omnipotence of God is his act in the 'moment'. Thus 'omnipotence' is only an abstract description of God's 'momentary' act, and is simultaneously a description of man's existential situation.** Thus omnipotence can be described as the only power which can free man from his past for the future.

We find a not dissimilar standpoint in the theology of Brunner.*** Brunner gives a list of theologians who radically doubted

* See the whole argument of Bultmann in his essay, The Question of Natural Revelation, (Essays, pps. 90 f.), which we shall discuss fully in chapter II. See especially Essays, p. 102.

** As we shall see in considering the problem of propositional theology (concluding chapter) Bultmann believes that any dogma, to be authentically Christian, must have some reference to man's existential situation. This is in line with his conviction that an authentic Weltanschauung must express man's historicity and temporality.

*** Dogmatics, (E.T.), vol. I, London 1949, pps. 241 f., The Problem of the Divine Attributes.

the notion of the divine attributes, because they felt that it finitized God, and took away from his unity and simplicity; among these, we find Justin, Spinoza, Arnobius, Augustine, Quenstedt, and Brunner finds one root of the opposition to the doctrine in the philosophy of Plato. Brunner draws a distinction which is not dissimilar to Bultmann's (in the last essay in Kerygma and Myth^{*}). He distinguishes between what God is 'in himself', and what he is 'in relation to us'. God's nature, 'in himself', is above all finitizing qualities. But to us in our existence God is the Almighty, the Omniscient, the Righteous. Brunner is correct when he writes, "The ideas of divine attributes ... all point back to God's nature, but they express this nature of God in relation to different particular aspects of the created world".^{***} In so far as Brunner's view means that it is impossible to speak of the attributes of God without simultaneously speaking of human existence-in-the-world, the standpoints of Brunner and Bultmann are not dissimilar in this matter.

^{*}except that Bultmann will have nothing to do with the notion of what God is 'in himself'.

^{***}Dogmatics, I, p. 247. Bultmann would say that they were objectifications from existential experience.

(9) IN THE 'MOMENT' TAKES PLACE ENCOUNTER WITH THE THOU.

In the 'moment' I encounter the other, the Thou; in this encounter I perceive that I am not infinite, unlimited. My existence is circumscribed by limits --- by the claims on me of the other; in the 'moment' I perceive these claims, and their fulfilment by me is 'love'. In this sense I recognize that in the 'moment' I exist for the other, for the Thou.^x Therefore Bultmann can say: "Love means in fact being completely free from oneself and FOR the other person".^{xx} As we have seen, in Bultmann freedom has always this double reference, freedom for..... and freedom from.....

Bultmann is anxious to strip all security away from duty-doing. Thus he rejects the notion that our duty to love comes to us by means of rules or axioms derived from an ethical principle.^{xxx} Rather he wants us to realise that the demand to love confronts us not in ethical rules but in the concrete Thou that we encounter in the 'moment'.

^x Essays, p. 13.

^{xx} op. cit., p. 108. The token of eschatological existence is my love for the Thou; cf. I John 3:14 - "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren", Essays, p. 150, cf. Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology, pps. 210-211.

^{xxx} See Essays, p. 79.

'Love' is the existential state in which a man is when he perceives the 'good' of his neighbour, and the 'good' that is demanded of him.

For Bultmann, the 'love' that is demanded of us in the 'moment' is opposed by 'hate'.^x Hate is the element in our make-up which opposes love, and thus produces a crisis whenever in the 'moment' love is demanded. We believe, and this belief we obtain from the world around us, that there is nothing so important as our own interest, and because this is so in us and in man generally, there is the Christian doctrine of original sin.^{xx} But this is not an empirically verifiable, 'natural' quality, arguable or provable, but an existential attitude only revealed in the 'moment' of the encounter with the Thou who demands love. Thus, just as Bultmann refuses to allow the knowledge of God or oneself to become systematized into dogmatic possessions, so also does he refuse love to become systematized into a code or ethic which demands blind obedience to imperatives.^{xxx}

Bultmann draws a distinction between 'eros' and 'agape'.^{xxxx} 'Eros' has reference to man's self-fulfilment in drawing

^x Essays, pps. 15 f. Here once again we have Bultmann's view of existence as a sphere where a continual struggle goes on between authenticity and inauthenticity.

^{xx} op. cit., p. 15. Bultmann would doubtless say that like other doctrines and dogmas, this one is an objectification from the experience of the 'moment'.

^{xxx} We have already referred to above Bultmann's **strictures** on the Pharisees' attitude to the Law, where a command is to be obeyed just because it is in the Law. Cf. Theology of the New Testament, I, pps. 11 f.

^{xxxx} Essays, pps. 72-3.

him upward to the ideal; 'agape' is seen as the power of devotion binding the I to the Thou.* The I and the Thou, we may add, are both concrete, historical, temporal, and therefore this power can only be realised in the 'moment'.

Such love, fulfilled in the 'moment', has a testimonial or witnessing character. It testifies that a man has been freed from himself, from his sin, from his past; it testifies that a man has been transferred from worldly existence into eschatological existence. There is only meaning in history where this existence is achieved, and the "proof" of it, so to speak, is love manifesting itself in the 'moment', in the concrete encounter with the Thou.

'Agape' is further distinguished from that love which is 'philos'.** The distinguishing mark of 'philos' is a common concern with the other; in the love which is demanded in the 'moment' a common concern, in the sense of common likes, dislikes, or interests, is quite irrelevant. It is demanded only in the 'moment' and has no reason or ground except that of need, and the demand for the fulfilment of that need in the 'moment'.

*op. cit., p. 73.

**op. cit., p. 155.

At the beginning of this chapter we discussed, in relation to the works of Tillich, Owen, and Macquarrie, the question whether there was a norm by which the correct hearing and responding to the kerygma could be judged, a standard by which authentic Christian experience could be differentiated from inauthentic. It seems that clear that although Bultmann must reject absolutely the notion of an objective and historically scientific norm by which we could measure Christian experience, ~~it seems clear that~~ the only 'norm' or 'standard' against which we can measure our experience of God's eschatological event is that love which is manifested in our encounter with our neighbour in the 'moment'.

Bultmann holds that the event in which man is freed from his past and for his future is the Word of the divine love in Jesus Christ which confronts him and says 'Thou' to him, thus elevating him into a new status with God.^x It is from this point of view that we are to understand the impressive and oft-quoted statement from Bultmann that only the people who have been loved can themselves love.^{xx} This means that it is only the man who has experienced the 'moment' in which God's grace has freed him from the past, from sin, from himself, from the enmeshment in worldly care, can himself turn to the concrete

^x op. cit., p. 302.

^{xx} Kerygma and Myth, pps. 32-3.

claims of the encounter with the Thou which happens in the 'moment', which can happen in any 'moment'. To use Bultmann's own language, it is only the man who has been 'freed from.....' who is 'freed for.....'.

The similarity in language here between that of Bultmann and that of Martin Buber^x is obvious. Although we must postpone until chapter III a complete comparison between Bultmann's and Buber's view of the 'moment', we may perhaps say a little here about the Thou. For Buber too, love is that which exists between the I and the Thou. "Love does not cling to the I in such a way as to have the Thou only for its 'content', its object; but love is between I and Thou. The man who does not know this, with his very being know this, does not know love.....".^x It is clear how near this is to Bultmann's distinction between 'agape' and 'eros'.

We have also discussed Bultmann's distinction between 'agape' and 'philos', the love based on common interests and concerns. Buber is aware of this distinction. Love, for Buber, consists in

^x I and Thou (E.T. by R. Gregor Smith), 1st edition, Edinburgh 1937, pps. 14-15.

"helping, educating, raising up, saving". For him, love has nothing to do with a particular common feeling at all. "Love is the responsibility of an I for a Thou". The "dreadful point" of love is this --- "to love ALL men". Love goes out to good people and evil, wise and foolish, beautiful and ugly.* This will perhaps indicate the close similarity between the thought of Bultmann and that of Buber on relationships of love.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE 'I AND THOU' RELATIONSHIP

AND THE DOCTRINE OF IT

*See I and Thou, p. 15 passim.

This foregoing discussion of the 'moment' and the 'encounter' raises a question which we now answer to which our discussion is already incomplete. Does not the sensitivity of the 'moment' and the 'encounter' imply the need for a new kind of knowledge which will be prior to the knowledge of the 'moment' and the 'encounter' not only in the sense that it precedes the moment of encounter, but also in the sense that it is prior to the moment of encounter?

CHAPTER TWO

THE 'MOMENT', THE SPIRITUAL LIFE,

AND THE DOCTRINE OF IMMANENCE

It is the aim of this chapter to show that the doctrine of immanence is not only a doctrine of the 'moment' and the 'encounter' but also a doctrine of the 'spiritual life'. (It is in the 'spiritual life' that even the 'moment' and the 'encounter' are possible.) The doctrine of immanence is a doctrine of the 'spiritual life' in the sense that it is a doctrine of the 'spiritual life' which is prior to the moment of encounter and the moment of encounter.

Our aim is to show that Bultmann stresses the total exclusion of the word 'within'.¹ By 'within' we mean the word 'within' as used in the 'Encounter and the Word', pp. 52 f.

This foregoing discussion of the 'moment' and its implications raises a question without an answer to which **our discussion** would be manifestly incomplete --- namely, does not the positing of the 'moment', in which encounter takes place, imply the coming into man's existence of something absolutely new, to which man had no prior relationship before the 'moment'; does this doctrine of the 'moment' not imply a transcendence so complete that **it excludes the notion of immanence** absolutely? If so, does not this exclusion indicate that the doctrine of the 'moment' is seriously inadequate?

This specific charge (that Bultmann's theology suffers from lack of a proper doctrine of immanence), finds expression in Mr. H.P. Owen's Revelation and Existence.^{*} Owen reminds us that Bultmann has stated that 'the idea of immanence is radically incompatible with Christian theism'.^{**} (It is a little unfortunate that Owen has not given consideration to the possible interpretation of Bultmann's assertion, that the classical or traditional doctrines of immanence are incompatible with theism). Owen's opinion is that Bultmann "stresses the God 'without' to the total exclusion of the God 'within'".^{***} He does not, writes

^{*}Cardiff 1957; we shall have to refer more especially to chapter 4, Encounter and the Word, pps. 52 f.

^{**}op. cit., p. 53.

^{***}op. cit., p. 53.

Owen, take seriously enough the truth that all men are created in God's image.^x These charges against Bultmann's thought are re-iterated throughout the chapter in question.

To be fair to Owen, he allows that Bultmann indicates an immanence of a type, though in Owen's opinion, quite inadequate. He allows that Bultmann's thought includes the suggestion that the 'imago dei' is retained in two ways : first, by man's power to think of God, however negatively ; second, by man's possession of needs that only God can answer.^{xxx} Yet Owen believes that this comes short of the right doctrine of immanence, which would assert that " ... God is actually PRESENT in man.....".^{xxxx} In Owen's view, any adequate doctrine of immanence would have to include this proposition.

This proposition, that God is actually present in man, reveals an aspect of Owen's thought that we must grasp if we wish to understand the issues at stake. It is thoroughly spatial, and reveals an ontology that is thoroughly substantial. There is little doubt that Owen thinks of man's soul, his inner being, as a kind of substance.

^x op. cit., p. 53.

^{xxx} op. cit., p. 53.

^{xxxx} op. cit., pps. 53-4.

For instance, Owen writes, " ... how does Christ revive this light ? Not by forcing his speech on us from without, but by entering us himself to renew the divine image that he implanted".^x Such terms as 'entering' and 'implanted' are significant. Again, he writes, " St. Bonaventure regards the knowledge of God as pre-existing in the depths of our soul like a sort of impress left upon us by the Creator so that the human soul knows God simply by reflecting on itself, since it is made in the image of God".^{xxx} Such terms as 'the depths of our soul', and 'impress' are very significant. "St. Bonaventure locates God's act within, at the unseen centre of man's existence".^{xxx} The significant terms here are 'within' and 'centre'. " ... When Christ 'comes' to us, he 'comes' as an interior presence; he indwells the believer through His Holy Spirit".^{xxxx} The significant terms here are 'interior' and 'indwells'. In face of the presence of such terms, it can hardly be denied that Owen's ontology is in terms of substance. And we must grasp Owen's criticism of Bultmann; Bultmann's inadequacy in the matter of immanence lies in his alleged inability to make a statement like this, "God is actually present in man".

^x op. cit., p. 67.

^{xxx} op. cit., p. 69.

^{xxxx} op. cit., p. 70.

^{xxxxx} op. cit., p. 70.

But Bultmann in fact can and does use this kind of language; he speaks of "a proof of the 'deus in nobis'"^{*} in an essay^{**} to which we shall require to make many references in this chapter, The Question of Natural Revelation. But Bultmann uses the phrase in a radically different sense from that given to it in classical theology. Classical theology, especially in its developement since Descartes, has held a view of man in which man is conceived as substance, a view of man which stands in sharp contrast to the view of existentialist thought, which views man's nature existentially rather than substantially. It would therefore be impossible for Bultmann to use the term 'deus in nobis' in the classical sense. For Bultmann, and here again we see his indebtedness to his existentialist background, man is to be conceived of in terms of historical existence. We perceive therefore that there must be a gulf between the thought of Bultmann about man and the thought of anyone who holds, as does Owen, an ontology of substance.

Bultmann uses then this traditional language of the 'deus in nobis'; and we must ask in what sense he uses it. To answer this, we refer to Bultmann's essay cited above. The argument of Bultmann there is something like this. Man cannot speak of himself, or

^{*} Essays, p. 93.

^{**} In Essays, pps. 90-118.

investigate himself without, at the same time, speaking of God and wondering about Him. Man's investigation of himself yields a three-fold result. First, it yields man's powerlessness, the truth that man is subject to outside forces that he is unable to control. In short, it reveals man's finitude. This points man to a higher power which is master of all others, to a God who is omnipotent. Second, it yields man's sense of oughtness, of obligation; his feeling that he is not a finished nor a fulfilled creature, but that he ought to become, that he is always 'on the way', and that he ought to be different from what his past has made him. This points man to demand, to judgement which come from outside himself; to the Holy One, who will indicate to him the right way to become. Third, it yields man's knowledge of his own transience, of his experience of decay, of his sense of unachievement, of his radical temporality. This points man to one who is not subject to these conditions, to an eternal and transcendent one --- to one who is all-complete in himself, not in a perpetual state of having-to-become, not subject to the law of decay. Only in this sense can we say that man's knowledge of himself is knowledge of God.

Perhaps here we should write 'God' in quotation-marks, for Bultmann holds that it not the real living God that man knows about in this way.[¶] Pure speculative knowledge of God is not really knowledge of God at all. If man were to conclude that he really knew the living

[¶]Essays, pps. 98, 102, 106.

God from his analysis and investigation of his own existence, this conclusion would actually be sin.^{*} Bultmann points out that man's relationship to the living God is based upon what God does for man, in his act, in the 'moment', since man's life is historical and temporal. It can only be said therefore that man believes in God if the following three conditions (which correlate with the threefold analysis outlined above) are satisfied.

Man believes in, has knowledge of God, if 'God' is the one who frees man from himself in the 'moment' of historic encounter.^{**} This is the first condition to be fulfilled. We have seen earlier, when discussing the revelation of the divine attributes, that Bultmann identifies the 'moment' revealing God's omnipotence with the 'moment' in which God frees man from his sinful past by the Word of his grace. Thus Bultmann is but re-iterating once more the main point of his belief in the possibility of meaning in history. In the 'moment' a dislocation is made in the causal connection running from past to future through the present; man is a free creature, a new creature, his old history is brought to an end and he is given a new history, if man knows or has known the 'moment' of the grace of God. When this happens, man, a

^{*}op. cit., p. 107.

^{**}op. cit., pps. 98-102.

creature who knows direction from outside by alien forces, knows God the Almighty, but not until this happens.

Second, man's sense of oughtness brings him into a relationship with the Holy God if the 'God' to whom he looks is the one who " ... liberates man from himself, endowing him with purity, and putting an end to his sinful history".^{*} Thus again we see how Bultmann makes the 'moment', in which man's history is invaded by the liberating grace of God, freeing man from his past and gifting to him a new future under grace, absolutely central to his thought. Man's sense of obligation or of guilt alone ^{is} do not bring him into a relationship with God; only if the 'moment' occurs, and only if, can man truly speak of the Holy God.

Third, in looking out of his transience towards eternity, or towards the 'eternal one', man has no real relationship to the Eternal God.^{**} It is only man's illusion that tells him that he can thus relate himself to eternity while imprisoned in time. Man can be actually related to eternity only if this happens; if God imparts to man his grace, and as the Eternal One frees man from his old existence, from the life of sin and care and dread and over-involvement in worldly

^{*} op. cit., p. 106.

^{**} op. cit., pps. 106 f.

concerns, and ~~gives~~ ^{gives} him a new free relationship to himself and the world of the other.^{*} It is almost unnecessary to point out again the utter centrality that Bultmann accords the 'moment' (a 'moment' in which God acts) in his thought.

From this we conclude that Bultmann's theology contains a doctrine of the divine immanence. Not, admittedly, the traditional doctrine of immanence; still a doctrine of immanence it is. Man's nature, prior to any special revelation,^{***} includes 'gaps', 'wants', 'needs', 'longings', which point to a being devoid of these, a being who is all-perfect. Such a being would, if man were in relationship with it, perfect and fulfil man's nature. As we have pointed out in all fairness to Owen, he does recognize this aspect of Bultmann's thought. But we feel that Owen's account does not give Bultmann's position full enough consideration at this point^{***}, because he omits all reference to Bultmann's important conclusion, namely, that God, of whom man can think and in his existence long for, encounters man in an historical 'moment', and ~~man~~ in time fulfil man's deepest needs, which we may term

^{*}op. cit., pps. 108-9. Cf. History and Eschatology, p. 153: "... history comes to its end in the religious experience of any Christian 'who is in Christ'. In his faith he is already above time and history..... In his faith the Christian is a contemporary of Christ, and time and the world's history are overcome. The advent of Christ is an event in the realm of eternity which is incommensurable with historical time..... the Christian ... is above time and the world.....".

^{**}In this sense it is a natural revelation.

^{***}Revelation and Existence, p. 53.

eschatological freedom. Man's being lacks, longs for and craves for something, and this longing prepares man for the historical encounter with the living and acting God, who fulfils these deep needs of man's nature, although not necessarily 'fulfilling' them in the way expected by man. That is, God's fulfilment of man's needs transcends and corrects them; God's act cannot be ^{no}accomadated^{no} by man's existential situation.

At this point we may profitably make several observations about our comparison of these two types of immanence, Owen's and Bultmann's. First, we must distinguish Bultmann's view from the classical 'via negativa'.^{*} Man does not come to a knowledge of God at all by a contemplation of his ~~own~~ nature, to which God's nature is the opposite. In short, Bultmann does not hold that God is merely that which we are not. To the contrary, as we have insisted, Bultmann holds that by examining himself, man can come to no real knowledge of the true God at all. That knowledge, for Bultmann, is existential knowledge, gained in that 'moment' when God invades man's time, confronting him in history, and freeing him by his act. The 'via negativa' is not an historical method at all; Bultmann's is thoroughly historical.

^{*}Bultmann points out that the eternity man learns about in his existential self-analysis is "a negative conception", Essays, p. 109.

This brings to our notice another significant point. The view of immanence that Owen favours is that of St. Bonaventure, whose view can be called 'contuition'.^{*} Contuition is the process in which " ... the human soul knows God simply by reflecting on itself, since it is made in the image of God".^{**} Or to quote another definition,^{***} contuition "... is .. the apprehension in a perceived result of the presence of a cause which we cannot perceive intuitively". It seems to me that this view of immanence suffers from at least two defects. First, it does not seem to take seriously enough the doctrine of original sin; namely, that in some sense, the divine image is defaced by man's transgression. Therefore any revelation based upon the perception of such an image will inevitably be distorted. Bultmann does not fall into any such error. All through the essay we have been quoting, he is at pains to point out that any analysis that man may make of his own existence does not bring authentic knowledge of the living and acting God. But this objection seems perfectly valid against St. Bonaventure and subsequently against Owen. Second, the method is thoroughly unhistorical. In it, there is no context, no 'other', no 'world'. Man could come to knowledge of God in this way while living in

^{*}Owen, op. cit., p. 69.

^{**} op. cit., p. 69.

^{***} that of Etienne Gilson, in the Philosophy of St. Bonaventure, (London 1938), pps. 400-1, quoted by Owen, op. cit., p. 69.

an existential vacuum. Man is simply an object to himself as subject. Nowhere else, I suspect, could we find such a contradiction of (the) ¹⁶Heideggerian insight that man is 'Dasein', or such a Cartesian view of knowledge. This view of immanence therefore, in which man is so radically unhistorical and untemporal, would be completely unacceptable to those who accept, upon existentialist and biblical grounds, the radical historicity and temporality of man.

While Owen criticizes Bultmann's view as over-intellectual and his view of revelation as propositional^{*}, ~~both~~ his own lies wide open to these very criticisms. Thus Owen's statement that "God IS truth and to believe in him is to acknowledge him as true" reveals the intellectualistic and propositional nature of his view.^{***} This is just as true of his assertion^{***} that " ... He (i.e. the present writer,) hopes to be able to see the truth of Christ's teaching, and even, sometimes,

^{*}op. cit., p. 71. Owen completely misses the point of Bultmann's theology here. There is hardly a stronger emphasis in Bultmann's thought than his denial that 'what God is saying to me here and now' (Owen, op. cit., p. 72) can be objectified into a general proposition. God's disclosure of himself gives me a meaningful self-understanding and also meaningfully relates me to my situation at a particular 'moment'. But the whole point about this insight is that it cannot be turned into a proposition, generally meaningful, no matter the form of words in which I try to express it. Thus an imperative is inseparable from an indicative. What would Bultmann's alternative be? Only that what is disclosed in the 'moment' is a vague, shadowy, contentless, image of God, quite unrelatable to my existential situation. But such a view would be nonsensical. While we are becoming used to critics of Bultmann complaining that his theology is unacceptable because devoid of the possibility of propositions, it is a little hard to find Owen saying the exact opposite!

^{***}op. cit., p. 65.

^{***}op. cit., p. 65.

to practice⁵ it; but he has never experienced anything that he would call an encounter". There is little doubt that these are thoroughly intellectualistic views of immanence. Yet, Bultmann's view is one that regards man in his totality; if man is given awareness of God and of his own existence, this is not merely intellectual knowledge --- for since self-awareness is an integral part of man's total being any change in it is 'ipso facto' a change in man's total being.* So, to return to Bultmann's central theme, the revelation of God does not merely inform man but transforms him. It does seem to me that Owen's view of immanence seems to be static and intellectual and ^{supra}~~metaphysical~~ historical, while Bultmann's seems to be dynamic and existential and thoroughly historical.

We must now try to examine Bultmann's doctrine of immanence at a deeper level, first by examining Bultmann's theology in itself, and then by comparing it with that of other thinkers. We have seen that Bultmann rejects any view of man that is substantial rather than historical and existential. He obviously does not regard the soul as a kind of substance which could have an 'impress' left upon it by the hand of its Maker. "In the genuinely Christian view, man is, body and soul, the creature of God, and no pre-existent spark of heavenly light---

*This is an insight that Owen seems to have totally missed.

as if that were his real being --- is to be distinguished from his psychosomatic existence".^{*} Bultmann is concerned throughout his theology with man's historical existence. To use the terminology of Heidegger, he believes that man is 'Geschichtlich', a category which is applicable to man as 'Dasein'. With 'Geschichtlichkeit' is closely linked another category of 'Dasein', 'Zeitlichkeit', which means temporality.^{**} Man's special temporality is in being inseparably connected with past, present, and future. This means that in describing man, the only valid statements that we may make are existential, not substantial. Therefore, just as classical theology could make statements like 'man is mortal and substantial soul', modern existentialist theology must say 'man is historicity and temporality'. Thus it is impossible to speak of man without simultaneously speaking of that which constitutes him, that which is, so to speak, his "essential" ingredient, namely time, in its peculiar human structure of past-present-future. Grasping this, we can go further and say, man is temporality, and within man's temporality is to be discovered the divine immanence. Thus God is hidden in man as temporality and is to be encountered only through it. For if God is to be discovered elsewhere than in the special structure of past, present,

^{*}Theology of the New Testament, I, p. 168.

^{**}For these terms, see Macquarrie, An Existentialist Theology, pps. 160, 32.

and future, then man's temporality in the sense in which we have described it is a fiction. Here we must hasten to correct a possible misinterpretation. Of course those of St. Bonaventure's persuasion must admit that man cannot be separated from time in the sense that man is always in time. But Bultmann's "Zeitlichkeit" means something different --- it means that man is confronted by knowledge of God and of himself not only in but through time, through history, through the past-present-future structure. Just as classical theology could state that 'God is present in the soul of man',* 'God has left an impress in the soul of man', so existentialist theology must state the same kind of things, except that it always must substitute 'historicity' and 'temporality' for 'soul'. It can say that God has left an "Anknüpfungspunkt" (contact-point) with himself in the historicity of man. Thus in existentialist theology the concepts 'historicity' and 'temporality' seem to have displaced the concept 'soul' in the context of the doctrine of immanence. If Bultmann's essay The Question of Natural Revelation is carefully examined, it will be found that those deep desires and cravings and longings experienced by man qua man are existential in the sense that they are historical and temporal.

*Cf. Owen, op. cit., p. 67: "... God is not trying to SAY something to us; he is trying to BE someone IN us".

We mean by this that they are all rooted in man's essential connection with time in the past-present-future structure. For example, there are man's subjection to forces alien to himself (like death) which cut short his future, his feeling that he is forever on the way and missing himself continually in the swift passage of time, his sense of unachievement, his subjection to decay. This is the core of Bultmann's doctrine of immanence.

The position that we have reached so far with regard to the doctrine of immanence is this: God has indeed left a witness of himself in man; he has left, if we may be allowed to use traditional language, an impress upon man's total temporal and historical existence.^x In creating man integrally connected with an historical existence, God has formed that existence in such a way that man is pointed to God as

^x"God is the mysterious, enigmatic power that meets us IN the world and IN time", Bultmann, Essays, p. 9.

"God's action with man through his Word naturally has no point of contact (Ger. Anknüpfungspunkt) in man or in human intellectual life, to which God must accommodate himself", Essays, p. 135.

"The question of his own real being which engages the attention of the man who seeks to be himself and has lost his self, is the point of contact (Ger. Anknüpfungspunkt) for God's Word", Essays, p. 136.

"Man's sin is the point of contact (Ger. Anknüpfungspunkt) for the ... Word of grace. One cannot then point to this or that point of contact (Ger. Anknüpfungspunkt) IN man, in his intellectual life and in his history. Rather is MAN IN HIS EXISTENCE, TAKEN AS A WHOLE, THE POINT OF CONTACT (Ger. Anknüpfungspunkt). And for this reason it is also true that there is no faculty in man --- no religious faculty possessing a special receptivity for God's Word. What we designate as a special religious faculty or disposition or receptivity can represent just as much a hindrance as a help for hearing God's Word", Essays, p. 137.

"God's Word confronts man in his whole existence.....", Essays, p. 137.

"...the task of preaching in the New Testament is ... conceived ..in such a way....that we cannot speak of a point of contact (Ger. Anknüpfungspunkt) for the Word of God in man's intellectual life", Essays, p. 138.

possibility. (God as actuality is disclosed only in the 'moment'.) Or, by imparting to man the quality of temporality (in the past-present-future structure) God has 'impressed' himself upon that temporality in the sense that he is the only factor or power who can break man's connection with a sinful past in the present 'moment' and give him the possibility of a new existence in the future. God is immanent in man's time and history as existing, not in his soul! Thus man's total historical, psychosomatic existence suggests God as possibility.*

If this standpoint of Bultmann's be accepted, then we can proceed to interpret other theological statements from it. Thus John Macquarrie quotes the famous prayer of St. Augustine, "Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in

Thee", and gives it an existential interpretation --- namely that the

*On reflection, I should not be happy at the total elimination of the notion of substance from anthropology. Quite apart from its actual derivation, and from its exact usage in mediaeval and post-mediaeval theology, there is one valid insight that the concept seems to guard and retain. This is the insight that there is something 'lasting', 'enduring', in the temporal 'I' who experiences. Thus, there must be some continuity between the 'I' who experienced in 1940, and the 'I' who experienced in 1950, and the 'I' who experiences in 1960. Despite continually developing and changing self-understandings, it must be in some sense 'substantially' the same 'I' which experiences. The alternative would be utter lack of continuity. But this means that my 'I' is different from A's, as A's is from B's. Thus 'substance' used in this way comes to guard individuality, and is thus different from the classical notion that all soul is the same substance with the same impress upon it. This is doubtless a pernicious idea. But the existentialists would have to agree that all existence qua existence is 'substantially' the same in so far as it is all related to the three-fold structure of temporality. And the main trouble with the classical idea of substance is of course that it makes possible the subject-object approach to God, and makes redundant the concept of historicity. In its classical usage, it is certainly incompatible with existentialist theology.

anxiety inseparable from historical existence in the world may incline man to God, the Creator, the ground of being.* So also does Macquarrie interpret Schleiermacher's famous 'Gefühl der schlechthinnigen Abhängigkeit'.** This feeling (cognitive feeling, and not mere emotion), another condition of man's historical existence, may lead man to God the Creator, and so far as it does, is not this feeling also an aspect of the divine immanence?***

But to move on to our comparisons, we must ask if Bultmann's doctrine of immanence is so unique? Is it so peculiar to Bultmann himself? Or has it wider-spread roots in the existentialist tradition, as over against classical theology? Certainly if we examine another theology also in the existentialist tradition, namely the theology of Paul Tillich, we find views there which suggest a view of immanence not unlike that of Bultmann's, although unlike that of Owen's.****

Speaking of the preparation in history for the coming of Christ, Tillich writes: "The universal quest for the New Being is a consequence of universal revelation. If it claims universality,

* An Existentialist Theology, p. 71.

** op. cit., p. 75.

*** Further references in Macquarrie's book might be indicated, especially in pps. 79 f., beginning with this sentence on p. 79: "The connection of the ontological interpretation of affective states with the knowledge of God is, however, implied in other Pauline passages".

**** It cannot be too strongly emphasised at this point again that here we are going to compare Bultmann's theology with the theology of the existentialist Tillich. As indicated already, we shall indicate in our concluding chapter the divergence between the existentialist and ontological strands in Tillich's theology as a whole.

Christianity implicitly maintains that the different forms in which the quest for the New Being has been made are fulfilled in Jesus as the Christ".^{xx} Here we have, first, 'universal revelation'; this refers to the revelation of God imparted at creation, and thus must mean, in some sense, immanence. 'The quest for the New Being' is a mark of human existence qua human, and therefore is existential and not substantial. 'New Being', analysed by Tillich in contrast with 'old being'^{xxx}, is a want, a lack, a need, a longing. The different forms of the quest become one in that they are 'fulfilled' by Jesus as the Christ. There is hardly need to point out here the similarities in thought and language between Tillich and Bultmann.

Tillich is interesting when he deals with his so-called method of correlation which underlies, he maintains, his theology as a whole. "Symbolically speaking, God answers man's questions, and under the impact of God's answers man asks them. Theology formulates the answers implied in divine self-manifestation under the guidance of the questions involved in human existence. This is a circle which drives man to a point where question and answer are not separated".^{xxxx}

^{xx} Syst. Theol., II, p. 103.

^{xxx} in Syst. Theol., II.

^{xxxx} Syst. Theol., I, p. 69.

From this it should be clear that human existence itself is the Anknüpfungspunkt for the self-disclosure of God, and not an impress or image in man's substantial soul.*

We can indicate again how Tillich comes out against the intuition view of immanence. Tillich writes: "The answers implied in the event of revelation are meaningful only in so far as they are in correlation with questions concerning the whole of our existence, with existential questions. Only those who have experienced the shock of transitoriness, the anxiety in which they are aware of their finitude, the threat of non-being, can understand what the notion of God means. Only those who have experienced the tragic ambiguities of our historical existence and have totally questioned the meaning of existence can understand what the symbol of the Kingdom of God means" (Syst. Theol., I, p. 69).

* I have deliberately not pushed the comparison between Bultmann and Tillich too far at this point. This is because there are two elements at least in Tillich's words that might be suspected, from a strictly existentialist point of view. First, this 'question/answer' terminology is ambiguous in that it could lend itself to a propositional interpretation. Tillich is not clear here that the answer of revelation to the existential question is strictly personal and not propositional. Whereas Bultmann is always crystal-clear at this point. For Bultmann, the answer is God, it is personal. Thus Bultmann writes to Schniewind: "I AM trying to substitute anthropology for theology, for I am interpreting theological affirmations as assertions about human life. What I mean is that the God of the Christian revelation is the answer to the vital questions, the existential questions" (Kerygma and Myth, pps. 107-8). Second, when Tillich speaks of the circle which drives man to a point where question and answer are not separated, it is unclear whether there could be room within this circle for event, for the historic 'moment'. In fact, it is difficult to decide really if we are dealing here with the existentialist or the ontological Tillich. The immense difficulty in interpreting his theology is that it is sometimes hard to decide whether we have come up against the existentialist or the ontological strain. In our concluding chapter we indicate both of these; this does not altogether remove the difficulty of deciding about specific passages. At any rate, there is little doubt here that Tillich's theology comes out against Owen's and St. Bonaventure's. The suspicion that we might have here **that** the ontological Tillich / (please see next page)

Thus, Tillich's use of such terms as 'existential questions', 'anxiety', 'the tragic ambiguities of our historical existence', indicate how he diverges from the totally unhistorical intuition view favoured by Owen. And there is a general similarity, subject to the reservations we have pointed out, between Tillich's conviction that 'only those who have experienced the tragic ambiguities of our historical existence can understand what the symbol of the Kingdom of God means', and Bultmann's notion that our experience of existence-in-the-world, and the threats and fears it brings, produce a seed-plot for a notion like 'God'. In so far as there is a strand in Tillich's theology which sees that God is immanent in man's awareness as historically existing, he is not dissimilar to Bultmann and diverges sharply from Owen. Tillich's exploitation of existentialist analysis, which is the main factor separating him from a intuition view of immanence, comes out clearly here: "... systematic

theology makes an analysis of the human situation out of which the the ontological Tillich/ is speaking is confirmed by Tillich when he writes of the point where for man question and answer are not separated: "This point, however, is not a moment in time. It belongs to man's essential being, to the unity of his finitude with the infinity in which he was created and from which he is separated. A symptom of both the essential unity and the existential separation of finite man from his infinity is his ability to ask about the infinite to which he belongs; the fact that he must ask about it indicates that he is separated from it" (Syst. Theol., I, p. 69). For Bultmann the point most certainly is a moment in time, a concrete encounter. For Bultmann, man deludes himself if he imagines that his awareness of his finitude gives him real knowledge of the living, infinite God. His awareness is merely an Anknüpfungspunkt. For Bultmann, it is unthinkable that there exists a unity in man, of finitude and infinity. And the phrase 'man's essential being' would be anathema to an existentialist like Bultmann or Heidegger or Sartre. As we shall see in our conclusions, it is most probably the ontologist Tillich who speaks in this way. But yet Tillich's emphasis on 'questions concerning the whole of our existence', with 'existential questions', (Syst. Theol., I, pps. 68-9) does separate him decisively from that tradition upheld by St. Bonaventure and Owen.

existential questions arise.....The analysis of the human situation is done in terms which today are called 'existential'".[¶] This same **exploitation is further** shown by this: "God is the answer to the question implied in human finitude".^{¶¶} The divergence of a thinker like Tillich from St. Bonaventure's and Owen's tradition is further demonstrated in passages like this, discussing the so-called ontological argument for the existence of God. For Tillich, the supreme value of this 'argument' (it is, for him, not an "argument" at all in the usual sense) is that it reveals that " ... an awareness of the infinite is included in man's awareness of finitude...".^{¶¶¶} Thus Tillich's thought is differentiated again from the thought of Owen; there is no indication here of a divine image impressed into a substantial and unhistorical soul.^{¶¶¶¶}

Here we make a point of considerable importance which we shall develop in detail in our chapter on the work of Kierkegaard. It is that any theology which develops from that of Kierkegaard (e.g., those of Barth, Bultmann, Buber), is simply bound to diverge sharply from a doctrine of immanence like that of St. Bonaventure or of Owen. The notion that there is in man's soul a divine image or impress which man

[¶]Syst. Theol., I, p. 70.

^{¶¶}Syst. Theol., I, p. 72. Cf. Essays, pps. 107-8, where Bultmann argues that man's experience of finitude is a contact-point for the divine revelation, which we have described by saying that this experience represents an element in the divine immanence.

^{¶¶¶}Syst. Theol., I, p. 228.

^{¶¶¶¶}But Tillich's thought here is far from being identical with that of Bultmann; we shall re-open Tillich's attitude to the ontological argument again when we compare him finally with Bultmann in the conclusions.

Contemplate

need only intuitively[^] was fiercely attacked and repudiated by Kierkegaard. Thus Kierkegaard writes: "In order that he may have the power to give the condition the Teacher must be God; in order that he may be able to put the learner in possession of it he must be Man. This contradiction is again the object of faith, and is the Paradox, the Moment. That God has once for all given man the requisite condition is the eternal Socratic presupposition, which comes into hostile collision with time, but is incommensurable with the temporal and its determinations".^{*} Thus, the Kierkegaardian revolt was in great part a revolt against a much over-emphasised 'classical' doctrine of the divine immanence in man. That Kierkegaard proceeded too far is at least arguable,^{**} But we mention this point here in order to show how theologies deeply indebted to the Kierkegaardian revolution share to a greater or less degree in this rejection of classical immanence.

While on this subject of immanence, there is one other thinker, seminal and highly influential, whose work we can scarcely ignore, Martin Buber. Although we shall deal with Buber's views on the 'moment' in our next chapter, he has certain passages with important

^{*}Philosophical Fragments, p. 50.

^{**}In fact, we shall argue so in chapter IV. In Kierkegaard's view there seems to[^] little room for any kind of immanence at all.

Implications

^ for the doctrine of immanence that we must deal with here.

One of the more important criticisms of the intuition-type of view of immanence, was that it was thoroughly unhistorical, that it did not take account of man as always man-in-the-world. Owen seems to imply that intuition could be carried out in abstraction from history, with a subject 'I' examining itself as object. With such a view, Buber will have nothing to do. "Spirit is not the 'I', but between 'I' and 'Thou'". It is not like the blood that circulates in you, but like the air in which you breathe. Man lives in the spirit, if he is able to respond to his 'Thou'. He is able to, if he enters into relation with his whole being. Only in virtue of his power to enter into relation is he able to live in the spirit".* This is tantamount to a complete rejection of Owen's position. For what is the 'power to enter into relation' if it is not one of the conditions of historical existence; that is, existence in the world, in time, in history, in a context of other Thous? And Buber's view that 'Spirit ... is like the air in which you breathe' surely means that ^{the} divine is immanent in the totality of historical existence.

Another such rejection of the intuition-view can be cited:

* I and Thou, 1st. edition, Edinburgh 1937, p. 39.

"If a man does not represent the 'a priori' of relation in his living with the world, if he does not work out and realise the inborn 'Thou' on what meets it, then it strikes inward. It develops on the unnatural, impossible object of the 'I', that is, it develops where there is no place at all for it to develop. Thus confrontation of what is over against him takes place within himself, and this cannot be relation, or presence, or streaming interaction, but only self-contradiction. The man may seek to explain it as a relation, perhaps as a religious relation, in order to wrench himself from the horror of the double inner-ganger; but he is bound to discover again and again the deception of the explanation. Here is the verge of life, flight of an unfulfilled life to the senseless semblance of fulfilment, and its groping in a maze and losing itself ever more profoundly".* It is hard not to conclude that when Buber writes 'confrontation of what is over against him takes place within himself, and this.. (is a).. contradiction', he has in mind something like St. Bonaventure's intuition. Nothing could be clearer; for the self to seek for reality within itself, without historical meeting, is for Buber 'a groping in a maze'.

And finally we may clinch the divergence of Buber from any intuition-type view. Buber writes as follows : "His sense of 'Thou', which cannot be satiated till he finds the endless 'Thou', had

* op. cit., pps. 69-70.

the 'Thou' present to it from the beginning; the presence had only to be-
:come real to him in the reality of the hallowed life of the world".^x
That man's sense of the Thou leads him to the Thou in historical meeting
is what we have been trying to argue throughout this chapter. And its
realisation in the 'hallowed life of the world' is the same thing, is
it not, as fulfilment, and yet more than fulfilment, in the 'moments'
of an existence which is thoroughly historical ?

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CHARLES THOMAS

THE "MOMENTS" IN THE WORKS OF

MARTIN BURR

^xop. cit., p. 80.

Before we consider Buber's teaching on the 'moment', we might recapitulate a little on what has already been said. The 'moment' as a concept is not uncommon in thinkers and writers of the existentialist tradition, and Heidegger's position we have already examined in detail in chapter I. Since the thinkers of the tradition living where a common life and an intimate dialectical background are lacking, we are surprised to hear Heidegger and others speak of the 'moment' in teaching.

CHAPTER THREE
THE 'MOMENT' IN THE WORKS OF

MARTIN BUBER

... part of the ... must keep ourselves ... The possibility ... occurrence demands that ... a dialectical ... world. Our spiritual ... be directed toward ... this readiness. The ... to have ... it is gone. The 'moment' is one of awareness, of disclosure, of vision, of self-knowledge, of encounter, of love. It is ... that dislocates our past from our future, and thus gives ... any meaning and significance. What comes to us in ... not easily retained and possessed: the awareness of ...

Before we consider Buber's teaching on the 'moment', we might recapitulate a little on what has already been said. The 'moment' as a concept is not uncommon in thinkers and writers of the existentialist tradition, and Bultmann's position we have already examined in detail in chapter I. Since the thinkers we are considering share a common biblical and existentialist background, we will not be surprised to hear again and again common chords striking through their teaching. In this third chapter we will be struck often by chords, themes, common to, for example, Buber and Bultmann.

The 'moment' is a brief span of time for which we must keep ourselves open and responsive. The possibility of its occurrence demands what Bultmann calls a dialectical relation to the world. Our spiritual culture should be directed towards this openness, this readiness. The 'moment' seems no sooner to have arrived, than it is gone. The 'moment' is one of awareness, of disclosure, of revelation, of self-knowledge, of encounter, of love. It is the 'moment' that dislocates our past from our future, and thus gives time and history meaning and significance. What comes to us in the 'moment' is not easily retained and possessed; the awareness it brings has enormous force and persuasion in the 'moment', quickly fading, and for this reason it is difficult to construct from it a philosophy, a Weltanschauung, a system of ideas. We must learn the lesson that to come to the knowledge imparted by the 'moment', we must ourselves experience the

'moment'. The 'moment' is the essence of and is implied by man's temporality and historicity, without which these concepts would be left empty and meaningless. Unless man's time is punctuated by 'moments', it cannot be truly said that he has a history.

It would be a mistake to assume that this concept occurs only in theology or philosophy wherever the word 'moment' is found. There are a great many terms, and we shall encounter this especially in Buber, which, when examined, mean much the same thing. For example, we have seen in the work of Dultmann that when we encounter the terms 'meeting', 'concrete event', 'encounter', that the 'moment' is but the temporal aspect of these. The reality of the 'moment' is also implied when certain writers use certain ^{other} phrases.

The 'moment' is the concrete temporal expression of the views that follow; that we only really know or understand what we have lived through; that a religion can only be believed by those who have in time committed their life to it; that truth only comes to those who, realizing their temporality and historicity in a radical sense, commit themselves to their history and their time, and realize truth only discontinuously in event or encounter.

Let us now turn to a brief examination of some of the terms used by Martin Buber which have special relevance for our subject. First, we notice that often Buber uses the precise word 'moment'. Often too he uses 'moment of...', or 'moments of...'. Other terms that he uses are as follows :-

- (a) The Present,
- (b) The Instant,
- (c) 'From time to time...'
- (d) Presentness (of man),
- (e) Relational event in which something comes to us,
- (f) The opposite of 'duration' (a negative term),
- (g) The presentness of the 'Thou',
- (h) The 'hour' in which...,
- (i) The decisive moment,
- (j) Incidents or situations lacking temporal duration,
- (k) The response to the Thou,
- (l) The present of man,
- (m) Present incident,
- (n) The 'here and now',
- (o) The opposite of continuity (a negative term),
- (p) The opposite of an unbroken continuum (a negative term),
- (q) The act of relation in time,
- (r) Repeated acts of relation in time,
- (s) To 'realize something anew in the world each day...'
- (t) The continual penetration of human life with relational events,
- (u) The original relational event (usually in reference to the history of a people or group),
- (v) The continual renewing of relational event,
- (w) The meeting,
- (x) The times when the world of 'It' can be left for the world of relation,
- (y) 'From time to time at every parting of ways',

- (z)The delicate appearance of the 'Thou' in the world of 'It',
- (A)"Isolated moments of relation in which we enter the unbroken world of 'Thou'",
- (B)The moment of supreme meeting,
- (C)Repeated decision,
- (D)The encounter.

We may make these few comments on Buber's terminology. Terms like 'moment', 'Instant', and so-on require no comments. But of his other terms we can say this. We note from them that Buber is concerned with man's time and how he lives it. He is concerned with the fact that in man's time he is encountered by something new which invites him into relation with itself. In man's time Buber is clear that there is lacking 'duration' or 'continuity'; man's time is for him 'fragmentary'. This is a negative way of saying that time is ~~the/now~~ 'punctuated' by moments, by hours, by presents. To these supremely valuable and significant points in time man ought not to prefer duration or continuity. To long for continuity is one of man's most dangerous temptations. We note also Buber's use of 'penetration'. He reminds us that man's time and man's everyday world is penetrated again and again by something new. On the other hand, he can also say that again and again man can enter into another reality --- again and again, but not continuously. This represents a two-way movement in which something moves towards man and man, in response, moves towards something; the coincidence of these two ^{in time} constitutes the occurrence of the 'moment'. We note also Buber's fondness for the terms 'renewal' and 'anew'. Thus he again emphasises the discontinuity of man's time; man's experience, his

moment, do not bring him the kind of knowledge he can possess once and for all, except the knowledge of his existential obligation to renew. Finally, we note Buber's fondness for the terms 'present', 'presentness', and 'presence'. Buber calls upon men to exploit their presentness, to realize that they must achieve their genuine life in the given 'now'. With these rather bald comments on Buber's terminology, we must now turn to a detailed consideration of Buber's teaching on the 'moment'. We shall do so just as we did in the case of Bultmann, by arranging our material for discussion under several headings. Not only has this the advantage of orderliness; it enables us to see how the headings we used in Bultmann's case in chapter I approximate sometimes to those we use for Buber, and thus makes comparisons easier to follow. The main sections in Buber's treatment of the concept 'moment' are these that follow.

(1) THE REALITY OF THE PRESENT 'MOMENT'.

The 'moment' is a real filled, present, characterised by meeting, relation. The present in Buber is really adjectival, for what constitutes the 'moment' is the present 'Thou'. If the 'Thou' were not present, there would be no 'moment'. In the absence of the 'Thou' there is only the past.^{**}

The appearance of the 'Thou' is uncertain, unexpected, uncontrollable. Man is unable to construct a sequence which is continuous, in which arrangements could be made^{***} for the appearance of the

^{**}See I and Thou, Transl. R. Gregor Smith, Edinburgh 1937, p. 12. Cf. Buber's paper, Elements of the Inter-human, transl. R. Gregor Smith, private typescript:- Here we find the closest possible linking together of the 'moment', the 'present'(of time), 'present'(Adjectival), and 'presence'. "This awareness..(of the other)..is only possible when I step into an elemental relation with the other, that is when he becomes a presence to me. So I describe awareness in this special sense as 'personal making present", p. 13. "For the proper content of the inter-human it is necessary, as we have shown.....that each one means and makes present the other in his personal being", p. 19. "In genuine conversation the turning of the partner takes place in all truth, that is, it is a turning of the being. Every speaker means the partner or partners to whom he turns as this particular existence. To 'mean'someone in this connection is at the same time to exercise that degree of 'making present' which is possible to the speaker at that moment. The experiencing sense and the real fantasy which completes the findings of the senses work together to make the other present as a whole and as a unique being, as the person that he is. But the speaker does not merely perceive the one who is present to him in this way, he receives him as his partner; that means that he confirms so far as it is for him to confirm, this other being. The true turning of his life to the other includes this confirmation, this acceptance. Of course, such a confirmation does not mean approval; but in no matter in what I am against the other I have affirmed him as a person", pps. 20-21.

^{***}As arrangements are made for, say, a scientific experiment.

'Thou' and thus for the occurrence of the 'moment'.³⁶ Nor has man control over the duration of the 'moment'. "The moment", says Buber, "is lived in a 'duration' whose purely intensive dimension is definable only in terms of itself".³⁷ For the 'moment' to occur there must be an 'I' ready for mutual action with the 'Thou', and thus the 'moment' requires openness, readiness, co-operation.

Buber says that there are 'moments' when the world-order is transitorily revealed to men, but hastens to point out that what is revealed here is not 'the ordered world'.³⁸ The 'ordered world', obviously, is that controlled, used, and co-ordinated world arranged by man's science and technology. But this is not the world-order. Moments of revelation radiate beams which stream into the ordered world, and dissolve it again.³⁹ I think that Buber means that in such 'moments' there is revealed the underlying reality, which lies beyond and

³⁶Cf. " ... the deity is always present but in every hour in the appearance that pleases him, that is to say, he does not allow himself to be limited to any form of revelation, and he does not allow himself to be limited to any form of revelation, and he does not limit himself to any of them;he bestows his grace and mercy on whom he will, and lets no one order a criterion for him nor himself orders any", Martin Buber, in The Prophetic Faith, chapter V, (New York, 1949), pps. 43-59; quoted in The Writings of Martin Buber, edit. W. Herberg, (New York 1956), p. 165. Cf. "With his words 'I shall be present howsoever I shall be present', he describes himself as the one who is not restricted to any specific manner of manifestation, but permits himself to be seen from time to time by those he leads and, in order to lead them, to be seen by them after the fashion which he prefers at the given moment", Martin Buber, Moses, Oxford 1946, pps. 119-140; quoted in Herberg, op. cit., p. 188.

³⁷I and Thou, pps. 30-33.

³⁸I and Thou, p. 31.

beneath the forms and orders of man and his industry. The 'moment's' revelation is given, not constructed. What is given in the 'moment' is primeval; it is also universal.

Such 'moments', says Buber, are immortal, the most transitory of all, and no content can be secured from them.³¹ Rather than furnish knowledge from which a Weltanschauung could be constructed, the 'moment' supplies power. (We think here of Tillich's view that revelatory experience is ecstatic-miraculous-shaking). This power, says Buber, "invades creation and the knowledge of man".³² We must make here one important preliminary observation; Buber's use of terms like 'dissolves', 'invades' makes us suspect a hint of antipathy, of opposition, between that world ordered by man's ingenuity on the one hand, and the power and insight of the 'moment' on the other. Our further examination of Buber will confirm this suspicion; so that here we have another similarity between Buber's thought and Bultmann's. Bultmann, as we have seen, is always clear that what comes through the 'moment' finds stiff opposition waiting for it in the tightly organized, institutionalized ~~WIRTSCHAFTS- UND KULTURLEBEN~~ life of man, whether on the social-political level, or in the cares, plans, wishes, work, of the personal everyday level.³³

³¹Op. cit., p. 31. Cf. Bultmann and Kierkegaard; for Bultmann too the 'moment' is eternal, in it man is lifted out of history; no possessable content is securable from it: for Kierkegaard, as we shall see, the Moment is eternal, filled with eternity; for him also, the Moment does not give possessable knowledge.

³²Op. cit., p. 31.

³³It is this that necessitates the inner aloofness of the dialectical relationship to the world.

Buber contrasts the reality disclosed in the 'moment' with the world ordered by man and his ingenuity. Each 'moment', each meeting, is not completely isolated; each has something in common. Each is a sign-post which points to the underlying world-order.* Or, each "meeting assures you of your solidarity with the world". Men, in their 'moments', dip into one reality which is universal. This world-order disclosed in the 'moment' is to be contrasted with the world in which we live every day and make our living --- for one thing it is unreliable.* This means that it 'takes on a continually new appearance'. What is probably behind the thought of Buber here is that in this world scientific laws describe the invariable reaction of things; they are thus not merely descriptions but 'prophecies'. They claim to be universals. In contrast to this, the world that appears to man in the 'moment' "cannot be held to its word". It is, speaking scientifically, unreliable. We are reminded here of Bultmann's views that the 'moment' is enigmatic, mysterious, risky.

Another contrast with the world of everyday life and science that Buber makes is that the revelation of the world-order in the 'moment' has no duration. "It comes", says Buber, "even when it

*op. cit., p. 32.

is not summoned", and "vanishes even when it is tightly held".^x We may contrast this with the world which we arrange for examination or experiment --- a typically subject/object relationship. But there is no possibility of 'arranging' or experimenting with the world-order glimpsed in the transitory, fleeting 'moment'. It is given, suddenly, inexplicably, and vanishes again just as mysteriously --- it is outwith man's objective observation and control. It "vanishes even when it is tightly held". We note again the impossibility of possessing its content for the future, of appropriating its content as raw material for a Weltanschauung. It is when we try to retain it and hold it, *that* it slips through our fingers and is gone. How like Bultmann's view this is. Buber describes his position thus: " ... It is your present; only while you have it do you have the present".^{xx} These words, we must admit, might have been written by Bultmann. Another sharp contrast with our ordered, technological world is supplied by Buber when he states that the present 'moment' " ... does not help to sustain you in life, it only helps you to glimpse eternity".^{xx} In other words, the 'moment' supplies ZOE rather than BIOS. Buber doubtlessly has in mind here how applied science, technology, medicine, sustain our life here in this world; that is their primary value.

^xop. cit., p. 32.

^{xx}op. cit., p. 33.

The 'moment', in contrast, helps us to glimpse eternity; it gives meaning to our human existence; as Bultmann says, the value of faith is that in it the believer is lifted above time and history.^x Thus the insights of the 'moment' are to set over against the advantages of science and its applications, greater speed and convenience of travel, greater freedom from bodily ailments, the prolongation of our days, and more efficient industrial methods.^{xxx}

The ordinary, every-day world in which we live and work, the world in which find means to achieve our ends, is for Buber the world of 'It'. Buber admits that such a world is pleasant to behold, exciting, absorbing.^{xxx} In comparison with this secure and comfortable world, what can the 'moment' offer? These temporal episodes, 'the moments of the Thou', are lyric, dramatic, seductive,

^xHistory and Eschatology, p. 153.

^{xxx}In Elements of the Inter-human, pps. 23 f., Buber describes an interesting application of this. In 1914 he attended a conference held to discuss means of avoiding the approaching war. In this conference, truth was apparent in the personal, I-Thou relationships that were established; 'existential' progress was made. Yet, from the point of view of arranging the world better, of selecting practical, concrete ends and means, the conference was a failure. Indeed, it had to be stopped because of the rapid approach of hostilities. Buber writes (p. 23), "In respect of its purpose the meeting must be described as a failure (even though now in my heart it is still not a certainty that it had to be a failure).....". Also, on p. 24, "Nevertheless, in the event, not one of the participants doubted that he had shared in a triumph of the inter-human". This is an excellent illustration of Buber's distinction between existential and practical knowledge.

^{xxxx}I and Thou, p. 33.

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magical.³² They have grave disadvantages for us who ordinarily live in the attractive world of 'It'. First, they "tear us away to dangerous extremes".³³ They make us aware of dangerous demands, demands never contemplated in the world of 'It'. They "loosen the well-tryed context". They raise questions that cast doubt on the solid and safe foundations of the It-world. They question its security and comfort. This can hardly be a welcome experience, because the great satisfaction of the world of 'It' is just that it is made up of answered questions, of resolved problems; its record is, says Buber, a "chronicle of solid benefits". In contrast, the 'moment' shakes our It-security by raising questions which it does not answer. It leaves us with a sense of unresolved mystery; thus Buber describes the 'moments' of the 'Thou' as uncanny.³⁴ Can we therefore be blamed for dispensing with the 'moments' of the 'Thou' ? They are transitory; we must soon depart from them back into our world of 'It'. Why then, it may be asked, leave this world in the first place ? Speaking of the 'moment's' content, Buber asks: "Why not call to order what is over against us, and send it packing into the realm of objects ?"³⁵ How like Bultmann this is! In other words, why not co-ordinate the disclosure of the

³² op. cit., p. 34.

³³ See op. cit., p. 34.

³⁴ op. cit., p. 34; cf. for Bultmann the 'moment' is enigmatic.

³⁵ op. cit., p. 34.

'moment' into an objectification, into a generalization, into a Weltanschauung which can be transmitted to all and sundry as an object, concrete and limited, regardless of existential participation? Yes, but " ... he who lives with 'It' alone is not a man".^{*} So to live is comfortable and secure. "We need only to fill each moment with experiencing and using and it ceases to burn".^{**} Obvious comparisons here are two. First, how similar this is to Bultmann's conviction that action, work, and the Weltanschauung, can be sworn enemies of the disclosure of the 'moment'. Second, there is an obvious similarity between Buber's thought here and the 'flight from historicity' we discussed in chapter I with reference to the work of Bultmann, Heidegger, and Kierkegaard.

The 'moment' does not vanish utterly when return to the It-world is made. If it did, it would be worthless. It can be recorded. It can be written down and transmitted, from man to man and from generation to generation within a people or a religious community. It can enter the general structure of knowledge. But, insists Buber, "... only as 'It' can it enter the structure of knowledge".^{***} The incident, the 'moment', the encounter, is now " ... included in the

^{*}op. cit., p. 34.

^{***}op. cit., p. 40.

'It' of knowledge which is composed of ideas".^{*} At this point a tragic possibility emerges. "....That which has become 'It' is left as 'It', experienced and used as 'It', appropriated for the undertaking 'to find one's bearings' in the world, and then to 'conquer' it".^{*} This would indeed be a tragedy. The 'moment' would become an object, a thing, utilized in a world of things. But there is another possibility. That is for a man to free the 'moment', the past encounter, from the 'It' of knowledge, from the Weltanschauungen, from the system. In what way? By looking on it again in the present moment, and fulfilling the nature of the act of knowledge^{xxx} to be real and effective between men. The objectified 'moment' "... has had the nature and disposition put into it to change back again and again".^{xxxx} The objectified 'moment' " ... must blaze up into presentness and enter the elemental state from which it came, to be looked on and lived in the present by man".^{xxxxx}

Buber obviously means by this that in some sense an interpreter of the past (i.e. history) must try to re-live (Ger. Nacherleben, W. Dilthey) recorded moments. He must try to make it come to

^{*}op. cit., p. 41; we note here that Bultmann held that the 'idea' was an enemy of authentic revelation.

^{xxx}op. cit., p. 41; although Buber uses the term 'act of knowledge', we must be most careful not to misinterpret him; he does not mean the imparting of knowledge, items of information, concepts, in the ordinary sense. He obviously means, from the context, the disclosure of being in an interpersonal sense. He uses 'act of knowledge' analogically.

^{xxxx}op. cit., p. 40.

^{xxxxx}op. cit., p. 40.

life again in his present. He must try to regard it with the same feelings, the same thoughts, from the same standpoint, as the person who originally experienced it and recorded it, thus sending it into the world of It-knowledge. It is to re-experience in the present a past encounter through the medium of a recorded 'moment'. The end of all this, as Buber points out, is a disclosure or communication between men, between persons.

'From man to man', 'between men' --- these words are important. The interpretation of past history as the making present of a past 'moment' so that interpersonal communication or disclosure takes place in a personal present, is one of the strongest links between Buber and his existentialist and biblical background.

First, we refer to the views set forth in chapter I on Bultmann's position that Holy Scripture becomes in the 'moment' rather than is the Word of God. Thus in reading the Scriptures, understanding only comes if God acts in them. We have stated that if revelation only comes in the concrete 'moment' and is recorded thus by the biblical writer, it follows that his meaning can only be grasped in the same kind of 'moment'. Thus the interpreter of the Bible must bring to his task his present (complete with problems, tasks, questions) so that it may inter-act with the recorded 'moment' of the original writer, for the same kind of 'moment' to recur. Thus biblical hermeneutics is essentially the ^{preparation for the} recurrence of 'moments'. Thus the 'word of God' in Scripture is not a substance, but an event.

Bultmann holds of course that the validity of Christian faith depends on the validity of such a theory. For him, the Scriptures would be meaningless and valueless unless in some sense they could interact with our present. They would be irrelevant for him unless we were able to experience in our present what Isaiah, Jeremiah, Peter, Zacchaeus, and Paul, all experienced, recorded for us in biblical 'moments'. To use Buber's terminology, these past 'moments', embedded in the It-world, must become for us now 'Thous'. They must blaze up again and assume presentness for us. Thus for Bultmann the Christ-event is EPHAPAX, unique, through its repeatableness; because it 'has had the disposition put into it to change back again and again' (Buber) and become for us present encounter. It is this kind of conviction that lies behind Bultmann's rather scandalous assertion that " ... Christus, der Gekreuzigte und Auferstandene, begegnet uns im Wort der Verkündigung, nirgend anders. Eben der Glaube an dieses Wort ist in Wahrheit der Osterglaube".³⁶ Thus Bultmann also writes: "In the preaching of the Christian Church the eschatological event will ever again become present and does become present ever and again in faith".³⁷

³⁶Bultmann, Neues Testament und Mythologie, in Kerygma und Mythos, I, (Hamburg 1951), p. 46.

³⁷History and Eschatology, p. 151.

We have already noted the work of R.G. Collingwood. We noted how Bultmann approves the general similarity between Collingwood's views and his own. "The historian's knowledge...", says Collingwood, " ... is knowledge of the past in the present, the self-knowledge of the historian's own mind as the present revival and re-living of past experiences".^{KK} " ... When the events which the historian studies are events that happened in the distant past, the condition of their being historically known is that they should 'vibrate in the historian's mind', that is to say, that the evidence for them should be here and now before him and intelligible to him".^{KK} " ... The historian's thought must spring from the organic unity of his total experience, and be a function of his entire personality with its practical as well as its theoretical interests".^{KKK} Similarities are obvious between Collingwood's use of 're-live', the 'present', 'here and now', 'total experience', 'practical interests' on the one hand, and Buber's conviction that historical interpretation is only possible when an interpersonal disclosure takes place, when a man out of his total existential present looks at a past recorded 'moment' in his own present. Thus in proper historical interpretation, what takes place is

^{KK} The Idea of History, p. 175.

^{KKK} op. cit., p. 202.

^{KKK} op. cit., p. 305.

not the impartation of ideas, concepts, propositions; rather it is men who speak to and inform and enquire of and question other men, no matter how great the stretch of time that separates them. They can speak from their situations to ours because the human situation is always the same, essentially. Anything that falls below the level of this is hardly the authentic, genuine interpretation of history; for Buber it would fall into the I-It relation.

That there is an amazing similarity between Buber's views on the interpretation of history and the existentialist interpretation (Dilthey, Bultmann, Collingwood) is beyond all doubt; we might say that Buber accepts the existentialist view of history. And if we make the important enquiry as to the source of this 'existentialist' doctrine in Buber --- the answer is not difficult to find. The main influence on Buber's views on hermeneutics has undoubtedly been the Hebrew Bible, with its notion of the radical historicity of revelation and disclosure. Thus Buber derives his hermeneutics from the history of Israel when he writes: "If history is a dialogue between Deity and mankind, we can understand its meaning only when we are the ones addressed, and only to the degree to which we render ourselves receptive The meaning of history is not an idea which I can formulate independent of my personal life. It is only with my personal life that I am able to catch the meaning of history, for it is a dialogical meaning".*

*Buber, Israel and the World; Essays in a time of Crisis, (New York 1948), pps. 81-82; printed in Herberg, op. cit., p. 34.

Thus the Bible addresses me in so far as I bring my present existence to the encounter it represents between God and Israel. For Buber, there is no possibility of history being factuality 'wie es eigentlich gewesen' : "There can be no certainty of arriving at 'what really happened'. However, even if it is impossible to reconstitute the course of events themselves, it is nevertheless possible to recover much of the manner in which the participating people experienced those events".²⁸ Thus true historical interpretation involves encounter with a participating people in the present. Again Buber rejects the 'wie es eigentlich gewesen conception' when writing of biblical leadership: " ... I do not mean that the Bible depicts men and women and events as they were in actual history; rather do I mean that its descriptions and narratives are the organic, legitimate ways of giving an account of what existed and what happened".²⁹ What Buber calls the 'saga element' in the Old Testament history is important for him, because we find in it "the reception of what befell in the minds of those whom it befell".³⁰ Thus interpretation of this history implies 're-thinking' and re-experiencing. In the Passover celebration, God's providence and leading become present encounter for the participating

²⁸ Moses, (Oxford 1946), pp. 13-19, which are printed in Herberg, op. cit. 149-156; see p. 152.

²⁹ Israel and the World, pps. 119-133, printed in Herberg, op. cit., pps. 218-30; see p. 218.

³⁰ Moses, pps. 13-19, as in Herberg, op. cit., p. 155.

congregation: "In the night of the Passover, 'the assembled company is fused together in every year and in all the world with the first cult confederates and attains that unity, which existed formerly at the first occasion in Egypt'. As they who keep the covenant in life know that it is the covenant which 'YHWH our God made with us in Horeb', 'not with our fathers', but 'with our very selves here this day, all of us being alive' (Deut. 5:2 f.), so telling the story of God's leading, they experience his historic deed as occurring to themselves".^{*} Similarly, the decalogue can only be rightly understood when it too becomes present reality and addresses a person in his present: "At all times , in any case, only those persons who really grasped the decalogue, who literally felt it as having been addressed to themselves, only those, that is, who experienced that first one's state of being addressed as though they themselves were being addressed. Thanks to its 'thou', the decalogue means the preservation of the divine voice".^{***} The significance of the tablets of the law in Judaism Buber describes thus: "And the tables remain as 'tables of testimony' or 'tables of making present' (Ex. 32:15), whose function it is to make present unto the generations of Israel forever what had once become word, that is, to

^{*}The Prophetic Faith, (New York 1949), chapter V, 'Holy Event', pps. 43-59, printed in Herberg, op. cit., pps. 157-171; see p. 164. Buber quotes here from Hempel, Das Ethos des Alten Testaments, (1938), p. 43.

^{***}Moses, the chapter 'The Words on the Tablets', pps. 119-140, printed in Herberg, op. cit., pps. 181-202, see p. 192 f.

set it before them as something spoken to them in this very hour".²

Buber holds that the justification of the so-called rebellion of 'Korah and his band' (Numb.16) is that " ... in the world of the law what has been inspired always becomes emptied of the spirit,³ yet continues to maintain its claim of full inspiration; in other words, that the living element always dies off, yet what is left continues to rule over living men. And the TRUE conclusion is that the law must again and again⁴ immerse itself in the consuming and purifying fire of the spirit,⁵ in order to renew itself and again refine the genuine substance out of the dross of what has become false. This lies in the continuation of the line of that Mosaic principle of ever-recurrent⁶ renewal".⁷

And it would be difficult to imagine a better paraphrase of the Dilthy-Bultmann-Collingwood type of hermeneutics than this : "The prophet fails in one hour in history, but not so far as the future of his people is concerned. For his people preserves his message as something that will be realized at another hour, under other conditions, and in other forms. The prophet's spirit does not, like Plato's, believe that he possesses an abstract and general, a timeless concept of truth. He always receives only one message for one situation. That is exactly

²Moses, pps. 119-140; Herberg, op. cit., p.202.

³i.e. as Buber says in I and Thou the law has become an It.

⁴or we might say in 'moment' after 'moment'.

⁵Cf. I and Thou, p. 40, where the recorded 'moment' must "...blaze up into presentness".

⁶⁷Moses, chapter 'The Contradiction', pps. 182-190 = Herberg, pps.203-217; see p. 215.

why after thousands of years, his words still address the changing situations in history".^{*} We have already discussed in full Bultmann's important conviction that Holy Scripture is the Word of God only in so far as this Word happens in our encounter with the Scripture; that is, for Bultmann, the Word of God is not a substance or an entity, but an event. The Word is likewise for Buber an event. "Judaism regards speech as an event which grasps beyond the existence of mankind and the world. In contradiction to the static idea of Logos, the Word appears here in its complete dynamic as 'that which happens'. God's act of creation is speech, but the same is true of each lived moment. The world is given to the human beings who perceive it, and the life of man is itself a giving and a receiving. The events that occur to human beings are the great and small, untranslatable but unmistakable signs of their being addressed; what they do and fail to do can be an answer or a failure to answer. Thus the whole history of the world, the hidden, real world history, is a dialogue between God and his creature, a dialogue in which man is a true, legitimate partner, who is entitled and empowered to speak his own independent word out of his own being".^{**}

Not only does God's providential leading of the Israelites in the

^{*}Israel and the World: Essays in a Time of Crisis, chapter 'Plato and Isaiah', pps. 103-112 = Herberg, pps. 231-238; see p. 237 f.

^{**}Israel and the World, chapter 'The Faith of Judaism', pps. 13-27 = Herberg, pps. 253-265; see p. 255.

Exodus become present event, but so does, for example, the Fall:

"The Fall did not happen once and for all,^X and become an inevitable fate, but it continually happens here and now in all its reality. In spite of all past history, in spite of all his inheritance, every man stands in the naked situation of Adam: to each, the decision is given. It is true that this does not imply that further events are deducible from that decision; it only implies that the human being's choice is that side of reality which concerns him as one called upon to act".^{XX}

Thus it should be obvious that Buber accepts the so-called existentialist view of the interpretation of history. It seems to me of great importance that he seems to do so because of the influence of the Hebrew Bible. This Bible, as Buber demonstrates, holds to the radical historicity of revelation, and thus his view of knowledge and disclosure flows from that, and not from some philosophy alien to or unsympathetic to the biblical tradition. It is not without importance that Bultmann's view here approximates to Buber's; because we shall try to show in the concluding chapter that the main influence on Bultmann's view of historicity and temporality need not be the ontology of Heidegger as in Sein und Zeit, but rather the 'momentary', 'concrete', radically historical view that the Bible takes of revelatory processes. To this we shall return in our conclusions.

^XIt is not without interest and significance that this is in Hellenistic Greek EPHAPAX.

^{XX}'The Faith of Judaism', Herberg, p. 256.

Buber makes his 'moment' highly personal. Because of this, there are two entities which must be 'momentless'.^{*} They are the 'I' of mere feelings, and the institution. Buber's meaning here is probably that the 'I' of feelings does not enter into what is over against it with the whole of personality, but regards the world of what is over against it as made up merely of objects for its feeling or experience. Such an 'I' is not interested in whole persons qua persons, nor the mutuality of the I-Thou life.^{*} Such an 'I' shrinks from immersion in what is over against it; it is not aware of the potential 'Thou-ness' of what is over against it, that what is over against it can become a 'Thou'.^{***} The trouble with institutions is that they are not interested in whole persons either. For them the person becomes a 'specimen'.^{***} Another criticism directed by Buber against the institution is that its knowledge is limited to the 'lifeless past that is over and done with'. Lifeless, because an institution is incapable of re-living a 'moment'; it cannot enter creatively into the past of a person and make it come alive again in the present moment through an identity of thought and imagination.^{*****} Neither the 'I' of mere feelings

^{*}I and Thou, p. 40.

^{***}For Bultmann too, as we have seen in chapter I, love is not an 'innate' feeling, but the total concrete response to a whole person in a situation. As we shall see, Buber's and Bultmann's views on love are almost identical.

^{*****}op. cit., p. 44. We who live in the context of 'State Medicine' highly dependent upon institutional care and treatment have little difficulty in understanding Buber's meaning here. We hear 'ad nauseam' the impersonality of the medical institution being contrasted with the informed, intimate, person-to-person relationship of the family doctor who was everything but an 'official'.

^{*****}We need hardly say that in chapter I we pointed out that Bultmann holds that the institution can become a sworn enemy of the 'moment'.

nor the institution can know the real, filled present, which constitutes the 'moment'.^{*}

The 'moment' is characterized by the fact that in it I lay hold of 'the deed which aims at me'.^{**} First, here we have the thought of the transcendent. Into the 'moment' there comes something from outside of the human situation, which must be grasped, as Buber says, 'with both hands plunged deep in the fire'; it is a question of now or never.^{**} The moment is the now. If grasped, what I achieve thereby is being.^{**} In both Kierkegaard and Bultmann, the significance of the 'moment' is that it makes all the difference between being and non-being, it is decisive for eternity. Second, here we have the notion of concreteness, a strong element in the existentialist tradition. In the 'moment', the 'charge is laid upon me'.^{**} Or, says Buber^{**}, what concerns me in the 'moment' is 'the single deed'. A most interesting

^{*}op. cit., p. 44. Cf. Bultmann's essay The Significance of the Idea of Freedom for Western Civilization, Essays, p. 317. "... we have to consider how the organization which is carried out, and which can affect the welfare of the individual, actually impoverishes the life of the individual and similarly of society". "... Where the principle holds good that 'I want nothing as a gift but only as my share, where everything that is necessary can be legally claimed by the individual, the joy of giving and the virtue of gratitude lose the soil on which they are nourished. Where mutual relationship is regulated through organization, trust ceases to be the bond between man and man'. 'The more organization is developed, the more is the relationship to the other man reduced to an impersonal level, that is, dehumanized", p. 318. These statements could of course be duplicated many times over from the writings of other existentialists.

^{**}I and Thou, p. 52.

illustration of what Buber means here has been given by Ronald Gregor Smith.³² Gregor Smith writes: "How often do you hear the claim made... that it was Christianity which was responsible for the abolition of the slave trade inside the British Empire; whereas the truth of the matter is so complicated that the only possible generalization seems to me to be that when a particular historical action is accomplished, the time for it was ripe and it happened. This does not mean that I reduce history to the level of nature, as that in autumn the plums fall from the tree, but it does mean that historical^{action} is an almost unravellable web of many different strands". This is undoubtedly true. Thus Wilberforce had a hand in the slave-trade abolition partly because he stood at a cross-roads in history where such abolition, through his decision and work, was at least an historical possibility. His peculiar and unique position in the historical process was a part of the givenness of history. In a sense, the deed aimed itself at Wilberforce, the charge was laid upon him, because he was there, just where, if we may put it so, the hard skin over economic history had worn thin. To use Bultmann's language, there was given to Wilberforce the possibility of decision in a 'moment' which would dislocate the causal connect-

³²A Theological Perspective of the Secular, in 'The Christian Scholar', Vol. XLIII, March 1960 (Spring), p. 21.

connection between past and future.

Thus we have Buber's emphasis on concreteness. In opposition to concreteness we find Buber citing 'the centreless Many', 'the abyss', both of which share in an 'iridescent' sameness.[¶] Of the man who concentrates on the single deed, who responds to the unique charge laid upon him, Buber says that he 'makes decision'.[¶] In this decision there is the beginning of realization. But this decision is not for the one and the utter rejection of the many, the alternatives; rather the desire for that rejected by the decision must be gathered and canalised, 'sublimated' towards that which is chosen out, the one, the single. Only this is worthy of the name of decision.^{¶¶} Buber defines a devil not as one who decided against God, but as one, who, in eternity, came to no decision at all![¶] This is a most important element in the thought of Buber --- that evil for him is almost identical with indecision. "The anthropological retrospective view of the person..... announces to us as evil all these and other indecisions, all the moments in which we did no more than leave undone that which we knew to be good. But is evil then not, by its nature, an action? Not at all; action is only the type of evil happening which makes evil manifest. But

[¶]I and Thou, p. 52.

^{¶¶}It is hardly necessary to point out that 'decision' is another great emphasis shared by Buber and Bultmann, and by other existentialist thinkers.

does not evil action stem precisely from decision to evil ? The ultimate meaning of our exposition is that it too stems precisely from indecision, providing that by decision we understand, not a partial, a pseudo decision, but that of the whole soul."^{xx} In the same vein Buber writes: "Evil is lack of direction, and that which is done in it and out of it is the grasping, seizing, devouring, compelling, seducing, exploiting, humiliating, torturing, and destroying, of what offers itself. Good is direction, and what is done in it; that which is done in it is done with the whole soul, so that in fact all the vigor and passion with which evil might have been done is included in it".^{xxx} Indecision in existence takes upon itself a certain solidarity: "We have seen how man repeatedly experiences the dimension of evil as indecision. The occurrences in which he experiences it however, do not remain in his self-knowledge a series of isolated moments of non-decision, of becoming possessed by the play of the phantasy with potentialities, of plunging in this possession with that which offers itself; in self-knowledge, these moments merge into a course of indecision, as it were into a fixation in it".^{xxx} Buber shows that he is aware that decision to be valid must be in the right direction; that it is not enough to equate goodness with decision. "Therefore Moses was zealous; he was zealous for his

^{xx} Good and Evil: Two Interpretations, (New York 1953), chapters III and IV, pps. 125-138 = Herberg, op. cit., pps. 89-96. See p. 91.

^{xx} op. cit., Herberg, p. 92.

^{xxx} op. cit., Herberg, p. 93. A simple equation of evil and indecision is a doctrine which would hardly gain wide acceptance, for, of course, positive evil can be chosen and done. There is more to evil than indecision. But Buber is surely right when he states that indecision is a dimension of evil. This an important existentialist insight.

God as the one who sets a goal, and shows a path, and writes a guide to that path on tablets, and orders men to chose again and again,^x to choose that which is right.....".^{xxx} Thus by his use of terms like 'God', 'goal', 'path', 'guide', and so-on, Buber distinguishes himself from 'secular' existentialists, and so guards himself decisively against the charge of sheer relativism, one of the charges so often brought against existentialism. For Buber there is an ethico-religious norm given through history. In our concluding chapter we shall take up and discuss an extremely important point. This is that biblical revelation, basing itself upon particular events, logically implies the doctrine of particularity, and thus the 'moment' of time without which no revelation can take place. Buber certainly recognizes this particularity, and sees the offence that it implies. Thus he writes: "Man of today resists the Scriptures because he cannot endure revelation."^{xxx} To endure revelation is to endure this moment of possible decisions, to respond to and be responsible for every moment. Man of today resists the Scriptures because he does not want any longer to accept responsibility. He thinks he is venturing a great deal, yet he industriously evades^{xxxxx} the one real venture, that of responsibility^{xxxxx}. To this doctrine of the offence of particular, 'momentary' revelation

^xi.e. in moment after moment.

^{xxx}Moses, pps. 182-190 = Herberg, pps.209-217, see p. 217.

^{xxx}i.e. is offended.

^{xxxxx}the flight from historicity.

^{xxxxxx}Israel and the World:Essays in a Time of Crisis, pps. 89-102 = Herberg, pps. 238-250, see p. 244.

we shall return in our conclusions.

The man who has passed through the 'moment' which confers on him the possibility of becoming, has thereby not dispensed with it. To the contrary, the 'moment' means for him one thing, repetition in the future.[¶] The 'moment' means his decision to achieve his destiny again and again in the future. The decision to become through encounter with 'Thou-ness', originally made in the 'moment', must be re-made, as Buber says, 'from time to time, at every parting of ways'.[¶] There is no disclosure or revelation made once and for all which does not require to be renewed. "The fundamental attitude of the Jews is characterized by the idea of the YIHUD, the 'unification', a word which has been repeatedly misunderstood. YIHUD involves the continually renewed confirmation of the unity of the divine in the manifold nature of its manifestations, understood in a quite practical way. Again and again,^{¶¶} this recognition, acknowledgement, and reacknowledgement of the divine unity is brought about through human perception and confirmation (Bewahrung) in the face of the monstrous contradictions of life, and especially in the face of that primal contradiction which shows itself in multitudinous ways, and which we call the

[¶]Cf. Kierkegaard, Repetition, (Oxford 1942).

^{¶¶}i.e. in 'moment' after 'moment'.

duality of good and evil".^{xx} Thus Buber expresses his conviction that man possesses knowledge of his own historicity --- the conviction that his becoming lies in his future encounters: " ... the free man ... has only the one thing...., his repeated decision to approach his destiny".^{xxx} We have already noted that Buber, like Bultmann and Kierkegaard, dislikes possessable and retainable knowledge in the form of a Weltanschauung, but like Bultmann, he does agree that after the experience of the 'moment' man does and must possess something --- the knowledge of how he must achieve and again achieve his personal destiny, that knowledge that he must understand himself as someone future, the knowledge that his authentic becoming depends on his orientation towards time and its history, and the repeated encounters that these will bring. This is knowledge then that man is able to possess and retain. But this 'knowledge' is compared by Buber to the other type of 'knowledge' --- that of " ... purpose here and means there, which he fetches for his purpose".^{xxx} Here we have, I am sure, a reference to that type of knowledge which belongs to the spheres of applied science and technology, occupied with means and ends. But existential knowledge (or perhaps we ought to say 'awareness') is of a quite different order ---it consists

^{xx}Israel and the World:Essays in a Time of Crisis, pps. 89-102 = Herberg, pps. 238-250, see p. 254 f.

^{xxx}I and Thou, p. 60.

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in insight into our radical historicity and temporality. The comparison here with Bultmann's theology is obvious --- Bultmann holds that the only possible Weltanschauung is one expressing historicity, that historicity is the criterion which differentiates genuine from false Weltanschauungen, that 'knowledge' of one's own historicity is the only 'truth' retainable after experience of the 'moment'.

We have then to be vitally concerned with our time and history. Something comes to us in the 'moment', and the sphere of our responsibility covers our side of the encounter.* Buber warns us not to trouble ourselves with the other, the transcendental side of the relational event. The other side represents grace, and simply because it is grace, it would be useless for us to be concerned about it. It comes to us unbidden. Therefore, rather than about grace we should concern ourselves about our will. Mere openness, readiness, for the 'moment' is not enough.* More is necessary, the will to step into relationship with what comes to us in the 'moment'.** And here Buber makes what is a crucial point in our comparisons of him with Bultmann. For this step presupposes the ability to suspend ordinary life with its limitations; this is strictly necessary; and this ability and this will entails suffering.*** Once again, the comparison with

*I and Thou, p. 76.

**op. cit., pps. 76-7.

***"The 'Thou' confronts me. But I step into direct relation with it. Hence the relation means being chosen and choosing, suffering and action in one; just as any action of the whole **being** which means the suspension of all partial actions, and consequently of all sensations of actions grounded only in their particular limitation, is bound to resemble suffering", I and Thou, pps. 76-77.

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Bultmann's thought is almost obvious. Bultmann also holds that the occurrence of the 'moment' presupposes in man a certain relationship to the world --- a relationship which Bultmann calls dialectical. We have seen in detail in chapter I how Bultmann favours an understanding of man such as that taught by St. Paul in I Cor. 7:29 f. --- that man should (he has to) engage in the ordinary everyday business and commerce of the world but with an inner aloofness, reserve, which give him an inner independence enabling him to turn aside from them to deal with ^{that} which is ultimate and eschatological, occurring in the 'moment'. Buber too teaches that authentic man must be ready to suspend those workaday activities of his which are of secondary importance, and will to step into relation with that which comes unbidden in the 'moment' of grace. Here we have another clear and important parallel between the thought of Buber and that of Bultmann. But Buber's words about our responsibility being directed towards this side (as contrasted with the other side) of the relational meeting, with will rather than with grace, shed light on another contemporary theological difference of opinion, and stress yet further the great similarity between Buber and Bultmann. How often have we heard it asserted that Karl Barth is interested in the transcendent, only in the God who is Wholly Other, and has consequently left little room in his theology for man in his freedom, in his willing, and in his deciding. (The fact that we note this criticism of Barth does not mean that we wholly agree with it). On the other hand, how often have we heard it asserted that Bultmann's theology is concerned merely with anthropology, with human consciousness. One of the most common judgements repeated in theological circles today is that of Helmuth

Thielicke, that in Bultmann's thought nothing else takes place but consciousness. Now apart from the truth of these criticisms, it is apparent that in the contemporary theological scene there is a difference about this very matter. We can say that it is possible to classify contemporary (and past) theologies as 'this side' or 'other side' theologies. They concern themselves, to use Buber's terms, either with, on the one hand, the 'other side', 'grace', or, on the other, with our side, with will, with decision. Now it is interesting and important that both Bultmann and Buber come down for theologies which concern themselves with 'our side'. Bultmann states that there may be depths in God that we can know nothing about, but if so, our theology can have nothing to say about these depths. In almost every book that he has written, he has quoted the celebrated opinion of Melancthon, 'To know God, is not to know Him as He is in Himself, but as He is in His saving benefits'. Bultmann is interested in God soteriologically, as we meet him here in existence, and ^{as} he confers his blessings upon us. Buber too is interested in God so far as he concerns our existence; he is concerned to warn us that we must be busy above all else about going out to grace and persisting in its presence.* "Grace is free and uncontrolled --- 'He bestows his grace and mercy on whom he will' --- and yet man's deeds count. Without grace there is nothing, and yet man must make the 'beginning'. Grace concerns us absolutely, but it can

*I and Thou, p. 96.

never become the object of our acquiring. Our freedom is real, yet grace is 'prevenient'. 'The person who makes a decision knows that his deciding is no self-delusion; the person who has acted knows that he was and is in the hand of God'. These multiple paradoxes are subsumed and expressed, not resolved, in the 'turning'".³² Since the Roman Catholic Church holds to the objectivity of revelation expressed in dogma, it is both interesting and important to hear Buber replying on this point to Catholic criticisms: "Some time ago, a Catholic theologian saw in this conception³³ a 'Jewish activism' to which grace is unknown. But it is not so. We are not less serious about grace because we are serious about the human power of deciding, and through decision the soul finds a way which will lead it to grace. Man is here given no complete power; rather, what is stressed is the ordered perspective of human action, an action which we may not limit in advance. It must experience limitation as well as grace in the very process of acting".³⁴ Thus Buber as well as Bultmann has been criticized on account of subjectivity, a fact which illustrates their closeness. And as we shall see when we come to consider Buber on 'immanence', this turning towards, this 'going out' on the part of man, is the main element in man's spiritual life, in his spiritual cultivation.

³²W. Herberg, in his introduction to The Writings of Martin Buber, p. 29, quoting and discussing Buber's Israel and the World, 'The Faith of Judaism', p. 17.

³³the conception that inertia is the root of all evil.

³⁴Israel and the World, pps. 13-27 = Herberg, pps. 253-265, see p. 257.

Buber gives his existential sense of values. Buber states that a circle can be drawn, which excludes everything, except the process by which a step is taken from the sphere of the 'It' into the sphere of the 'Thou'.^x The only thing that matters for Buber is "visible, full acceptance of the present".^x Buber freely admits the difficulty of accepting this sense of values. For the world into which the demand is made that man should step, is both unreliable and perilous. It is little wonder that man prefers the possessing of things to this. But if man is to find genuineness of life, this self-assertion must be renounced. Here once more we note that a struggle is suggested by Buber, a struggle that goes on in the heart of everyday life.^{xxx}

We have already indicated that Buber comes down on the side of those theologies which concern themselves with 'this side' of religious reality, with the human, willing, deciding side of the relational event. But just because he is a Jew and a great Hebrew thinker, he is also aware that God is also 'Wholly Other', the 'Mysterium Tremendum'.^{xxx} Yet the paradox of the 'moment' is that the same God meets us, as the 'wholly present', the 'self-evident, nearer to me than

^xI and Thou, p. 78.

^{xxx}And which we have already compared above to the 'dialectical' relationship to life that is found in the thought of Bultmann.

^{xxx}I and Thou, p. 79.

my 'I'.[⌘] But we must note that in life, in the 'moment', Buber's dominant stress and emphasis is on the second of these two. He indicates his choice in three ways : -

(a) He teaches that if we explore 'the life of things and of conditioned being', we come to the unfathomable.[⌘] That is, reality, truth, are to be met with here, in this world, in time, in history, which is of course Bultmann's dominant stress also.

(b) If 'we deny the life of things and of conditioned being', we 'stand before nothingness'.[⌘] This is merely a negative way of saying

(c) If we 'hallow this life' we 'meet the living God'.[⌘] Thus God is to be met with in the existences of those who cherish their historicity and temporality, and realize that their time and history are holy precisely because the Holy One is to be encountered in and through them. This is, as we noted, the only Weltanschauung that Bultmann and Buber allow to be retained from the experience of the 'moment'.

Now Buber's conviction that man is essentially
(if we dare use such a term in an existentialist context) historical is

[⌘]op. cit., p. 79.

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so crucial both for his thought in general and his doctrine of the 'moment' in particular, that we must give it some more attention here. The cruciality of historicity in this section of the thesis is briefly this. I should like to here show that the Hebrew Bible (with its stress on concrete, historical, temporal, 'momentary' revelation) has had such a profound influence on Buber's thought and work as a whole, that it commits him to the essential historicity and temporality of man, and that this in turn logically and inescapably commits Buber to a doctrine of the 'moment'. In short, I should like to show, by an examination of his work, that just because Buber is so intensely a Jew, he holds and must hold a doctrine of the 'moment'. This is important for a certain reason ---- in our concluding chapter, I intend to make out a parallel case; namely, that Bultmann, just because he is so deeply influenced by the New Testament with its notion of concrete, historical, temporal, 'momentary' revelation in the events of Christ, is also inescapably committed to the essential historicity and temporality of man, and thus also to his doctrine of the 'moment'.

Our task here is this: to show by a wide examination of Buber's works that the work of the Hebrew Bible in him has been to produce a doctrine of historicity and thus inevitably of the 'moment'. In the context of speaking of the call of God in the Old Testament, Buber writes: "God speaks to man in the things and beings he sends him in life. Man answers through his dealings with these things and beings".^{*} Speaking of man's relationship to God, Buber says:

^{*}Israel and the World; Essays in a Time of Crisis, p. 142.

"Any genuine life relationship to Divine Being --- that is, any such relationship effected with a man's whole being --- is a human truth, and man has no other truth.* The ultimate truth is one, but it ^{is} given to man as it enters, reflected as in a prism, into the true life relationships of the human person".~~***~~ And speaking of the work of the Old Testament prophets in The Prophetic Faith, Herberg has this to say of Buber's views : "The prophetic reality, which provides the underlying pattern of biblical religion, is presented as a divine-human encounter not in the abstract realm of a 'sacred upper story', but in the full existential context of life, and that means history".~~***~~ And still speaking of Buber's exposition of prophetic religion in The Prophetic Faith, Herberg has this to say: "This God makes his absolute demand upon man in the totality of life and being. For man, in the Bible, 'stands created a whole body, ensouled by his relation to the created, enspirited by his relation to the Creator'".~~***~~ And speaking of biblical revelation in Buber's theology, Herberg again perceives the cruciality of historicity : "Revelation comes to the individual and the community; it comes through nature and history".~~*****~~ And in a note to this remark, Herberg gives an explanation of Buber's views on

~~***~~ We see how relevant this remark of Buber's is to our argument that for Bultmann and him there is but one 'possessable' truth.

~~***~~ Martin Buber, "Remarks on Goethe's Concept of Humanity", in Arnold Bergstraesser, ed., Goethe and the Modern Age, (Chicago 1950). Cf. Herberg, op. cit., p. 19.

~~***~~ W. Herberg, in his introduction to The Writings of Martin Buber, p. 25.

~~***~~ Herberg, op. cit., p. 27, quoting Buber, Israel and the World, p. 27.

~~*****~~ Herberg, op. cit., p. 29.

revelation through nature, history, and 'moments', which, it can hardly be denied, could almost as well have been written of the theology of Bultmann. "Buber distinguishes between revelation through nature and revelation through history. The former is 'continuous',^{*} and continually proclaims 'that one, though all-inclusive something, that which the psalm calls the glory of God'. Revelation through history, on the other hand is discontinuous and varied: "times"^{xxx} of great utterance, when the mark of divine direction is recognizable in the conjunction of events, alternate with, as it were, mute times,^{xxxx} when everything that occurs in the human world and pretends to historical significance appears to us empty of God'. Moreover, in revelation through nature man is only the receiver; in revelation through history, on the other hand, 'mankind, being placed in freedom, cooperates incessantly in shaping its (history's) course' (At the Turning, 'The Dialogue between Heaven and Earth', pps. 57-58). These distinctions are important, but are they ultimate? In a great natural catastrophe, destroying men and communities, does nature speak so obviously and unequivocally the same word of revelation of the glory of God?"^{xxxxx}

^{*}This description is interesting, in view of the fact that in a later section of this chapter, we shall see that Buber holds that man's lust 'continuity' is a sworn enemy of the 'moment'.

^{xxx}i.e. 'Moments' of

^{xxxx}Or, as we described it in the Introduction, and as we shall describe it in the conclusions, history is discontinuous and fragmentary.

^{xxxxx}Note no. 90, in Herberg, op. cit., p. 341. Herberg's last point is valid. The great difficulty in arguing from nature to God has been that nature as well as exhibiting beauty has also been 'red in tooth and claw'. It is quite true that the lesson of nature is ambiguous. But this does not destroy Buber's distinction. It only casts doubt on his view that the voice of God in nature is continuous. God's voice in nature is also discontinuous and fragmentary.

Again, there seems to be little doubt of the Hebrew Bible's influence on Buber in the matter of historicity. Speaking of the message that Judaism has for the world, Buber says that it is this : "This is its message: YOU YOURSELF MUST BEGIN. Existence will remain meaningless for you if you yourself do not penetrate into it with active love and if you do not in this way discover its meaning for yourself ... Meet the world with the fulness of your being, and you shall meet God ... If you wish to believe, love."^x In short, historicity again through the influence of the biblical revelation. That God comes to man in the things of history is described thus by Buber : "He (God) hovers over his creation not as over a chaos; he embraces it. He is the infinite 'I' that makes every 'It' into his 'Thou'".^{xx} Or Buber can put this in negative terms and say : "God is not an object beside objects, and hence cannot be reached by renunciation of objects. God is, indeed, not the cosmos, but even less is he being minus cosmos. He is not to be found by subtraction, and not to be loved by reduction".^{xxx} Buber interprets Luther's marriage as a " ... symbolic action, because he wanted to lead the believing man of his age out of a religious separatism, which finally separated him from grace itself, to a life with God in the world".^{xxxx} And speaking of the dangers that this doctrine of historic-

^xAt the Turning, 'The Silent Question', p. 44. Cf. Herberg, op. cit., p. 39. As we shall see, Buber and Bultmann are also close in their notion of love, over against the theology of Kierkegaard.

^{xx}Buber, Between Man and Man, transl. R. Gregor Smith, (London 1947), 'The Question to the Single One', pps. 40-61, 65, 69-71 = Herberg, p. 79.

^{xxx}op. cit., p. 80.

^{xxxx}op. cit., p. 81.

/historicity involves, Buber warns that the danger must be faced and overcome : " ... finitude is certainly the danger, for nothing threatens us so sharply as the danger that we remain clinging to it. But our hope of salvation is forged on this very danger, for our human way to the infinite leads only through fulfilled finitude".⁸² In short, historicity again in a biblical context. Buber is close not only to the message of the Old Testament but also to that of the New when he writes thus of love : "I cannot love God without devoting my whole heart as living for the sake of my fellow-men, without devoting my whole entire soul as responsive to all the spiritual trends in the world around me, without devoting all my force to this God in his correlation with man".⁸³ But here again, commitment to love involves commitment to historicity. Or to put it a slightly different way : "If I love God, in the course of loving him, I come to love the one whom God loves, too".⁸⁴ Speaking of Israel's struggle against idolatry and image-making, Buber writes : "He is the history God that he is only when he is not localized in nature, and precisely because he makes use of everything potentially visible in nature, of every kind of natural existence, for his manifestation. The prohibition of 'images' and 'figures' was

⁸²op. cit., p. 83.

⁸³Eclipse of God: Studies in the Relation Between Religion and Philosophy, CHAPTER IV, 'The Love of God and the Idea of Deity', (New York 1952), pps. 67-84 = Herberg, pps. 97-107, see pps. 102-103.

⁸⁴op. cit., p. 103.

absolutely necessary for the establishment of his rule, for the investiture of his absoluteness before all current 'other gods'".^x Thus the idolatry-struggle was to make the God of the Bible the one who could manifest himself, not in a certain place at a certain time, but anywhere in any 'moment'.^{xx} Again, briefly, the notion of historicity induced by the concept of revelation in the Old Testament. Buber tells us that Moses modified the current idea of sacrificialism in so far as that idea tended to the 'utilization' of God : "This sacral power was replaced by the consecration of men and things, of times and places, to the One who vouchsafes his presence amid his chosen people, if only the latter persevere in the royal covenant".^{xxx} Here once again we have the Bible's influence on Buber's view of temporality, historicity, and the 'moment'. Buber holds that the hope for religion in our world is dependent upon religion's stress on the concrete, in time and in history : "To exert an influence on contemporary man, religion itself would have to return to reality. And religion was always real only when it was free of fear, when it shouldered the load of concreteness instead of rejecting it as something belonging to another realm, when it made the spirit incarnate, and sanctified everyday life".^{xxxx}

^x Moses, pps. 119-140 = Herberg, 181-202, see p. 189.

^{xx} Cf. Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 155 : "in every moment slumbers the possibility of being the eschatological moment. You must awaken it".

^{xxx} Moses, pps. 119-140 = Herberg, pps. 181-202, see p. 191.

^{xxxx} Israel and the World, pps. 89-102 = Herberg, pps. 239-250, see p. 241. We note of course in Buber's employment of the terms 'fear', 'shouldered the load', 'rejecting', another indication of the struggle which goes on between the spheres of authenticity and inauthenticity.

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Thus we could say that in Buber's opinion contemporary religion needs above all else, stress on the 'moment'. Buber holds, as does Bultmann, that man reaches truth through his 'Widerfahrnisse' with events in the world of nature and history : " ...natural events are the carriers of revelation, and revelation occurs when he who witnesses the event and sustains it experiences the revelation it contains. This means that he listens to that which the voice, sounding forth from this event, wishes to communicate to him, its witness, to his constitution, to his life, to his sense of duty. It is only when this is true that the man of today can find the approach to biblical reality. I, at any rate, believe that it is true".^{xx} The main point is again that it is 'biblical reality' which influences Buber's view of historicity. For Buber, the essence of the Jewish soul is this : "The living God to whom he has pledged himself appears in infinite manifestations in the infinite variety of things and events".^{xxx} Could we have a plainer statement of 'biblical historicity' ? Again and again in his writings, Buber uses one of his favourite expressions for historicity, 'the hallowing of the everyday' : "Because God bestows not only spirit on man, but the whole of his existence, from its 'lowest' to its 'highest' levels, man can fulfil the obligations of his partnership with

^{xx} Israel and the World, pps. 89-102 = Herberg, pps. 239-250, see p. 246.

^{xxx} Israel and the World, 'The Two Foci of the Jewish Soul', pps. 28-40 = Herberg, pps. 266-276, see p. 267.

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God by no spiritual attitude, by no worship, on no sacred upper storey; the whole of life is required, every one of its areas and every one of its circumstances. There is no true human share of holiness without the hallowing of the everyday". ^{xx} And finally, we can sum up Buber's attitude to the historicity and temporality of man in some of his own words on Hasidism: "The Hasidic teaching is the consummation of Judaism. And this is its message to all: YOU YOURSELF MUST BEGIN." ^{xxx} Existence will remain meaningless for you if you yourself do not penetrate into it with active love and if you do not in this way discover its meaning for yourself. Everything is waiting to be hallowed by you; it is waiting to be disclosed in its meaning and to be realized in it by you. For the sake of this your beginning, God created the world. He has drawn it out of himself so that you may bring it closer to him. Meet the world with the fulness of your being and you shall meet him". ^{xxxx} Thus again, under the influence of Judaism, Buber holds firmly to his conviction that man cannot have revelation, cannot receive truth, cannot rightly see God and existence, except he is correlated closely with the world of history and time. Surely Paul Tillich's judgement of Buber's significance in modern theology is absolutely right: "Religion, for Hasidism as well as for Buber, is consecration of the world. It is neith-

^{xx} op. cit., p. 270.

^{xxx} We can see once more how Buber comes down for 'this side' theologies.

^{xxxx} The Silent Question, 'On Henri Bergson and Simone Weil', (New York 1952), pps. 29-44 = Herberg, pps. 306-314, see.p. 314.

/neither acceptance of the world as it is, nor bypassing the world in the direction of the transcendent divine, but it is consecration in the double sense of seeing the divine in everything. This attitude removes the dualism of a holy and a secular sphere. In spite of the observance of doctrine and cult, in spite of its emphasis on the continuous^{*} conversation between the individual soul and God in prayer and meditation, the decisive characteristic of Hasidic religion is its way of looking at the world and acting in it. For man's action in the world has a significance not only for man but also for God. Man is responsible for the destiny of God in so far as God is in the world; man is called to re-establish the broken unity in himself and in the world. God waits for man, and the answer to man's action is divine grace. Man's action is not by way of asceticism or extraordinary deeds. It is the consecration of the moment, it is the simple act which is demanded from a special individual in a special situation, it is the acting of the anonymous people, the children and the simple ones. Such acting, if it is done in consecration, prepares the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is messianic action".^{***} So much for the Hasidic influence. Its effect in the thought of Buber is that " ...Significant is the daily life and the union the 'I' achieves in the encounter with

^{*}As we have seen already, and as we shall see again, it is man's lust for 'continuity', for 'duration', that militates against the 'moment'.

^{***}Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1959), 'An Evaluation of Martin Buber: Protestant and Jewish Thought', chap. xiv, pps. 194-5.

the 'eternal Thou', and the radiation into the world of him who is united in himself".^x In short, a doctrine of radical historicity.

Thus from our fairly wide examination of Buber's writings, it would seem that we can establish two facts which are beyond doubt. First, Buber holds a doctrine of the radical historicity and temporality of man; man is always 'being-there'; he is always in the world, and it ^{is} only in and through the events and Thous which make up the world ~~that~~ ^{can} man receive the disclosure of God and of himself. Second, it seems clear that the main influence upon Buber's notion of historicity has been the Old Testament (historic, concrete, here and now, 'momentary') idea of Revelation, mediated to Buber through his Jewish faith, especially in its Hasidic variety, which has emphasised the mediatorial function of the 'everyday'. Not only is this conclusion of considerable importance in itself, if we wish to understand a great Jewish philosopher, but it is of immense importance for another reason within the context of the argument of this thesis. We have shown how the Bible can produce a notion of historicity and temporality; and in our concluding chapter we wish to take up a parallel argument, namely, that it is possible to account for Rudolf Bultmann's doctrine of histor-

^xop. cit., p. 195.

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/historicity and temporality not by merely citing the influence of (existentialist) philosophy, but by pointing to the Biblical notion of revelation again (as it has been mediated to Bultmann through the New Testament Kerygma based upon the concrete life of Jesus). In this way, we shall try to show, that the biblical form of revelation implies the historicity of human existence, and thus logically also, the 'moment'. In this way too, we shall try to show that the category of the 'moment' (the subject of this thesis) is a quite necessary consequence of biblical revelation and of the Christian Faith. But to this argument we shall return in our conclusions.

The 'moments' of disclosure in our experience are discontinuous. This means that they lack continuity and duration. But not absolutely so; for every moment points beyond itself into the future.^{*} In each 'moment', in each relational event, we are allowed to glimpse 'a consummating event'. Every moment leaves us dissatisfied. We long to renew the relation, and this longing points us to future 'moments'. Thus Buber can say that man is in 'the eternal middle of the way'.^{**} Thus the 'moments' of existence are not entirely discontinuous. For there is something 'in' man, which man has had,

^{*}I and Thou, p. 80.

^{**}I and Thou, p. 80; we remember how Bultmann points out in The Question of Natural Revelation that "...man .. is on the way", Essays, p. 95.

'from the beginning',^x which makes man turn out towards the relational 'moment'. Buber even speaks of it as a 'sense', as man's 'sense of the Thou'.^x Thus Buber holds that in man's creation there is created in him some element which points towards and longs for relation in time and history.^{xxx} But this 'sense' must remain unfulfilled until the 'Thou' is realized in actuality in 'the reality of the hallowed life of the world'.^x Thus discontinuity is not absolute; indeed, we shall see presently that Buber holds that the historic 'moments' of existence come to constitute a world of their own, over against the world of 'It'.

Buber finds the solution of existential disunity is the 'moment'. There is a 'moment' offered to man which Buber calls the decisive 'moment' --- for in it an opportunity is given for the soul to attain to unity, a unity in which man's splintered and dissipated power can be concentrated, and in this wholeness man is able, as a unified being, to enter singlemindedly into relation, an act which was impossible for him when he was not one but many.^{xxxx} But if such existential unity is to be maintained (and man not to relapse into his former state of disunity), a condition is to be satisfied; this condition

^xI and Thou, p. 80.

^{xxx}We shall return to this point when we consider Buber's view of 'immanence'.

^{xxxx}I and Thou, p. 86.

condition/ is man's need for decision. This 'moment' is thus decisive because it is not merely a 'moment' of ecstasy, but one in which man's will is involved. The first decision of the series Buber terms 'the primal mysterious decision'.^{*} Since in this 'moment' can achieve or fail to achieve authentic, genuine, being, it carries 'the mightiest consequences for our destiny'.^{*} Without it, man remains in, or falls back into, existential disunity, and is thus useless for the act of encounter, meeting, or relation.^{***} It is significant that in Bultmann and in Kierkegaard the 'moment' is crucial also just because in it man can gain or lose his real existence. It is (Kierkegaard) the moment of re-birth, and without it there can be no possibility of becoming.

The term 'moment' has of course the effect of suggesting to us briefness, transitoriness. "Only for a moment", we say, and we express the thought that something was exceedingly brief. "It was only momentary", we say, and again we indicate briefness. The word 'moment' suggests to us something insignificantly and unimportantly brief and fleeting, suddenly here and then just as quickly gone, as though it had never been. Buber realises this keenly. "How powerful",^{*} op. cit., p. 86.

^{***}As we shall see when we come to deal with 'The Enemies of the moment' there is another kind of temporary unity attainable in mysticism which is quite unhistorical and therefore for Buber invalid.

says Huber, "is the unbroken world of 'It', and how delicate are the appearances of the 'Thou'".^{*} The world in which we live every day (the world of 'It') is protected from the intrusion of the 'moment' by 'the crust of the condition of things'.^{*} He describes the 'moment' thus: " ... for how inevitably short a time is it nothing to me but 'Thou'!".^{*} What grows feeble after the expiry of the 'moment' is the actuality of its (i.e. the Thou's) immediacy'.^{**} Every 'Thou' when encountered becomes an 'It' afterwards, except one --- God himself. But when we feel remote from God, this is not the absence of God from us, it is the absence of us from God. We remove ourselves into the world of 'It' from him --- he does not remove himself from us.

The exposition of this passage from I and Thou is interesting not only for its own sake; but also because it brings to us an already not unfamiliar picture. This picture is that of the 'moment' trying to penetrate a highly organised and tightly planned world, a solidly constructed life. This world is covered by a 'crust'. The result is opposition to the 'moment's' occurrence, and a conflict between it and the world of everyday living and working. This brings to mind again the comparison we have already made and whose importance

^{*}I and Thou, p. 98.

^{**}op. cit., pps. 98-99.

we have already indicated. It is that in Buber, as in Bultmann, the authentic relation to the ordinary everyday world of commerce and work (the world of 'It') should be dialectical. This is because the various elements in it, though necessary to our life, may so claim our attention and absorption that they stifle the occurrence of the 'moment' and eliminate the possibility of authentic existence that it brings.

There is another element in the 'moment' that may give a form of continuity between individual 'moments'. The 'moment' of encounter, says Buber, is immersed in speech.^{*} This speech links the 'moments' together. "The moments of relation are here, and only here, bound together by means of the element of the speech in which they are immersed".^{*} This is probably because, in line with Buber's 'existentialist' doctrine of history that we have already examined in detail, the spoken word, having become an 'It' as soon as it is past, can yet in another 'moment' take on presentness in encounter. It is this ability of the spoken words that gives the unity. As we shall see later, Buber allows that the unity spoken of here can develop to such an extent that it can be spoken of as a universe, a world, over against the world of 'It'.

^{*}I and Thou, p. 103.

We have now concluded the first section of our study of Buber. There can be no doubt of the reality of the 'moment' in the thought of Buber. In the 'moment' lies the hidden meaning of history,^x real living is concentrated in the 'moment' which is marked by decision and encounter,^{xx} The 'moment' means the consecration of everyday life because in it God can be encountered; only in it can God be encountered.^{xxx} The general similarities between Buber's 'moment' and that of Rudolf Bultmann are also, I think, clear. We must now turn to a consideration of another aspect of Buber's thought on the 'moment' which, we shall find, emphasises insights common to Buber and Bultmann, and which sheds valuable light on other problems both in philosophy and in theology.

^x"According to the biblical insight, historic destiny is the secret correlation inherent in the current moment", Buber, Israel and the World, pps. 89-102 = Herberg, pps. 239-250, see p. 244.

^{xx}"... living takes place in the awful and splendid moment of decision, your moment and mine no less than Alexander's or Caesar's. And yet your moment is not yours, but rather the moment of your encounter", Buber, op. cit., p. 244.

^{xxx}"God every day renews the work of the beginning, but also every day anticipates the work of the end", Buber, op. cit., p. 245.

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(2) THE 'MOMENT' AND THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY
REVELATION.

That section of our study of Bultmann, "What comes in the 'moment' can be grasped but not possessed", should be kept in mind throughout this section of our study of Buber. One of the main purposes of this section of our study will be to show that a very similar position is to be found in the works of Buber, and to elucidate the consequences of this emphasis for contemporary theology and philosophy. We shall take up the same problem in our conclusions when we deal with 'The Problem of Propositional Theology'.

What is the origin of characterisations, ideas, and representations, in religion, in art, and in poetry? Buber's answer to this question is clear. The origin of them, in his opinion, "are representations of incidents and situations that are specifically relational".³¹ Or to use terminology which we worked out for Bultmann, secondary revelation is derived from primary. Truths, ideas, insights, are abstractions from 'moments', from encounters. But their original derivation from the 'moment' is too strong to be ignored.

³¹I and Thou, p. 19.

A parallel insight of Buber's is that the personal character of the 'moment' or encounter is objectified after " ... the relational event has run its course".^x It has entered the world of 'It'. But the world of 'It' contains not only objectifications of past 'Thous'. It is much more complex. The world of 'It' also contains 'items of knowledge'.^{xxx} These are added to by the mutual borrowing and lending between one historic culture and another, which increases the knowledge available of the 'world of objects'.^{xxxx} This leads to a further process; man must now set about 'experiencing and using' this enlarged world of 'It', of objects, of items of knowledge. Inevitable as this process is, it yet possesses its dangers; this process in which man immerses himself, experiencing and using, may mean the ignoring and therefore the degeneration of man's awareness of his essential historicity, and thus his ability to enter into personal relation, and therefore the loss of his spiritual life.^{xxxxx} The precise danger would seem to be that since the world of 'It's' complexity consists in containing not only objectified 'moments' but also a vast mass of expanding (and in its own sphere quite legitimate) technological information, we should fail to see the wood for the trees, that objectified 'moments' may be smothered with items of information, and that attention

^{xx} I and Thou, p. 33; 'objectified', that is, become an object, a thing, an 'It'.

^{xxx} op. cit., p. 38.

^{xxxx} What Buber probably means here can be illustrated, for example, by the fact that India (or Israel) have borrowed extensively from the scientific information current in Western industrial society.

^{xxxxx} op. cit., p. 39. Cf. op. cit., p. 34 - "We need only fill each moment with experiencing and using, and it ceases to burn".

to experiencing and using in the technological sense may have an adverse effect on man's primary spiritual ability, to experience the 'moment' of relation. Such warnings, from the pages of the existentialist writers, could be reproduced a hundredfold.

The objectified 'moment', an 'It', can tragically be left as an 'It'. But this objectified 'moment' is 'the melancholy of man and his greatness'.^x It is man's melancholy, we may assume, because it can be left as an 'It'; it can perish as a mere thing of the past, never to live again. But it is man's greatness, we may assume, because the objectified 'moment', embedded in books and narratives, in ideas and representations, has within it the power to live over again. And also, it is man's greatness, because unless the objectified 'moment' had this power to become objectified and transmitted, there would be no knowledge, no work, no image, no symbol.^{xxx} The greatness consists mainly though in that the 'moment', " ... hardened into a thing among things, has had the disposition put into it to change back again and again".^{xxx} This, as we have already indicated, is because the interpreter of a past recorded 'moment' has the possibility of interpersonal encounter when he approaches the past record with his own present.

^xop. cit., p. 39.

^{xxx}op. cit., p. 40.

Or, (as we have already noted), the objectified 'moment' " ... must blaze up into presentness and enter the ~~elemental~~ state from which it came, to be looked on and lived in the present by man".* Thus the process is not the imparting of items of information, but an interpersonal disclosure. Thus the validity of this type of awareness derives from the subjective experience of the person who re-lives the 'moment', and differs from the validity of scientific knowledge, where the criteria are whether it accords with formal rules (as in mathematics), or whether it is useful and therefore valuable (as in scientific technology). In existential awareness, the secondary derives from the primary; the secondary only yields itself to him who in his present immerses himself with the whole of his being in the primary.

What, it may be asked, is the value of the life of the man who has experienced the 'moment' ? Has it any value for us ? Buber's conviction is that its value lies in that it has a teaching purpose to fulfil.** But we must be careful in defining what this teaching purpose is! We must reject the notion that 'teaching' between man and man has the content of teaching a man what he must become. It must not define and prescribe a man's essence as a person.

*op. cit., p. 40.

**op. cit., p. 42.

The teaching must direct itself to show man 'how' his existence is to be approached. It must, by means of the teacher's existence, demonstrate the intensely personal temporal/historical nature of human existence.* But in attempting to do so, such a teaching-life has a thankless task, because, in the world of 'It' the pupils have been hardened against existential teaching, in it they believe# themselves to be 'fully equipped with information'.*** Here we have one more scathing reference to the 'knowledge' of the world of technology, the world of ends and means. The pupils are also hardened because, says Buber,*** the pupils have 'pinned the person down in history and secured his words in the library'. This means that the living vibrating person is shackled at a point in the past, and not permitted to rear himself up in man's present, to live and speak again. History is no longer a living, vibrating, pulsating, present event.*** Here again it becomes clear how Buber favours the existentialist (Bultmann/Dilthey/Collingwood) interpretation of history. Thus we see how difficult it is to communicate this view of history and teaching in a technological era where pupils are liable to suffer from the 'hardness of heart' which makes it difficult for a life which has experienced the present 'moment' to become 'Thou' for them, to invite them into the sphere of 'Thou-ness', into the sphere of

*See op. cit., p. 42. Cf. Buber, Israel and the World, pps. 137-145, 'teaching and Learning', = Herberg, op. cit., pps. 317-324.

***I and Thou, p. 42.

***In other words, 'It' has been left as 'It' in the world of objects.

presentness. Here again, we want to make a vital point. We want to argue that Buber favours this view of teaching, which is absolutely parallel to his view of history, under the influence of his Jewish faith with its historical/temporal view of revelation. When Buber discusses the 'propagation of values' within community, he is clear that valid propagation means the propagation of 'life', of 'spirit'.^{*} Thus this view of education involves 'the person as a whole, just as does physical propagation'.^{*} This is because, " ... In Israel of old, the propagation of values itself assumed an organic character and penetrated the natural life of the people We, and we only, once received both life and the teachings together, and in the selfsame hour became a nation and a religious community. Since then, the transmission of life and the transmission of the teachings have been bound together, and we consider the spiritual transmission as vital as bodily propagation'.^{*} Two things are quite clear in this. The first is that according to Buber education, teaching, means an interpersonal disclosure of an existential type. And the second is the apparent influence of Buber's biblical faith. He can state the same thing in a different manner. "In these recurring encounters between a generation which has

^{*}See Buber, Israel and the World, pps. 137-145, 'Teaching and Learning', = Herberg, pps. 317-324. See p. 317.

reached its full development and one which is still developing, the ultimate aim is not to transmit a separable something. What matters is that time and again an older generation, staking its entire existence on that comes to a younger with the desire to teach, waken, and shape it; then the holy spark leaps across the gap. Transmitted content and form are subordinate to the tradition of existence as such, and become valid only because of it. The total, living, Jewish human being is the transmitting agent; total, living, Jewish humanity is transmitted. Tradition is concentrated in the existence of the Jew himself. He lives itIsrael is inherent in these human beings; they are Israel. Israel is renewed, not by what they say, but by the totality of their existence."^{*} This important passage proves our case in three directions:- (a) From it is apparent the influence on Buber's concept of education of that faith rooted in the Hebrew bible, in the religion of Israel. (b) What is imparted is not, as Buber says, a 'separable something'; that is, not a Weltanschauung, an ideology, a system of ideas. (c) What is imparted is primary revelation in the sense of something absolutely ~~inter~~personal, expressed by Buber as 'existence', 'holy spark', 'humanity'. And just because authentic teaching does not mean handing over a Weltanschauung, " teaching is inseparably bound up with

^{*} op. cit., p. 319.

doing; here, if anywhere, it is impossible to teach or learn without living. The teachings must not be treated as a collection of knowable material.....Either the teachings live in the life of a responsible human being, or they are not alive at all".[¶] It is life " that realizes the teachings in the changing potentialities of every hour".[¶] Buber's notion of revelation and education, his rejection of knowledge as a system of ideas, the formative influence on this of his Jewish religion, are succinctly summed up by him in this way: "The teachings themselves are the way. Their full content is not comprehended in any book, in any code, in any formulation. Nothing that has ever existed is broad enough to show what they are. In order that they may live and bring forth life, generations must continue to meet, and the teachings assume the form of a human link, awakening and activating our common bond with our Father".^{¶¶} And where could we get a clearer expression of the view, which is also Bultmann's, that the revelation of God can only be realized in encounter ?

Buber distinguishes between personalism and individualism. The person, for Buber, is he who says merely 'I am'; it is he who says merely 'know thyself', 'know thyself to have being'. Thus Buber's person stops short of prescribing essence. But the individual

[¶]op. cit., p. 319.

^{¶¶}op. cit., pps. 323-4.

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goes further, too far, and says: "I am such-and-such" and in his relationship with another says: "Know thyself to have thy particular kind of being".^{*} The individual invalidly takes his own special kind of being as his observation-point --- it is the real attraction for him. In so doing he detracts from the worth of being in itself. This individuality is a form of selfishness --- it goes towards entities of my kind, my race, my species. The authentic person points only to the necessity of realizing being-in-the-world; he points to and invites into historicity, temporality. He should not attempt to do more. Here again, we have Buber's rejection of an anthropology of essence; it means in effect the rejection of a Weltanschauung-type of knowledge in favour of insight given in interpersonal encounter.

Buber's rejection of a universally communicable, objective knowledge comes out again when he says that the 'moment' means that in it something has 'happened to' man (not that knowledge was imparted to him in it). This is known in its existential results. After the passing of the 'moment' we discover the 'gift'.^{***} What comes in the 'moment' is non-transferable because it is a Presence, 'a Presence as power'.^{***} Within this there are three strands :-

^{*}See op. cit., (I and Thou), p. 64.

^{***}op. cit., p. 109.

^{***}op. cit., p. 110.

(a) The experience of being bound in relation.

(b) The assurance of meaning.

(c) The meaning is of this life in this world, the world of our time and history.

Buber comments on these three things in a way that highlights his views on the impossibility of a Weltanschauung-type knowledge:-

(a) Of the relation, man can 'give no account at all' of how it comes about. Thus there is here no 'seperable something', universally and objectively communicable.

(b) Of the meaning, man does not know how to 'exhibit and define the meaning of life'; there is no 'formula or picture' for it; yet its certitude, independent of these, is greater than the certitude of sense-perception.

(c) Of the meaning of this life here in this world of history, this meaning 'does not permit itself to be transmitted and made into knowledge generally current and admissible'.^{*} This meaning can be received and tested 'by each man in the singleness of his being and the singleness of his life'.^{xxx} From the encounter of the 'moment' we return bearing only the 'Thou' on our lips, nothing more.^{xxx} We can derive from the 'moment' no "knowledge" which might lessen its mysteriousness. Nor can we pass it on to others, saying to them: "You must know this, you must

^{*} op. cit., p. 111.

^{xxx} op. cit., p. 111; there is an obvious contrast here ^{between} ~~the~~ existential meaning and the objectivity of the results of a scientific experiment, which certainly do not require to be tested by each man in the singleness of his being and life.

^{xxx} In so far as this 'Thou' means our possessed conviction that our real life lies in the future in relation and encounter, this is in accord with our already expressed judgement of Bultmann and Buber, that the only possible Weltanschauung expresses our radical historicity and temporality.

do this".* In the 'moment' it is not revealed to us what God is, what his name is, a definition of God, all that is disclosed is that God IS. God's name is I AM THAT I AM.** There is given no solutions of problems, no solving of riddles, no evaporating of mysteries: only a Presence as power.*** Thus it is clear that for Buber 'revelation' is revelation in our primary (interpersonal, 'momentary', concrete, historical, temporal) sense; it is hard not to conclude that Buber thinks that the secondary type of 'revelation' belongs properly to science.

But this (primary) kind of revelation or awareness is precisely opposite of that which man desires to have.**** Man desires to 'possess God'.**** He wants to have 'a continuity in space and time of possession of God'.**** It is not enough for man to receive meaning occasionally, discontinuously, in the 'moment' ---- he wants to see the confirmation of meaning as something "that can be taken up and handled, a continuum unbroken in space and time that insures***** his life at every point and every***** moment".***** We need hardly point out here the closeness to Bultmann's conviction that man's desire

*op. cit., p. 111.

**op. cit., p. 112.

***op. cit., p. 111.

****op. cit., p. 113.

*****We have already found in Bultmann the insight that man desires above all else 'security'; Bultmann holds that radical 'insecurity' is the hall-mark of genuine existence.

*****This is the opposite of 'discontinuity'.

*****op. cit., p. 113.

for a possessable Weltanschauung is an enemy of the 'moment' and its revelation. The Weltanschauung, as Bultmann has so rightly pointed out, can be re-applied in life so as to do away with the necessity for the 'moment'; it can be, as Buber, says, 'taken up and handled'.

Buber put the same thing in a slightly different way --- man 'longs for extension in time, for duration'.[⌘] This is of course the diametrical opposite of what we mean by the 'moment'. This longing has an adverse affect on faith.[⌘] Faith becomes thought of as going out towards that which is extended in time, and that is an object, a thing. Thus God becomes an object, the object of faith. The original, valid, function of faith was to complement the 'moments' of relation, it was the human response to God's historical approach. But faith, infected by the desire for duration, replaces these 'momentary' encounters. 'Faith', so understood, cancels out the necessity for man's stepping out into meeting in the 'moment'. 'Faith', so understood, has become unhistorical and untemporal --- it is lifted out of the 'moments' of time and is directed to a transcendent object --- to 'God'. This inauthentic desire for continuity and duration mani-

[⌘]op. cit., p. 113.

manifests/ itself also in inauthentic worship, in a cult, in a ritual, which have as their object an object, continuous in time.* Dissatisfied by the existential loneliness of the 'moment', man's community-urge makes him immerse himself in the community which follows the cult of a representation of God, unbroken in time. ** By means of this cult the community as distinct from the person is united with its God; thus 'God' can become a possession, always accessible in the liturgy. Originally, the cult (like faith) was a completion of and the response to God's 'momentary' approach; now it displaces this personal response; the link between history and worship becomes broken; the object of the cult, 'God', is above time and history absolutely, a thing, an 'It', extended in space and time. Thus such a cult can lead to inauthenticity of life --- it can deceive man about his historicity and about the living God who comes to him in the 'moment'. This cult is parallel to secondary revelation; it grows out of 'momentary' encounters, to be sure; but it becomes objectified when it loses its existential connection with the concrete happening which gave birth to it. The concrete happening is primary.

So far the similarity between Buber and Bultmann

*op. cit., p. 114.

**As we have already seen, false forms of community and the 'clamour of the voices' which they contain are held by Bultmann to be enemies of the 'moment', deceiving us, they make us forget our solitariness, see Essays, pps. 7 f.

is plain --- they hold similar views as to primary and secondary revelation. Primary revelation for them both is 'momentary', concrete, historical, relational, given in historical interpersonal encounter; the secondary, though derived from the primary, is dangerous in that it may be broken off from its primary roots, and passed off as generally current and admissible. For them both revelation is essentially primary.

But here we must make another crucial point. Granted the general similarity, what is the main origin of Buber's views on revelation? If it can be answered simply some alien (i.e. unbiblical) philosophy, such as existentialism, that is no doubt interesting. Here we have another interesting instance of the effect of the philosophy of existence on modern thought. But I should like to show that this answer is invalid. For it is possible, I am convinced, to show that the formative influence on Buber's distinction between primary and secondary revelation is the Hebrew Bible, his Jewish faith, especially as it has come to him in its Hasidic form.

Let us then examine some of Buber's expositions of the biblical faith. While discussing the faith of the Old Testament prophets, Buber has this to say: "Centralization and codification, undertaken in the interests of religion, are a danger to the core of religion, unless there is the strongest life of faith, embodied in the whole existence of the community, and no relaxing of its renewing activity".*

*The Prophetic Faith, p. 170.

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'Codification' and 'core of religion' in this quotation are obviously secondary and primary revelation respectively. Discussing Pascal's embracing of the God of the Bible, Buber remarks: "The God of Abraham, the God in whom Abraham had believed and whom Abraham had loved ('The entire religion of the Jews', remarks Pascal, 'consisted only in the love of God'), is not susceptible of introduction into a system of thought precisely because he is God. He is beyond each and every one of these systems, absolutely and by virtue of his nature. What the philosophers describe by the name of God cannot be more than an idea. But God, 'the God of Abraham', is not an idea; all ideas are absorbed in him".*

Here Buber makes reference to the notion of primary revelation under the term 'the God of Abraham', a God encountered by Abraham in the 'moment', and to secondary revelation under the terms 'idea', and 'system of thought'. So his view is really determined by the revelation of the Hebrew bible. Still in the context of Pascal's conversion Buber has this to say : " ... the philosopher, if he were really wish to turn his back on that God (i.e. the God of the philosophers), would be compelled to renounce the attempt to include God in his system in any conceptual form. Instead of including God as one theme among others, that is, as the highest theme of all, his philosophy both wholly and in part would be

*Eclipse of God: Studies in the Relation Between Religion and Philosophy, CHAPTER IV, 'The Love of God and the Idea of Deity', pps. 67-84 = Herberg, pps, 97-113, see p. 97.

compelled to point toward God, without actually dealing with him".^{*}

Still speaking of the God of the Bible, Buber points out the uselessness of secondary revelation without primary : "For when man learns to love God, he senses an actuality which rises above the idea. Even if he makes the philosopher's great effort to sustain the object of his love as an object of his philosophic thought, the love itself bears witness to the existence of the Beloved".^{xxx}

Buber's acceptance of the primary notion of revelation over against the secondary comes out finely in this passage : "If philosophy is here set in contrast to religion, what is meant by religion is not the massive fulness of statements, concepts, and activities that one customarily describes by this name and that men sometimes long for more than for God."^{xxx}

Religion is essentially the act of holding fast to God. And that does not mean holding fast to an image that one has made of God, nor even holding fast to the faith in God that one has conceived.^{xxxx}

It means holding fast to the existing Gpd. The earth would not hold fast to its conception of the sun (if it had one), nor to its connection with it,^{xxxx} but to the sun itself", (Eclipse of God, chapter VIII, 'God and the Spirit of Man' = Herberg, pps. 108-113, see p. 108). But it is vital for our purpose here to note that Buber makes this distinction whilst discussing the God

^{*}op. cit., p. 98. The similarity here between Buber and Bultmann is too obvious to deserve comment. As we saw in chapter II above, in The Question of Natural Revelation Bultmann argues that our existential self-analysis points to the notion of God, but without actually dealing with him. God is only to be met with in the 'moment' of encounter.

^{xxx}op. cit., p. 107.

^{xxxx}Cf. Bultmann's conviction that man's longing for a Weltanschauung (cf. Buber, 'continuity') is an enemy of 'momentary' revelation.

^{xxxxx}We remember here that Bultmann holds that faith and belief are not retainable entities, but 'events' in time.

disclosed through the Hebrew Bible; he is still discussing the God of Abraham. Secondary revelation can actually fight against primary revelation and try to destroy it : "If the living quality of the conception of God refuses to enter into this conceptual image, it is tolerated alongside of it, ususally in an unprecise form, as in the end identical with it or at least essentially dependent on it. Or it is depreciated as an unsatisfactory surrogate, helpful to men incapable of thought".^{XX} Discussing Moses' struggle against idolatry in early Israel's sacrificial system, Buber makes this comment : "The people wish for a tangible security,^{XX} they wish to 'have' the God, they wish to have him at their disposal through a sacral system; but it is this security^{XX} which Moses cannot and must not grant them".^{XXXX} And of course it is precisely this wish to 'have' God (at their disposal) that gives rise to the religious ideology, the possessable Weltanschauung. Again, while discussing the faith of Judaism, and the question of whether there is or is not a Jewish dogmatics, Buber makes this important statement : "Dogma can arise only in a situation where detachment is the prevailing attitude to the concrete, lived moment --- a state of detachment which easily becomes misunderstood in dogmatics as being superior to the lived moment itself. Whatever is enunciated IN ABSTRACTO in the third person about the divine, on the thither side of the confrontation of

^{XX} Eclipse of God, chapter VIII, quoted in Herberg, p. 109.

^{XX} We remember again Bultmann's conviction that radical insecurity is the hall-mark of authentic existence.

^{XXXX} Moses, 'The Words on the tablets', pps. 119-140 = Herberg, pps. 181-202, see p. 191.

I and Thou, is only a projection onto the conceptual construct plane, which, though, indispensable, proves itself again and again to be unessential".* We could hardly ask for plainer proof that Buber infinitely prefers primary to secondary revelation, and that for Judaistic-biblical reasons. In another place we find his Jewish religion influencing Buber in the direction of primary as against secondary revelation: "The tribes of Jacob could only become Israel by disentangling themselves from both gnosis and magic. He who imagines that he knows and holds the mystery fast can no longer face it as his 'Thou'; and he who thinks that he can conjure and utilize it, is unfit for the venture of true mutuality".** There is no doubt that Buber's terms 'knowing' and 'holding' (the mystery fast) imply a secondary type of revelation, and that 'facing' it as 'Thou', and 'mutuality' imply the primary type. In Hasidism, the mystery of the person to God is "... rendered, however, no longer knowable"; "... The meaning of revelation is that it is to be prepared; Hasidism affirms that revelation is to be prepared in the whole reality of human life".*** The exact trouble with secondary revelation is just that it presupposes that this mystery is knowable within its propositions. Secondary revelation concerns itself with a God who is comprehensible, but who is rendered insufficient in

* Israel and the World, 'The Faith of Judaism', pps. 13-27 = Herberg, pps. 253-265.

** op. cit., p. 261.

*** op. cit., p. 262.

the crises and contradictions of life : "'the fear of God' is rightly called 'the beginning of knowledge' (Ps.111:10). It is the dark gate through which man must pass if he to enter into the love of God. He who wishes to avoid passing through this gate, he who begins to provide himself with a comprehensible God, constructed thus and not otherwise, runs the risk of having to despair of God in view of the actualities of history and life, or of falling into inner falsehood. Only through the fear of God does man enter so deep into the love of God that he cannot be cast out of it".^{*} Again the influence of Judaism in influencing Buber in the direction of primary revelation is apparent. This danger of which Buber speaks here is a very real one, one of which existentialist theologians are keenly aware. As we shall see in the concluding chapter, when dealing with the problems of propositional theology and of community, Bultmann insists throughout his theology that man's awareness of God and of his self-hood must be constantly corrected and confirmed in 'moment' after 'moment' of responsible living. For Bultmann too there can be no question of a metaphysical description of God to which man's subsequent experience must conform; rather there must be constant question and answer, dialogue, between Kerygma and situation in man's existence. It is also this insight that lies behind Bultmann's

^{*}Israel and the World, 'The Two Foci of the Jewish Soul', pps. 28-40 = Herberg, op. cit., pps. 266-276, see p. 269.

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insistence that man cannot have belief in God as 'a lasting possession'. Discussing religion in the modern world, Buber asks this question -

" ... where is religion to be found ?It is only to the historic-- -- or to some of them ---- that such a question can literally be addressed. But it is neither in their dogma nor in their ritual that the answer may lie; not in the one because its purpose is to formulate beliefs which are beyond conceptual thinking into conceptual propositions, not in the other because its object is to express the relation to the Unlimited by means of steadfast and regular performance. Both have their specific spheres of influence, but neither is capable of helping the modern world to find faith. The only element in the historic religions which the world is justified in calling upon is that intrinsic reality of faith which is beyond all attempts at formulation and expression but exists in truth; it is THAT which constantly renews the fullness of its presence from the flow of personal life itself. This is the one thing that matters: the personal existence, which gives actuality to the essence of a religion and thus attests to its living force". * Thus Buber gives the Hasidic-Jewish answer to his question; in this answer, the primary/secondary distinction is plain - 'dogma', 'conceptual propositions', 'conceptual thinking', 'formulation', and 'expression' all indicate the secondary type: and 'beliefs which are beyond conceptual

* At the Turning: Three Addresses on Judaism, (New York 1952), pps. 29-44, = Herberg, pps. 306-314, see p. 307.

thinking', 'that intrinsic reality of faith', and 'personal existence' all indicate the primary. We shall return to this matter in our concluding chapter; it is sufficient here to note that the distinction in Buber between primary and secondary revelation has been profoundly influenced by his Jewish faith.

Buber admits that a certain genuine 'continuity' is possible.* God is to met with here in this world, in this life, anew each day.** This only comes about if man realizes the potency of things in the world to become 'Thou' for him --- it is no guaranteed, automatic, process. Man must realize that 'Its' can come alive for him in his present, speak to him, and challenge him. In so far as this process is carried out, it 'shapes man's time'. And in so far as the process continues, the 'moments' of meaning and meeting increase in quantity until they lose 'the impression of isolated stars shining in the darkness of the sky and gain the impression of a solid and strong moon shining through a starlit night.*** Surely this symbol of the moon is intended to convey a certain constancy and duration to a responsibly lived authentic life? It is this process also that

*I and Thou, pps. 114 f.

**We are reminded here of Bultmann's fondness for the expression, that God's mercies are to be realized new every morning.

***op. cit., p. 115.

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builds up and guarantees community.* For Buber, community does not come first, but rather authentic persons who have experienced the 'moment' commonly. It is this common experience which alone constitutes community and guarantees its existence.**

Buber rejects the process by which man practises reflection to (reflexion to) the God who has revealed himself in the 'moment'. This process is invalid because in it man wishes to concern himself with 'God' and not with the world through which God reveals himself. But in revelation God and world are inextricably linked together: "All revelation", says Buber, "is summons and sending".* The 'God' of reflexion to the past is an 'It'.* The comparison here with Bultmann is almost too obvious to need comment. Bultmann too sternly opposes the reproduction of past disclosure in their purely worldly actuality; he does so because this process can be carried out without one's present being involved. For ~~Bultmann~~^{Bultmann} too revelation involves the world just because memory can only validly reproduce past events by allowing them to encounter now his present-in-the-world. That procedure of 'reflexion' criticized by Buber, in contrast, is thoroughly unhistorical. It concerns itself with a God who is above history, and

*op. cit., p. 115.

**We shall return to Buber's view of community in the conclusions.

time, and one's present-in-the-world. Buber believes that nations and cultures are founded upon 'an original relational incident'.^{*} But here again Buber disallows the possibility of secondary revelation; the original incident does not produce secondary knowledge generally available within the community. The continuity of the culture and the nation that it comprehends depends upon the re-living, and the re-encountering, of the original 'moment'. Without this, the past 'moment' remains an 'It', and thus strengthens the world of 'It', which can only be spasmodically broken through by the 'glowing deeds of solitary spirits'.^{***}

Thus we conclude this section by pointing out once more that Buber, as well as Bultmann, dislikes merely propositional revelation --- knowledge that man can master, possess and utilize. He therefore refuses to separate knowledge from the disclosure-moment. There is in his thought the closest possible connection between disclosure-event and what is disclosed; he holds that man cannot possibly come to the latter except through encounter with the former. In other words, man cannot attain to, unhistorically and untemporally, secondary revelation by means of an inauthentic by-passing of primary revelation.

^{*}I and Thou, p. 54. An obvious example that springs to mind here is the Red Sea deliverance of the Hebrews and its function in the foundation of 'Israel'.

^{***}op. cit., p. 54; we shall return to this insight when we compare, in chapter IV, Kierkegaard's views with those of Cullmann. Cullmann objects to Kierkegaard's Moment just because it implies an overleaping of time in a backward direction to the foundation-Christ-event, whilst ignoring the intervening history.

(3) CAUSALITY, FREEDOM, AND THE 'MOMENT'.

In reading this section of our study of Buber, there should be kept in mind throughout section (3) of our chapter on Bultmann, entitled 'THE 'MOMENT' IS ONE OF DECISION, RELATING THE PAST TO THE FUTURE'. We recall here that Bultmann holds that meaning can only be found in history (and indeed that the term 'history' itself has meaning) if man by his choice and his decision can rise above causal laws and make his own history. If man were subject always and everywhere to causality, as are plants and animals, he would be merely an element in the natural world, and it would be nonsensical to talk of him as historical. We have seen how Bultmann rejects 'historicism', the interpretation of man in analogy with nature. We have also seen how Bultmann holds that there is a 'moment' given to man in which he may decide to become, and it is the possibility of this 'moment' that distinguishes man from nature. This 'moment' dislocates the causal connection between man's past and future. We have, in chapter I, compared this 'moment' to the 'Augenblick' of Heidegger in Sein und Zeit, and to the thought of Tillich and Kierkegaard. The importance of such a 'moment' can be seen perhaps from the following quotation from Karl Mannheim's Systematic Sociology^{*}: "By itself living in society would not have such far-reaching consequences if man had not a fundamental quality which low-

^{*}London 1957, p. 7.

lower/ animals lack; that quality is the flexibility of his behaviour.
Ants and bees also live together, they too have a kind of division of
labour and a kind of state, but, unlike man, there is no visible change
in their psychic life --- they still reproduce the same social and ment-
:al patterns, and in that sense they have no history".³² Mannheim agrees
with Bultmann that ants and bees have no history; it is Bultmann's con-
:viction that 'the flexibility of ... behaviour' of which Mannheim
speaks is, in its radical sense, the gift of faith. Without such a
gift, man has only ^{relative} freedom to act.

We have already come across a certain duality in
Buber's thought in that he thinks of two worlds, of two spheres, two
types of reality; the one he designates 'Thou', the second, 'It'.
The 'moment', the present, presentness, belongs to the former of these
two. But the world of 'It' and causality are closely linked together.
'Causality has an unlimited reign in 'the world of 'It''.³³ We there-
:fore expect to find its opposite in the world of 'Thou'. This is what
we find; Buber states that this unlimited reign of causality need not
cripple man, because man can from time to time ³³³³ leave the world of
'It', of things, of objects, of causality, for another world where the

³²It is significant how, in this important book, Mannheim deals first
(pps. 7-27) with 'Man and his psychic equipment', before he deals with
those social laws and forces which shape man. That is, he deals first
with man's desires, wishes, freedom to decide and act, and so on.

³³³I and Thou, p. 51.

³³³³i.e. in moment after moment.

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unlimited sway of causality is broken. The world of relation so entered is 'Neither connected with nor coloured by any causality'.* In his entry into this sphere man finds assurance of freedom. In it he finds himself capable of decision. This is because in it man approaches the Face. Here we find linked up closely the 'moment', the breaking of causality, freedom, decision, God. So far there is no great variance between the thought of Buber, and, say, the thought of Bultmann. But causality, proper to the sphere of 'It', can invade the sphere of the 'Thou' with disastrous results.** This can happen to two entities --- to the person, and to the nation.*** It can happen to the person when he forgets that his freedom from causal forces depends upon those 'moments' when he enters the world of relation, of the 'Thou', when he is assured of freedom, and can become. It can happen to a nation or to

*I and Thou, p. 51.

*** Buber thinks there is a danger of this in the times in which we are living: "In our time there predominates an analytical, reducing, and deriving look between man and man. 'This look is analytical, or rather pseudo-analytical, since it treats the whole being as put together and therefore able to be taken apart --- not only the so-called Unconscious which is patent of a relative objectification but also the psychic stream itself, which can in truth never be adequately grasped as an object. This look is reducing, because it tries to contract the manifold person, which is nourished by the microcosmic richness of the possible, to some schematically surveyable and recurrent structure. And this look is deriving, because it supposes it can grasp what a man has become, or even is becoming, in genetic formulae, and it thinks that even the dynamic central principle of the individual in this becoming can be represented by a general concept. An effort is being made today not merely at Max Weber's 'disenchantment' - which could be quite acceptable - but also at a radical destruction of the mystery between man and man. The personal life, the constantly near mystery, once the source of the most tranquil enthusiasms, is planed down" - The Elements of the Inter-human, transl. by R. Gregor Smith, private MS, pps. 13-14.

*** I and Thou, p. 54.

a culture (as we have already noted) when the original foundational-
'moment' is not renewed and re-lived by succeeding generations. If p.
54 of I and Thou ~~be~~ carefully examined, we see that its key-note is
'again and again', in 'moment' after 'moment'. If the person or the
nation makes these omissions, what is the result? It is that ^{*}
"smooth causality ... rises up till it is an opp~~ressive~~, stifling, fate".
"Wise and masterful destiny ... has been changed into a demonic spirit
adverse to meaning, and has fallen into the power of causality ...
we are laden with the whole burden of the dead weight of the world, with
fate that does not know spirit".^{xx} The solution to such a dilemma
lies in " ... a new event of meeting, which in the course of assuming
substantial being --- out of a new response, determining destiny, of a
man to his 'Thou'".^{xxx} In short, the solution lies in re-living, re-
experiencing, re-encountering, an emphasis in Buber which we have already
analysed in relation to the Bultmann-Dilthey-Collingwood interpretation
of history.

We have noted more than once Bultmann's aversion to
'historicism'. Buber is equally opposed to it. He attacks strongly
what he calls the 'quasi-biological and quasi-historical thought of

^{*}I and Thou, p. 54.

^{xx} op. cit., p. 54. Buber here uses 'fate' to denote causality and
'spirit' to denote freedom. In this part of I and Thou Buber makes plain
his debt to oriental philosophy, especially to Buddhist karmatic thought.

^{xxx} op. cit., p. 55.

today'.* He attacks it because it has established 'a more tenacious and oppressive belief in fate than has ever before existed'.* Such thought contradicts the view that " because man is the sole living creature known to us in whom the category of possibility is so to speak embodied, and whose reality is incessantly enveloped by possibilities, he alone amongst them all needs confirmation. Every animal is fixed in its this-being, its modifications are pre-ordained, and when it changes into a caterpillar and into a chrysalis its very metamorphosis is a boundary; in everything together it remains exactly what it is, therefore it can need no confirmation; it would, indeed, be an absurdity for someone to say to it, or for it to say to itself: You may be what you are. Man as man is an audacity of life, undetermined and unfixed; he therefore requires confirmation, and he can naturally only receive this as individual man, in that others and he himself confirm him in his being-this-man".** The fate belief in which is established by modern thought is, according to Buber, made up of several strands. One such is " ... the 'law of life' of a universal struggle in which all must take part or renounce life.....".*** Here Buber obviously intends those universal interpretations of history which try to elucidate how

* op. cit., p. 56.

*** Images of Good and Evil, chapters III and IV in Good and Evil: Two Interpretations, (New York 1953), pps. 125-138 = Herberg, pps. 89-96, see p. 94.

**** I and Thou, p. 56.

history operates in accordance with universal rules, and which instruct nations and individuals how they must co-operate with such laws to their benefit. The second strand is " ... the 'law of the soul' which completely builds up the psychical person from innate habitual instincts".^{KK} Buber obviously has in mind here certain mechanistic psychologies.^{KKK} The use of the word 'law' implies that such a psychology would describe how the person must behave, causally conditioned, without freedom to decide and therefore to become. The third strand of fate cited by Buber is " ... the 'social law' of an irresistible social process to which will and consciousness may only be accompaniments".^K Here is meant obviously sociologies which describe man as the product of social and economic change --- as being moulded radically by the group or groups to which he belongs and in the face of which he is by his decision or will quite powerless.^{KKKK} A fourth and final strand is " ... the 'cultural law' of an unchangeably uniform coming and going of historical structures".^K Here is meant obviously those great philosophies of history which divide the past into eras or periods, and from which there is produced by induction certain laws or predictions regarding the future of history.^{KKKKK} Writing in 1948, Buber points out that the 'man of today' has two approaches to history before him which are both

^K op. cit., p. 56.

^{KKK} For a sociologist's criticisms of such mechanistic psychologies, see Karl Mannheim, Systematic Sociology, 2, i, 'Habits and the Problem of Instincts', pps. 10 f.

^{KKKK} For descriptions of such sociologies see again Mannheim, op. cit.

^{KKKKK} Many such philosophies of history are set forth and analysed admirably in Social Philosophies of an Age of Crisis, by Pitirim A. Sorokin, (London 1952).

invalid. The first is simply to reject utterly as impossible any attempt to find meaning in the 'promiscuous agglomeration of happenings'. And the second is " ... to view history dogmatically, derive laws from the past sequences of events, and calculate future sequences, as though the 'main lines' were already traced on some roll which need merely unroll; as though history were not the vital living, growing, of time, constantly moving from decision to decision, of time into which my time and my decisions stream full force. He regards history as a stark, ever-present, inescapable space".^{*} The words 'unchangeably uniform' are typical of all these strands of fate which Buber contends the quasi-biological and quasi-historical thought of today bids us accept. The net result of such fate for man is that ' ... (he) is set in the frame of an inescapable happening that he cannot, or can only in his frenzy, resist'.^{***} At the basis of all these 'laws' is 'possession by process, that is, by unlimited causality'.^{***} And 'the dogma of process leaves no room for freedom'.^{***}

The solution to this frightful dilemma is to be found

^{*}Israel and the World, pps. 89-102 = Herberg, pps. 239-250, see p. 244.

^{***}I and Thou, p. 56.

^{***}op. cit., p. 57.

in a certain type of individual. This individual would deal thus with the four strands of fate which Buber has singled out :-

(1) With regard to the great universal interpretations of history, he would 'through reversal surmount the universal struggle'.* That is, escape from the so-called inescapable.

(2) With regard to mechanistic psychologies, he would through reversal 'tear to pieces the web of habitual instincts'.*

(3) With regard to economically determined sociologies, he would 'raise the class ban'*; that is, he would ~~escape~~ escape from the determining sway of class and society.

(4) With regard to 'era'-philosophies of history, he would 'stir, rejuvenate, and transform the stable structures of history'.* That is, by his existence he would demonstrate that the necessary comings and goings of historical process were not at all necessary. Such a man, acting in these four directions, shatters the four strands of fate in which modern thought would have us believe. For man's uniqueness is the possibility of the 'moment'; in it there is given what Buber calls 'reversal', the 'break through'.** Thus the 'moment' in which this happens makes man's history possible.

* op. cit., p. 57.

** op. cit., p. 56.

In a society in which there is enslavement to causality one of the obvious symptoms of this is always the prediction or the prophesying of future events from those 'laws' which are supposed to have emerged from our examination of past events. As we shall see in the next chapter when we examine Kierkegaard's argument in the Philosophical Fragments it was just in this connection that he raged against his own generation as "this prophesying generation". Their prophesying and prediction was ample proof of their belief in and mastery by fate, by causality. Buber can say very much the same thing : "Prediction from the world of objectivity is valid only for the man who does not know presentness".* It is in the present 'moment' that there is given awareness of freedom, and thus the possibility of decision and thus the possibility of becoming not bound to any objective cause; thus prediction of the future becomes invalid. What the future will actually be will thus depend to some extent upon what man does with that freedom which is a possibility of the 'moment'. The man who does not know presentness, the 'moment', is severely limited. Knowing only causality, he can be concerned only with ends which he wishes to attain in the world of It and the correct means of attaining them --- in short, with

*I and Thou, p. 58.

techniques, and their study, technology. He can be concerned with nothing else, certainly not with himself, for he knows when he examines himself that he can do nothing with himself --- he is ^a creature causally determined. Therefore he indulges in escapism --- tinkering with means and ends in the world of 'It'. This escapism absorbs his attention and prevents him from falling into despair about himself;[¶] ironically, this despair would be ultimately healthy, for it would help him to recognise the unreality of his own existence and so 'come to himself'.^{¶¶} In contrast to such a man, the man who knows freedom does not dissipate his energies in the world of means and ends --- he knows that he must become by means of his decision.^{¶¶¶} He has made a 'primal' decision^{¶¶¶¶} --- the decision to approach his destiny here in this world of time --- and this decision involves the decision ever to renew it. Such a man Buber calls the 'free man',^{¶¶¶¶} --- free because he has known the 'moment' of presentness. We have already seen in Bultmann that the freedom which dislocates the past from the future is not a general, observable, possessable quality, but rather that 'freedom is an event'. So it is too with Buber : "For the responsible response to exist, the real-

[¶] I and Thou, p. 61.

^{¶¶} Cf. Kierkegaard's argument in The Sickness unto Death.

^{¶¶¶} I and Thou, p. 60.

^{¶¶¶¶} 'Primal', meaning basic, fundamental, indispensable, and also the first in a series without which the series would be impossible.

reality/ of the person is necessary, whom the word meets and claims in the event; and the reality of the truth is necessary to which the person goes out with united being and which he is, therefore, able to receive only in the word, as the truth which concerns himself, in his particular situation, and not in any general way". * Thus for Buber also, freedom is an event.

Man's situation is characterised by paradox, by an antinomy.^{***} To live in paradox, in this specific paradox between necessity and freedom, is extremely uncomfortable. Man dislikes the antinomy. There are four invalid ways in which man can deal with it :-

- (i) He may accept one pole and reject the other, which is a destruction of the paradox.
- (ii) He may try to think out a synthesis between the two --- this also amounts to an elimination of the paradox.
- (iii) He may relativize the antinomy.
- (iv) He may try to deal with the conflict between the two poles in some other way than with his life.^{***} The paradox is religious

* Between Man and Man, 'The Question to the Single One', pps. 40-61, 65, 69-71, = Herberg, pps. 63-88. See p. 85.

^{***} I and Thou, pps. 95-6.

(or better, existential) and not merely intellectual. If it were merely intellectual or philosophical, there are various techniques by which we might rid ourselves of it. There is the technique of Kant^x --- to ascribe necessity to the world of appearances and freedom to the world of being. This is to reconcile the paradoxical poles. There is the Hegelian technique^{xx} --- this is to reconcile the poles of the paradox through a synthesis on the earthly plane, here, in time and history. At this point it is impossible not to mention Kierkegaard and his anti-Hegelian revolt. For Kierkegaard, man's experience of the paradox leads him into despair --- despair at the human intellect's inability to comprehend or to reconcile the paradox. Melville Channing-Pearce quotes Dr. W.M. Horton thus:

"... a truly reverent theology ... must reverse the Hegelian dialectic ... must look for no synthesis on the earthly plane, but balance every thesis with an antithesis, every Yes with a No, and then, standing helplessly in the contradiction, appeal to God for a revelation, for an act of grace".^{xxx} Melville Channing-Pearce

points out again the close link between the paradox and life in Kierkegaard when he writes : "Kierkegaard's conclusion is that of

Jan van Ruysbroek: 'we must all found our lives upon a fathomless^x op. cit., p. 96.

^{xxx} Hegel's name is not mentioned by Buber; but it is impossible from the context, when Buber rejects the technique of thinking out a synthesis between thesis and antithesis (I and Thou, p. 95), not to conclude that Buber has Hegel in mind.

^{xxx} Soren Kierkegaard: A Study, (London 1945), p. 40.

abyss' -- an abyss which can only be crossed by the 'leap in the dark' which is faith, that 'happy passion'. But, for existential thinking, faith itself remains a 'tension'. Existential truth is thus a 'troubled truth' which points to despair and so to the decision of faith*.^x Let us now return to Buber. For him also the antinomy (paradox) is not just a matter of thought. It is a matter of concrete life. It concerns 'standing before God'. The two poles of it are represented first by 'I am given over for disposal' (necessity), and second by 'It depends on myself' (freedom).^{xx} For Buber, the only valid way of dealing with the paradox is to realise that 'it has to be lived'.^{xxx} "I am compelled to take both sides to myself, to be lived together, and in being lived they are one".^{xxx} For Buber, no stronger attack can be made upon the paradox than that of logical propositions : "It is only when reality is turned into logic, and A and non-A^{xxxx} dare no longer dwell together that we get determinism and indeterminism,^{xxxxx} a doctrine^{xxxxx} of predestination and a doctrine of freedom, each excluding the other. According to the logical conception of truth, only one of two contraries can be true; but in the reality of life as one lives it, they are inseparable. The person who makes a decision knows that his deciding is no self-delusion; the person who has acted knows that he was and is

*op. cit., p. 41.

^{xx}I and Thou, p. 96.

^{xxx}i.e. Thesis and antithesis, the two poles of the paradox.

^{xxxx}i.e. "-isms", theories, not existential realities.

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in the hand of God. The unity of the contraries is the mystery at the innermost core of the dialogue".^x Thus for Buber also, the paradox is something ^{with} which man has to live.

It will be obvious from this that Buber does take his place (as do Kierkegaard and Bultmann) in the 'existentialist tradition'. That side of the paradox we call necessity belongs to that sphere which Buber calls 'It' --- the world of process, of causality, of laws, of means and ends.^{xx} The other side, freedom, belongs to the sphere symbolised by the 'moment', by presentness. In these 'moments' man is not bound to the world of causality, but can leave it and thus escape from the determining universal sway of causality in the 'It'-sphere. In returning to the 'It'-sphere man returns different. In this two-way movement is his life to be found. Man must find his total life not in one sphere nor in the other but in both. There is the tension of the paradox --- having to live in one sphere and having to leave it in the 'moment' for the other, and having to return again. Thought, as both Buber and

^x Israel and the World, 'The Faith of Judaism', pps. 13-27, = Herberg, pps. 253-265, see p. 256 f. This important matter of paradoxes 'thought out' and 'lived out' will be raised again in our conclusions when we deal with the problem of propositional theology.

^{xx} Man is of course an 'It' in so far as he is also a biological organism. Thus man must accept a certain 'givenness' of biological and psychological heredity and so-on.

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Kierkegaard are agreed, cannot deal with this paradox, but only life. If thought could deal with the paradox, we must notice that this admission would constitute a major attack on the 'moment', on the essential historicity and temporality of man, on decision, in short, on the presuppositions of existentialist theology. It is for this reason that both Buber and Kierkegaard reject thought's jurisdiction over the paradox, and, analogically, Bultmann rejects objectively verifiable dogma and propositional theology. All must depend upon the 'moment'; upon the 'moment' depends whether man is or is not causally determined, on the 'moment' depends whether man becomes an authentic being or remains sunk in inauthenticity. We have stated that Buber takes his place within the existentialist tradition. What does this mean at this point? If one takes a group of typical existentialist thinkers, such as those whose thought is analysed by Mr. H.J. Blackham in his Six Existentialist Thinkers, one finds that there are two strands running through their work. From a reading of Mr. Blackham's book itself, this becomes apparent. These two strands of paramount importance in the writing of existentialist are (i) Necessity, and (ii) Freedom. And the existentialists are prone to giving a good deal of attention to elucidating the precise connection between the two. So Blackham writes: "To recognize that these limits define the permanent ^{im-}possibility of my realizing myself in the world is the necessary disillusion and despair on the further side of which is the possibility of self-transcendence, for then the limits are accepted as the end only for particular aims and forms of attachment and for the general understanding, and they may become frontiers where Transcendence is met. The perpetual temptation

to escape from this situation in mysticism^x or positivism or intellectualism,^{xx} to refuse to recognise that there is an ^{irreducible} ~~irreducible~~ duality between being-oneself and being-there in the world, that the authentic self which transcends the empirical world in liberty is doomed to frustration in the tasks and ends and ideals which it must nevertheless seriously engage in pursuing, as the only way of being-oneself and of reaching being-in-itself, this tension is the ethical situation at the heart of Jasper's philosophy".^{xxx}

Buber also finds life hovering between these two poles: the distance between which cannot be thought out but can only be lived out in the tensions of concrete existence. The core of this actual living is, of course, the 'moment' in which there is the free possibility of deciding what is going to be accepted from the past and from one's givenness, what is going to be rejected from this, and what shape one's future self is going to take. The general similarities between Bultmann's and Buber's positions are obvious. This brings to a conclusion this section of Buber's thought, and its importance for contemporary theology and philosophy.

^xTypical of existentialism is the distrust of mysticism; we have already, in chapter I, seen that Buber lists it as an enemy of the 'moment'; so does Buber, as we shall see in a later section of this chapter.

^{xx}'Intellectualism', in the sense of asserting the supremacy of thought over life, and in the sense of being the constructor of a system, is another element much distrusted by existentialists.

^{xxx}Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 52.

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(4) THE ENEMIES OF THE 'MOMENT'.

In the reading of this section on Buber's thought, we should try to keep in mind the sixth section of chapter I on Bultmann, THE NATURAL ENEMIES OF THE 'MOMENT'. We shall draw comparisons where thought possible. Throughout this fourth section we shall also list those elements in human existence which ^{oppose} the occurrence of the 'moment', reference to which is made elsewhere in this chapter.

Since in Buber the 'moment' is closely linked with the presentness of the 'Thou', it is natural that we should find ^{that} the world of 'It' appears as antithetical to the 'moment' and to its occurrence. For Buber the 'moment' is so important, so meaningful and significant, that it is exclusive.[⌘] Buber can say that the reality which confronts us in the 'moment' of encounter 'fills the heavens'.[⌘] Its range is cosmic.[⌘] All else 'lives in its light'. But when the 'momentary' event has run its course, it becomes an 'It' in the world of 'It'; but it offends the world of 'It' precisely because of its exclusiveness. It seems to the world

[⌘]I and Thou, p. 78.

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of 'It' that the 'moment' claims to 'exclude the universe'.^{*}

Hence we have one source of opposition to the 'moment' from the world of 'It'. It feels itself excluded from experience, from revelatory power, by the positing of the 'moment'. It seems though that this is an offence which any experiential theology cannot help causing. To be informed that one cannot appreciate a certain sphere of life, or a certain area of existential country, because one has not yet experienced it properly, is a most irritating experience. There is a certain sense in which every claim to truth implies a certain exclusiveness. If I claim that A is true, and B is its opposite, this seems to imply that B is excluded from truth by my claim. This may cause offence. If old age chides youth with the assertion that youth is unable to comprehend because of its lack of years, this is a grave offence to youth. Exclusiveness as a cause of offence can be illustrated in many ways; when St. Paul writes " ... ^{we} ~~the~~ preach Christ crucified ... unto the Greeks foolishness" (I Cor. 1:23), ~~the~~ point of this is that since Greek thought sought after truth in universals, the proclamation of the truth in the form of a concrete life and death was folly to the Greek mind.^{***} For the Greeks of St. Paul's day, the preaching of

^{*}op. cit., p. 78.

^{***}This logically implies that Christianity is offensive just because it locates the truth in particular events and not in others; thus we shall argue in our concluding chapter that Christianity implies the offence of particularity which implies in turn the 'moment' as a necessary Christian category.

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Christ was folly because, in the terms Buber uses, it 'excluded the universe'. Therefore it is hard not to conclude that any theology which takes seriously man's essential historicity and temporality does imply some form of exclusiveness, and therefore cannot escape the possibility of giving offence. Thus Paul Tillich writes : "Christian theology ... implies the claim that it is THE theology. The basis of this claim is the Christian doctrine that the Logos became flesh, that the principle of the divine self-revelation has become manifest in the event 'Jesus as the Christ'. If this message is true, Christian theology has received a foundation which transcends the foundation of any other theology and which itself cannot be transcended."^{*} Thus Tillich perceives the offence inherent in the specific, concrete, particular event.^{**} The 'moment', in so far as it claims to be a 'filled present', (Buber), 'filled with eternity' (Kierkegaard), 'eternal' (Bultmann), is bound to be offensive to those who seek for universality in intellectualism or mysticism or science. It is of course perfectly true that ecclesiastical history abounds in instances of gross abuse just because of this exclusiveness, and that the doctrine of exclusiveness is one fraught with the most frightful dangers, not always least for those

^{*} Systematic Theology, I, pps. 19-20.

^{**} Cf. " ... strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it".

who hold it. Indeed, one cannot help sympathising with those who will have nothing to do with this doctrine because of its horrible historical consequences alone. Yet, it must also be said that ecclesiastical abuses, numerous and frightful as they have been, do not by themselves constitute a reason for not holding to some form of particularity and exclusiveness. After all, many theological doctrines (e.g. Justification by Faith, the dialectical relationship of the believer to the secular world as in I Cor. 7:29, analysed in chapter I), are dangerous and always liable to acute distortion, but because a doctrine is dangerous is not a sufficient reason for saying it is untrue. Nor should we identify a doctrine with its historical distortions. At any rate, Buber is clear that the 'moment', entering the world of 'It' as an 'It', is an offence to it because of its exclusiveness. We shall re-open this matter in our concluding chapter when we examine the doctrine (and scandal) of particularity.

We have noted already that for Buber the world of 'It' has a certain solidity over against the 'moment'. It is the world where we must live and make our living every day, out of which we are invited to come in the transitory 'moment'. But the world of 'It' clings to us, it is fain to see us go. It offers us comfort and security and activity³² in competition with the 'moment'.

³²I and Thou, pps. 33-4.

How hard it is, to use Bultmann's terminology, to maintain that inner detachment from the world of things and commerce and 'Its' which will allow us to turn aside to meet the 'Thou' which confronts us. "How powerful", writes Buber, "Is the unbroken world of It, and how delicate are the appearances of the Thou".^x The 'moment' has a hard task finding an entrance into a world which, says Buber, is covered by a 'crust'.^x In other contexts Buber leaves us in little doubt that he conceives the two spheres as being in mutual opposition.^{xx} He speaks of the 'moments' linking up into a world-solidarity over against the It-world, and the task of the 'moments' being that of penetrating and transforming the world of 'It'.^{xxx} We need hardly note here that the 'moment' also finds opposition from the It-sphere because of the universal sway of causality in it; the 'moments' task is to dislocate causal process by conferring freedom.

The 'moment' implies meeting, encounter, in time. Anything that denies encounter opposes the 'moment'. Because the 'moment' is bi-polar, it can be denied by anything which breaks this structure. For example, exclusive emphasis on the 'I' as

^x op. cit., p. 98.

^{xx} op. cit., p. 100.

^{xxx} op. cit., p. 100. This is surely Bultmann's view also; the world of the everyday takes on a new meaning for the believer as that sphere abounding in opportunities for concrete acts of AGAPE.

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subject would fall into this category.* So would any theory of the divine immanence which regards the soul as a substance impressed with revelation apart from meeting the other in time and history; to this we shall return in our next and final section.**

Another element cited by Buber as opposing the occurrence of the 'moment' is mysticism. As we saw in chapter I, so does Bultmann. It is interesting that Buber criticizes mysticism for almost the same reasons as does Bultmann, and his colleagues in the existentialist tradition.*** He dislikes mysticism because it makes a complete break with life in the world. In the 'moment' a man leaves this world for the other world disclosed in the 'moment', but he must return to it immediately, except that he is now altered, changed, different. This world can never be the same again for him; it assumes a new meaning because of the experience of the 'moment'. But in mysticism this world is denied. The world of

***It is perfectly possible for the mutuality of Buber's I-Thou relationship to be criticised from the point of view of Christian theology, as being ultimately incompatible with AGAPE, with divine grace as it is emphasised in the New Testament. Yet this should not blind the Christian theologian to the value of Buber's thought which guards theology against two errors; first, against the notion of man as a subject-I contemplating an object-God; second, against the notion of a God who is wholly Other revealing himself to man as, in Dr. John Baillie's terminology, to a stick or a stone. Man does not discover God as an object; God does not disclose himself to man as an object. Buber's I-Thou theology invalidates both of these notions, and therefore has great value for Christian theology.

*See I and Thou, pps. 81 f.

***op. cit., pps. 85 f.

the mystic has no relationship to this world. The tragedy of mysticism is that it forgets that man must live daily here in this world, in this life. The consequence of engaging in this type of mysticism is a kind of existential schizophrenia : "What does it help my soul that it can be withdrawn anew from this world here into unity, when this world itself has of necessity no part in the unity --- what does all 'enjoyment of God' profit a life that is rent in two ? If that abundantly rich heavenly moment has nothing to do with my poor earthly moment --- what has it then to do with me, who have still to live, in all seriousness still to live, on earth ? Thus are the masters to be understood who have renounced the raptures of ecstatic 'union'".³² As we said earlier in discussing Bultmann's distrust of mysticism, mysticism completely misunderstands the dialectical relationship to the world; it seizes on one pole of the paradox only; while this relationship rejects the world in any ultimate sense, it yet affirms the world as a rich sphere where 'moments' of love and relation are constantly occurring; this latter pole mysticism fails to see. Thus, as Bultmann might say, mysticism helps man to flee from his demanding and enigmatic historicity and temporality.

³²I and Thou, p. 87.

We must also, for completeness' sake, include here man's natural desire for continuity and duration, which we have discussed earlier.^x In this connection we have already discussed man's desire for a Weltanschauung, a system, which gives him security and a ready-to-hand solution to riddles and enigmas, and we have already drawn comparisons with Bultmann's work. We have also seen the opposition exerted by inauthentic faith which replaces rather than complements the 'moment' of relation, and how the inauthentic cult can replace rather than be a response to the reality which comes in the 'moment'. We have seen too how the 'moment' can be denied by the man who forgets its propensity to become present reality again and again, and who thus regards a past 'moment' as a mere objectification. False forms of community (cf. Bultmann) can stifle the occurrence of the 'moment' also. Thus collectivism for Buber is the "last barrier raised by man against a meeting with himself" and therefore with God.^{xx} He calls to contemporary man "to be a person again, to rescue one's real personal self from the fiery jaws of collectivism, which devours all selfhood".^{xxx} "The person has become questionable

^x" ... man desires to possess God; he desires a continuity in space and time of possession of God", op. cit., p. 113.
 "(Man wants) ... meaning as something that can be continually taken up and handled, a continuum unbroken in space and time that insures his life at every point and every moment", op. cit., p. 113.
 Man " ... longs for extension in time, for duration", op. cit., p. 113.

^{xx}Between Man and Man, 'What is Man?', p. 201; cf. Herberg, op. cit., Introduction, p. 24.

^{xxx}Between Man and Man, 'The Education of Character', p. 111.

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through being collectivized ... The truth has become questionable through being politicized".² Buber's paper The Elements of the Inter-human shows further his distrust of false forms of community such as propaganda-and collectivist-states. We cite also man's arrogant lust for possessions and for the security offer in preference to the unreliability, peril, and lack of duration characteristic of the 'moment';³ or we could cite man's mistaken notion of knowledge as consisting of items of information from the objective world.⁴ 'Codification' and 'objectification' are both processes fraught, for Buber, with great danger. Thus Herberg writes :

"Buber's inability to accept the halakah is his fear that through becoming codified in the law, the demand of God is 'objectified' and robbed of its inner power.....".⁵ "the Torah of God, which is 'God's instruction in his way', may not without peril be made into a 'seperate objectivum'".⁶ To this business of 'objectification' we shall return in our conclusions when we deal with the whole problem of propositional theology.

At any rate it is quite clear that for both Bultmann and Buber, the 'moment' has to face considerable opposition from

² Between Man and Man, 'The Question to the Single One', pps. 80-81.

³ I and Thou, p. 78.

⁴ op. cit., p. 42.

⁵ W. Herberg, op. cit., Introduction, p. 38.

⁶ W. Herberg, op. cit., Introduction, p. 38, quoting Two Types of Faith, (London 1951), p. 57.

various elements in man's personal and social life. The number of elements common to Buber's and Bultmann's thought are undeniably remarkable. Couldnot Herberg have written of Bultmann as he has of Buber?: "Many are the ways in which the self tries to evade its responsibility in the existential dialogue of life, but they all add up in the end to the erection of some protective structure of fixed and final general rules (ideas, programs, values, standards, &c.)^{*} to stand between the individual person and the concrete here-and-now which makes its demand upon him, so that it is not he that is deciding, but the general rule that decides for him".^{xx} We must now turn to our fifth and final section of this study of Buber.

^{*}Not only have we seen Bultmann's refusal to understand man as a concrete instance of a general rule, but we recall how he instanced ideas and programmes as enemies of the 'moment's' occurrence.

^{xx}W. Herberg, op. cit., Introduction, p. 20.

(5) THE 'MOMENT', THE SPIRITUAL LIFE, AND THE DOCTRINE OF IMMANENCE.

As this fifth section of our study of Buber is read there should be kept in mind throughout our argument in chapter II, where we discussed the 'moment' and the doctrine of immanence, and where Buber's ideas on immanence have already been touched on.

Sunk in the world of 'It', man's time is spent in such activities as using, and in 'specialized utilization', in acquiring and exploiting the fruits of the experience of others.* This utilization tends towards a better organization of man's social and economic structures. When men talk of 'a progressive development of the spiritual life' this is the meaning they give it.** But the cultivation of the life of the spirit does not consist in becoming a better user, a better organizer, of the world of 'It', a more skilful acquirer of information. Indeed, Buber holds that the following of such activities, far from sharpening the spiritual faculties, actually dulls and blunts them. For these activities are engaged in at the expense of the ability to enter into relation, to

*The 'classical' instance of this is the way in which scientific results, as a body of 'assured results', are taken over and used without the experimentation which produced them having to be repeated.

**I and Thou, p. 38.

to relinquish the world of 'It' momentarily for the meeting, for the encounter. For it is this ability which is the content of the spiritual life^x--- and attention and cultivation paid to it are alone worthy of the name, 'cultivation of the spirit'.^{xx} Man becomes cultivated spiritually only in so far as, becoming aware of his own radical historicity, he directs himself existentially to the world of history, events, and persons, which stream toward him continually in time, becoming (or having the potentiality to become) 'Thou' for him. So says Buber: "Through the Thou a man becomes I.....".^{xxx} "All real living is meeting".^{xxxx} Turned in upon himself in mysticism, in self-contemplation, man misses his real existence, because that is offered to him only in his time and in his history. In affirming and going out to the world, the world of events and persons actually cultivate and shape him as a spiritual being.

'Spirit' for Buber is not a substance in the soul which requires cultivation and care by means of spiritual exercises carried out in solitude. For him, spirit is not IN, but BETWEEN. It realizes existence IN meeting, IN encounter. Thus Buber writes:

^xIn other words, Bultmann's, the alternative view would seem to hold that it was possible for us to acquire and utilize as a Weltanschauung secondary revelation, without that immersion, encounter, meeting, re-living, so characteristic of primary revelation.

^{xx}This theme of Buber's is of course developed in his paper, Of Teaching and Learning, pps. 137-145 in Israel and the World, = Herberg, pps. 317-324.

^{xxx}I and Thou, p. 28.

^{xxxx}op. cit., p. 14.

"Spirit is not the 'I', but between 'I' and 'Thou'. It is not like the blood that circulates in you,³⁸ but like the air in which you breathe. Man lives in the spirit, if he is able to respond to his 'Thou'. He is able to, if he enters into relation with his whole being. Only by virtue of his power to enter into relation is he able to live in the spirit".³⁹ That man must learn to direct himself existentially to history and time is meant again by Buber when he writes : "The 'I' is real in virtue of its sharing in reality. The fuller its sharing, the more real it becomes".⁴⁰ It would be wrong though to conclude from this that in the encounter, in the sharing, the 'I' is lost, is so connected to what it encounters that it disappears, merged in the other. No, the 'moment' can be represented as a swinging movement --- into relation and back again into isolation like a pendulum.⁴¹ In this movement, the 'I' retains its identity --- as Buber says : "The seed remains in it".⁴² Yet in the movement it changes in the sense that it develops and matures; before it swings back again into isolation, the 'I' approaches nearer to its authentic existence. "In subjectivity the spiritual substance of the person matures".⁴³ And Buber further describes this movement by saying of it that each swing into relation intensifies the desire for yet more sharing and so further maturity.⁴⁴ In this

³⁸Cf. substantial theories of soul and of immanence.

³⁹op. cit., p. 39.

⁴⁰op. cit., p. 63.

sense too, we can say that man's decision to open himself up towards history and time means his entering upon a course whereby he will be cultivated spiritually.

At this point we may make two observations. First, we see the typically existentialist pattern in which man is always on the way (Bultmann), always in a perpetual state of becoming, only pointing towards finality, his genuine self. We note also that Buber, like his existentialist colleagues never prescribes WHAT man must become, but only THAT man must become. Second, we ^{have} noted over and over again the conviction of Bultmann and Buber that the criterion of a valid Weltanschauung is whether or not it points man to his time and history as the sphere where his genuine self is to be achieved. This is ⁱⁿ complete accord with this doctrine of the spiritual life which emphasises man's obligation to go out into relation so that he may become. Here again, we witness the consistency of the existentialist tradition.

Certain views of immanence have held that there is in man, implanted at his creation, a so-called divine spark, an element in man which enables him to perceive and know God 'in his heart'. We discovered in chapter II, that in St. Bonaventure, followed by Mr. H.P. Owen, this was thought of as an 'impress' left in the soul of man by his creator. St. Bonaventure commended as a spiritual exercise 'contuition', a process in which by reflecting upon himself, upon the divine image impressed within, man could come to a knowledge

of God. Let us compare Buber's position with this. The only 'divine spark' in man allowed by Buber is man's 'sense of Thou' which, says Buber, had 'the Thou present to it from the beginning'.^{*} But this sense is no more than a mere 'Anknüpfungspunkt'^{**} for the relational 'moment', for true relation with the 'Thou' is only realised when man goes out to the 'reality of the hallowed life of the world'. This sense or longing is only satisfied when man treats the world of history and time as holy --- as the sphere where God is to be met. We have already, in chapter II, compared Buber's position here to that of Bultmann.

Buber can put this in a different way by saying that in the 'moment' there is given, imparted,^{***} to man something which hitherto he did not possess --- or that in the 'moment' something happens to man which makes him different from what he was before.^{****} " ... A man does not pass from the moment of the supreme meeting the same as he entered it. The moment of meeting is not an 'experience' that stirs in the receptive soul and grows to perfect blessedness; rather in that moment something happens to the man the man who emerges from the act of pure relation that

^{*}I and Thou, p. 80.

^{**}We shall return to a detailed definition of this term and its implications in our conclusions.

^{***}As we shall see later, the theology of the 'moment' is a theology of "impartation".

^{****}op. cit., p. 109.

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so involves his being has now in his being something more that has grown in him, ... of which he did not know before and whose origin he is not able to indicate the reality is that we receive what we did not hitherto have, and receive it in such a way that we know it has been given to us.....".^x Thus for Buber also revelation is an event in that something comes to man from outwith himself, for the reception of which his own existence only contains an 'Anknüpfungspunkt'. Thus Buber writes : "Genuine responsibility exists only where there is real responding"^{xx}; this"presupposes one who addresses me primarily, from a realm independent of myself, and to whom I am answerable".^{xxx} Thus there is given to me something from a realm independent of myself. "Our answering-for-ourselves is essentially our answering to a divine address".^{xxxx} Buber can imply the same kind of thing by use of his celebrated term 'turning', 'Turning towards...'. Thus W. Herberg writes : "The 'turning' is 'something that happens in the immediacy of the reality between man and God'. It has its 'subjective' and psychological aspects, of course, but essentially it is 'as little a 'psychic' event as is a man's birth or death; it comes upon the

^x op. cit., p. 109.

^{xx} Between Man and Man, 'Dialogue', p. 16, quoted by W. Herberg, op. cit., Introduction, p. 20.

^{xxx} Between Man and Man, 'The Question to the Single One', p. 45.

^{xxxx} At the Turning, 'The Dialogue between Heaven and Earth', p. 56.

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whole person, is carried out by the whole person....'. All of life, individual and corporate, depends on the 'turning' --- the 'turning' and the 're-turning' --- of man to God. 'For the sake of the 'turning'', the Hasidic masters have said, 'was the world created'".^{*} Thus man gains knowledge of God by 'turning towards him', not by 'looking in upon him within himself'. The mutuality of dialogue, and the existence of God as a being who is outwith me, and addresses me from a point independent of myself is expressed by Buber thus : "Responsibility presupposes one who addresses me primarily, that is, from a realm independent of myself, and to whom I am answerable. He addresses me about something that he has entrusted to me and that I am bound to take care of loyally. He addresses me from his trust, and I respond in my loyalty or refuse to respond in my disloyalty; or having fallen into disloyalty, I wrestle free of it by the loyalty of the response. To be so answerable to a trusting person about an entrusted matter that loyalty and disloyalty step into the light of day --- but both are not of the same right, for now loyalty, born again, is permitted to conquer disloyalty --- this is the reality of responsibility. Where no primary address and claim can touch me, where everything is 'my property', responsibility has become a phan-

^{*}W. Herberg, op. cit., Introduction, p. 29, paraphrasing Buber, Israel and the World, 'The Faith of Judaism', p. 20.

phantom/. At the same time, life's character of mutuality is dissipated. He who ceases to make a response ceases to hear the Word".^x Nowhere does the divergence between Buber's thought and the St. Bonaventure-Owen school of thought become plainer than here : "Two traits.... set (the Old Testament)... apart from the other great books of the world religions. One trait is that in the 'Old Testament', both events and words are placed in the midst of the people, of history, of the world. What happens does not happen in a vacuum existing between God and the individual. The Word travels by way of the individual to the people, so that they may hear and translate it into reality. What happens is not superior to the history of the people, it is nothing but the secret of the people's history made manifest".^{xxx} When we recall that in chapter I we criticized St. Bonaventure's and H.P. Owen's notion of revelation because it was unhistorical, because it held that the God-to-man disclosure took place in an 'existential vacuum',^{xxxx} we perceive even more clearly how averse Buber is to the St. Bonaventure-type of "immanentist" revelation, 'contuition'.

Two comments require to be made here. First, the

^xBuber, Between Man and Man, 'The Question to the Single One', pps. 40-61, 65, 69-71 = Herberg, pps. 63-88, see p. 68.

^{xxx}Israel and the World, 'The Man of Today and the Jewish Bible', pps. 89-102 = Herberg, pps. 239-250, see p. 241.

^{xxxx}Cf. Rudolf Bultmann's criticism of Harnack's Das Wesen des Christentums, because it holds that revelation concerns only 'God and the soul' in a vacuum, in Kerygma and Myth, p. 13. See also Bultmann's introduction to the new American edition of Harnack's What is Christianity? (New York 1957), pps. xiii, f.

general similarities between Buber's notion of disclosure as 'impart-
 :ation' and Bultmann's is clear enough. And it is not without sig-
 :nificance that Buber seems to hold his view not primaril~~y~~ for
 philosophical reasons, but because of the dialogue, the address, the
 notion of the Word that he finds in the Hebrew Bible. Second, it
 is clear enough also how Buber's idea of revelation, of disclosure,
 stands in stark contradiction to "immanent^{ist}~~ist~~" views of revelation such
 as we have analysed in chapter II. In our next chapter, on Kierke-
 :gaard, we shall see his abhorrence of all doctrines of immanence
 and the spiritual life which suggest that the knowledge of God must
 simply be perceived in or extracted from man's soul. It was perhaps
 one of Kierkegaard's greatest contributions to modern theological
 thought that he made theologians face up to the transcendent GIFT,
 the giving and receiving of which, in time and in history, is the
 condition of 'becoming a Christian'. This whole question of imman-
 :ence, the question of the 'Anknüpfungspunkt' which revelation seems
 to require, will be re-opened in our concluding chapter when we shall
 compare for the final time the views of Bultmann and Tillich on this
 matter.

POSTSCRIPT AND CONCLUSION TO OUR STUDY OF THE WORK OF BUBER.

The main object of this section is to guard against an objection and a misunderstanding.

The objection is that the 'moment' may be thought unsatisfactory on account of its brief, fragmentary nature. It may be supposed that the 'moment' is so brief and so disjointed from other 'moments' that it can have little to do with the remainder of our time, and thus leads ultimately to the rejection of the world and of history. We must admit that any doctrine of the 'moment' lies open to this danger, and may succumb to it. Care must therefore be taken to ascribe to the 'moments' of personal existence the significance and decisiveness which they deserve.

Buber guards against this objection carefully by allowing a certain genuine continuity between 'moments', to which we must now briefly turn. I have found that Buber allows six kinds of continuity, which are as follows :-

(i) There is first the propensity which a past, recorded 'moment' (as an 'It' in the world of 'It') has to blaze up again into presentness, in the present of an interpreter. We have already compared this to the existentialist (Bultmann/Dilthey/Collingwood) understanding of history. There are thus close links between Buber and existentialist hermeneutics, in that the disclosure is ~~historical~~ intensely interpersonal. This propensity of historical records represents

an important dimension of continuity.

(ii) There is second the fact that experience of the 'moment' brings to man awareness of his own historicity and temporality, that the world around him is full of entities with the potentiality to become 'Thou' for him, to assume presentness for him; that disclosure of God and persons takes place not only in time but through time. In so far as man retains knowledge of this essential historicity and cultivates it by going out to meet the world, this represents another important dimension of continuity.

(iii) There is third the fact that experience of 'momentary' relation leaves man unsatiated, dissatisfied, a dissatisfaction which draws man out again to the world to renew the relational act. This is because Buber holds that man has a 'sense of the Thou' which can only receive its fulfilment in the 'moments' of the 'hallowed life of this world'. And we have compared this to the whole of Bultmann's argument in The Question of Natural Revelation, analysed fully in chapter II.

(iv) There is fourth the 'teacher-concept'. Experience of the 'moment' confers the status of teacher in the sense that one is now enabled to direct others to the world of the 'moment' and of presentness by becoming a 'Thou' for others in their present. Such a teacher can only direct others to become, but cannot instruct them what to become. But this represents yet another dimension of continuity,

for as persons spring up in the world having experienced the 'moment' their existence lends itself to the achievement of authentic personality.

(v) This in turn leads to an increased frequency of occurrence of the 'moment' in the world of 'It', in which the 'moments', from having the appearance of isolated stars shining in darkness, come to take on the solidity and consistency of the 'moon'. And this represents yet another dimension of continuity between isolated 'moments'.

(vi) There is sixth, and finally, the continuity that comes from genuine community. Those who have the 'moment' in common form the radii of a circle which point towards a common Centre. Those on the circumference of the circle are there only through the radius joining them to the centre; there can be no question of joining the circle at the circumference alone.* In the existence of such a genuine community, in the common experience of the members within it, we have a dimension of continuity.

Not only have we included this section to show how Buber guards himself against a charge of over-fragmentariness, but also because these points will re-emerge in our conclusions. For example,

*We shall return to this conviction of Buber's in our concluding chapter when we deal with the problem of church and community.

the 'teacher-concept' is of considerable importance in building up a valid view of church and community, as we shall see.

Having dealt with the objection, let us now turn to the misunderstanding. It might be enquired: does not the worker in other lines of enquiry, in science for instance, also have his 'moment' ? Is there for him also a time of discovery, a time of disclosure, a moment of truth ? Are there not scientific 'moments' also ?

We must point out that there are vast differences between the process we have outlined in this thesis and the process by which the scientist or technologist makes a discovery or has something disclosed to him. There are in fact six vital differences.

(i) The scientist can procure his substance, sometimes change its form or size, and arrange it in certain relationships with other substances or apparatus. He ~~can~~ choose his time and his conditions. But the "substance" of human existence cannot be thus regulated or controlled; man cannot 'choose his time', it is given to him. It comes at such unsuitable times that the authentic person's relationship to the everyday world can only be dialectical.

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(ii) The scientist's results can be written down, transmitted, and understood quite independent of repetition of or participation in the original disclosure-event, the experim~~ent~~. Thus a young scientist starting his training does not require to repeat all the experiments which built up his text-books and tables. He simply uses them and builds his own work on them as an agreed body of truth. But in the existential sphere, in a sense we have all to 'start from ~~scratch~~'. In a sense we are all neophytes.^x There does not exist for us an agreed body of conceptual truth analogical to the assured results and information available to scientific neophyte. There is no Weltanschauung but that which teaches us our own radical historicity.

(iii) The scientist's moment, his occasion,^{xx} is relatively unimportant. If his results were not discovered in this way in this moment, they would be in some other way at some other time. If not within the time of one research worker, then in the time of another-- it simply does not matter. The real importance attaches to the detachable results.^{xxx} But in the sphere of human existence, the 'moment' is of value in itself; it is not a matter of indifference who experiences the 'moment'. In a sense, the person who exper-

^{xx}We shall return to this insight in our conclusions when we deal with the problem of church and community.

^{xxx}A term which Kierkegaard uses for the Socratic philosophy.

^{xxxx}Thus the scientific view of a disclosure event is identical with the view of biblical event taken by the XIXth liberal theologians we have criticized in the Preface.

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experiences/ the 'moment' stands alone in his experience. Communication is only possible within the community of those who have this experience in common, only possible within the theological circle (Tillich).

(iv) Thus proof, demonstration, persuasion, are quite different in the two spheres. The truth of scientific propositions can be demonstrated from one scientist to another on the basis of certain intellectual canons which they share. But the "proof" of what comes in the 'moment' is dependent upon experience of the 'moment'; as Buber says: each man must prove it 'in the singleness of his being'.

(v) A further difference is apparent in that generally speaking a great deal of scientific results are useful in that they can be applied through technological processes to easing our life in this world.³ They can make life more convenient, or time-saving, or more immune from danger --- they can give us better health or longer life. In contrast to all this stands existential knowledge. Buber holds that it does not 'help to sustain our life here in this world'.

It helps us to achieve authentic personal existence. Its aim is to

³It can of course be argued that scientific work should not be undertaken for the sake of practical useful results, but because the pursuit of truth itself is valuable. Nevertheless, perfectly sound scientific work can be done without holding this view, and it remains true that a great deal of scientific research has practical applicability. A vast amount of scientific research is undertaken because of its practical value, for example, cancer research. And there is the fact of the tremendous financial help given by industry to the Universities in order that such practical results might be obtained.

produce real persons.

(vi) Finally, generally speaking science is concerned with causality. It is interested in, and in utilizing, the laws by which one state of affairs inexorably produces another state of affairs. Science might be defined as the systematic investigation and utilization of causality. In contrast, the 'moment' derives its significance from the fact that it dislocates causal process within personal existence. Buber has demonstrated how the 'moment' offends the scientific world of 'It' (in the form of theories of mechanistic psychology and deterministic sociology) because of the freedom from causality which it claims to bring. And Bultmann has demonstrated how catastrophic the results are when scientific causality invades the sphere of human existence, in the case where such thinking as applied to history has produced 'historicism', history understood in analogy with nature.

From this analysis of the difference between scientific and existentialist thought, it is not difficult to hazard a guess that the doctrine of the 'moment' will not be easily received into our modern world. And we can see this more clearly if we remember that a great deal of modern existentialist thinking (e.g. that of Jaspers, Buber) has been worked out in reaction to an era dominated by scientific ways of thought.

When we read Buber's views on the 'moment', it is hard not to conclude that he means that in it ~~it~~ man receives some

kind of vision. It is hard not to conclude that what he means by the 'moment' can only be fully understood by recalling biblical incidents such as the vision granted to Elisha's servant-lad when they were in danger from the King of Syria, as in II Kg.2:6. Of that incident we may say that it is a highly personal experience, it is transforming, shaking, it brings an absolute minimum of detachable propositional content; it is brief, only a glimpse of another sphere in and through this sphere, bringing a reality which is personal; its value as a recorded 'moment' is that it points us to history and to time as the spheres where we encounter reality. It is to misinterpret Buber to forget that not only is he a philosopher and a sociologist of note; he is also a celebrated student of the Hebrew Bible and a noted Rabbinical and Hasidic scholar. That Buber has a vision in mind is confirmed by his own words^{*}: "When I drafted the first sketch of this book (more than forty years ago), I was impelled by an inner necessity. A vision which had come to me again and again since my youth, and which had been clouded over again and again, had now reached steady clarity. This clarity was so manifestly suprapersonal

^{*}In the Postscript to the new American edition of I and Thou, transl. by R. Gregor Smith, (New York 1958), p. 123.

suprapersonal/ in its nature that I knew at once that I had to bear witness to it.

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE MOMENT IN THE WORKS OF

BORIS KERNSTADT

On the last page of the Philosophical
Kierkegaard gives a schema of what he has tried to do
in this book, a list of the key-concepts that he has used, &
will be developed in the Concluding Unscientific Postscript.
In the Introductory Discourse to Kierkegaard, he has to
the following:

(1) A new conception of God.

CHAPTER FOUR

(2) A new conception of the Christian.

(3) A new conception of the Church.

THE 'MOMENT' IN THE WORKS OF

SØREN KIERKEGAARD

that Kierkegaard uses the term (cf. the Introductory Discourse to Kierkegaard)
with the philosophical conception of the moment.
we proceed to the philosophical conception by examining how
by each thinker in his works, we can converge upon
that Kierkegaard uses the term self-consciously and
also it is marked with an initial capital, i.e. the
*Grundriss by David F. Swenson (Princeton 1916), p. 91.

On the last page of the Philosophical Fragments^{*}

Kierkegaard gives a schema of what he has tried to set forth in the book, a list of the key-concepts that he has used, whose significance will be developed in his Concluding Unscientific Postscript.^{**}

In the Fragments, according to Kierkegaard, he has been trying to posit the following :-

- (1) A new organ : Faith.
- (2) A new presupposition : the consciousness of Sin.
- (3) A new decision : the Moment.
- (4) A new Teacher : God in Time.

In this chapter we shall try to assess the significance that Kierkegaard gives to number (3), the Moment, and to compare it with the concept as used by other existentialist writers. Since we commenced the earlier chapters by examining how the word was used by each thinker in his works, we can commence here by pointing out that Kierkegaard uses the term self-consciously and very deliberately; it is printed with an initial capital, i.e. the Moment.

^{*}Transl. by David F. Swenson (Princeton 1936), p. 93.

^{**}Transl. by David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton 1941).

There can be little doubt that Kierkegaard is trying to establish the term as a concept. As he says, the Philosophical Fragments was written to posit the Moment (with other terms) as a concept of thought. This removal of ambiguity will lighten our task considerably.

We shall now begin an examination, under several main headings (as we did in the case of Bultmann and Buber), of Kierkegaard's use of this term, comparing it with other uses where possible, criticizing it, keeping in mind throughout that a great deal of recent and contemporary theological thought owes a great debt to Kierkegaard in this matter, even when they appear to differ radically from his teaching on the Moment. The following then are Kierkegaard's main uses of the term 'Moment' in his work.

(1) THE MOMENT MEANS ABSOLUTE NEWNESS; THE CONDITION OF UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTH IS GIFTED AND IMPARTED IN THE MOMENT; THUS IT IS NOT RECOLLECTION; THE CONDITION IS FAITH; THIS IS NOT INCLUDED IN MAN'S CREATION, MAN HAS NO ETERNAL KNOWLEDGE OF IT.

If the 'Truth' were something embedded in me, so to speak, from creation, the time of discovery would be no Moment, but simply an 'occasion'. The time when I perceive that I knew the Truth all along, would at once vanish into the maw of eternity without trace. In eternal consciousness there is no concrete point, no decisive Moment; but only, as Kierkegaard says, 'an ubique and nusquam'.^{*} In much the same way, if man were able to will himself free from the bondage of sin and error, there would be for him no Moment of decisive significance --- for his past state (bondage) would vanish into the maw of time, for the man would not be aware^{**} that he had bound himself and that he had freed himself; bondage and freedom would be unconscious states; the transition-point from one to the other would therefore be infinitesimally small, unworthy of notice. It certainly would not be the Moment --- it would lack the necessary decisive quality inseparable from the Moment.^{***}

^{*}Philosophical Fragments, p. 8.

^{**}Like Bultmann after him, Kierkegaard is very much preoccupied with consciousness, awareness.

^{***}Op. cit., pps. 11-12.

The Moment, for Kierkegaard, is also absolutely decisive because it is the temporal point of re-birth. It is the transition - point of being and non-being.^x It is a conscious Moment, because in it man is aware of both his previous ~~state~~ and his new state. If man's previous state had been of being, there would take place no transition. The Moment would not be decisive because there would not be any new factor brought in. So Kierkegaard can say that the two states are so separated by the decisive Moment that man cannot return from one to the other; in the Moment "the breach is made".^{xx} The dialectic of the Moment is set by Kierkegaard over against the Socratic method of Recollection; in this there is brought forth from^{xxx} the learner that of which the seed always ^{was} ~~in~~ ^{xxx} the learner. Here again there is nothing absolutely new and decisive.^{xxxx} The occasion of truth, of apprehension, vanishes into the maw of time. The consciousness of Recollection knows no concrete here-and-now, decisive and new. Thus in this Socratic method there can be no Moment.

As we shall see more fully later, what makes the Moment really decisive is that God comes in it.^{xxxxx} It is this that makes the Moment something new, startling, something far removed from an

^xOp. cit., p. 15.

^{xx}Op. cit., p. 14.

^{xxx}This is diametrically opposed to the theology of 'impartation'.

^{xxxx}Op. cit., p. 24.

^{xxxxx}Op. cit., p. 44.

'occasion'. * The relationship involved in the Moment is vertical, and not merely horizontal (Socratic). This can be put another way by saying that whereas the Socratic occasion is concerned merely with time, the Moment is concerned with eternity.** It is the beginning of eternity, and without it there is no possibility of advance for man. The Moment is thus concerned with that which *** "refuses to be reduced to a moment of merely occasional significance".

Kierkegaard rejects absolutely any doctrine that assumes that God in creation has given man the condition for coming to knowledge of and understanding^{of} the truth.**** In chapter II on the doctrine of Immanence we stated that any theology that derived from the thought of Kierkegaard is bound to diverge sharply from the contuition doctrine of St. Bonaventure, favoured by Mr. H.P. Owen in his Revelation and Existence. Thus there is an ultimate incompatibility between Kierkegaard's notion of "impartation" and any doctrine teaching that God has planted within man's soul an image of himself by reflection on which man comes to have a knowledge of God. Since both Bultmann and Buber are within the existentialist tradition, it is little wonder that the theologies of Bultmann, of

*Op. cit., p. 44.

**Op. cit., p. 46.

***Op. cit., p. 47.

****Op. cit., p. 50.

Buber, and of Kierkegaard on the one hand, diverge so widely from the thought of St. Bonaventure and Owen on the other.

When Kierkegaard comes to discuss the nature of contemporaneity in apprehending the meaning of historical events, he allows the immediate contemporary only this --- the immediacy of his contemporaneity can serve and only serve as an occasion for perceiving the truth. For Kierkegaard, what enables anyone to perceive the truth in the Moment is the condition imparted³¹ by God in time, the condition without which there can be no perception of the truth.³²

At this point some comments on Kierkegaard's thought are relevant. We can see already that in his doctrine of the Moment ~~namely~~ Kierkegaard is more concerned with life than with thought. We see that in the course of life (in time and in history) Kierkegaard believes that something must be imparted³¹ to man. We see also in Kierkegaard's thought the germ of the notion of 'encounter' (with that which is outwith, over against man), which has played such a vast role in post-Kierkegaardian theology. We note also his stress on the concrete; we see his distrust of the 'eternal', of the

³¹The theology of 'impartation' again.

³²See Fragments, pps. 56 f.

'infinite', of the 'universal' in so far as they lend themselves to vagueness over against the here-and-now Moment; rather than representing concreteness, they represent the 'ubique et nusquam'. We see in Kierkegaard's thought the modern doctrine that the Moment must be decisive --- man must be aware of it or it is no Moment; he must experience its newness and its startling character. It follows from these comments that without the Moment, without this brief but startling eruption into time, there can be no question of human 'advance', 'progress', 'becoming'. Without the decisive Moment, man, with all his information and science, is left precisely where he was. The Moment is the crucial and indispensable condition of change and improvement. We have already witnessed the development of this doctrine in the thought of Bultmann and of Buber. It will now be obvious that in our examination of Kierkegaard's work we are going to find in place after place how he anticipated and fertilized much modern theology and philosophy, and not least in his exposition of and in his emphasis on the Moment.

... in the Moment of Christian revelation
has reached its end for the believer. He is faced with the
existing reality of his life and must decide what
... for the Christian.

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(2) THE MOMENT IS DECISIVE IN THAT IT BRINGS CONVERSION, NEW BIRTH, A TRANSITION FROM NONBEING TO BEING, A NEW CREATION: IT MAKES AN IRREPARABLE BREACH WITH THE PAST IN WHICH MAN WAS IN ERROR: THE MOMENT IS DECISIVE FOR ETERNITY.

The Moment is decisive for eternity, it is filled with eternity; it brings conversion, the new birth; it marks the transition from nonbeing to being.^x

One of the main purposes of this section will be to show that in these notions of Kierkegaard are to be found the roots of much contemporary theological thought. Let us compare Kierkegaard's views on the decisiveness of the Moment with Bultmann's. We remember that for Bultmann the 'moment' was significant in that it marks the end of the believer's history as the 'old' man; in the 'moment', God breaks the power of man's past, and gives him the possibility of a new history as a 'new' man, as a free man. For the Christian, history is meaningful because he can, in Christ, stand at its end. In the 'moment' of Christian revelation the old world has reached its end for the believer. He is freed from the determining sway of his sinful past, and can decide what to accept and

^xSee Philosophical Fragments, pps. 8, 13, 15, 24, 44, 46-7, 56-7.

what to reject of what lies behind him. Thus in the 'moment', for Bultmann, causality, running from past to future through the present, is dislocated. Thus we can see why Bultmann ascribes to the 'moment' vast decisiveness as the indispensable transition-point in genuine human becoming.

The 'moment', for Bultmann, is an eschatological one. It brings the believer out of an old age and into a new age. For Bultmann too, the Church (made up of such believers) is the eschatological community 'par excellence'. Jesus Christ for Bultmann is the eschatological event. He brings the believer's old history to an end and gives him a new one. He is therefore the existential transition-point, indispensable for authentic human change and advance. Bultmann can say that in his faith the Christian believer is lifted out of history into eternity and yet paradoxically remains within, or is simultaneously thrust back into, history. Thus it is possible for us to make the following comments about Bultmann's 'moment' also :-

- (a) It is absolutely decisive, being the transition-point from old existence to new existence.
- (b) It represents new birth --- in it the old man is done away with and there emerges a new man, a free man.
- (c) It is the transition-point from nonbeing to being, in so far as prior to its occurrence determinism and causality held sway in the human sphere; its occurrence means that man is able to decide what to become, able to decide on possibilities to accept and possibilities to reject.

(d) It is a decisive breach, in that man has become a new kind of creature, freed from the irresistible sway of instinct and his habitual past; now man sees the world as a quite new place, consisting of events, people, encounters, in which God speaks his Word to him, and through which he may become a genuine person.

(e) It is a 'moment' in which the believer is lifted into eternity while paradoxically having his true existence before him within time.

Thus when we compare Kierkegaard's Moment with Bultmann's 'moment', we find in the thought of the former many of the roots and seeds of recent and contemporary theological thought. There are differences too, which we shall discuss later, but this makes the similarities none the less striking.

... of the ... in ...
... that the ... in the ...
... state ...
... the nature of the antecedent state is revealed in ...
... contrast with the state that commences in and through

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(3) MAN DISCOVERS THAT HE WAS IN ERROR IN THE MOMENT.

This follows from Kierkegaard's argument.

In the Moment, man receives the Truth. But if the Truth is something quite new to him --- something that hitherto man did not possess --- it follows that hitherto he was devoid of it, that is, in error.^{xx} Thus the Moment is also one of self-awareness.^{xxx} The Moment thus corrects man, sets him off on a new, right, road.

This is an integral part of the analysis of the Moment as that in which there comes to man something new and decisive. Unless the state which precedes the Moment were radically different from the state that follows it, there would be no Moment for Kierkegaard, but only an 'occasion' which disappears into the maw of time. Thus in both Kierkegaard and Bultmann we have the notion that the Moment is the decisive transition-point from one existential state to another, one negative and the other positive, and that the nature of the antecedent state is revealed in the Moment, by contrast with the state that commences in and through the Moment.

^{xx}Fragments, p. 9 f.

^{xxx}We saw how in Bultmann the 'moment' is invariably one of self-understanding.

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In Kierkegaard there can little dispute about the antecedent state, which he defines as Error, which means Sin, which means absence from God, or the absence of God.* Of course this is not untrue when applied to Bultmann. In his celebrated essay The Question of Natural Revelation, Bultmann, in asserting that nature just fails to give man true knowledge of the living God, has actually admitted that apart from "momentary" impartation of God's liberating word in Christ, man is also without knowledge of God. But we shall have to return to this question shortly; Kierkegaard also sharply diverges from Bultmann on the question of natural revelation.

*In the case of Bultmann, there has of course been a dispute whether Bultmann's emphasis on 'inauthenticity of life' as analysed by Heidegger (definable as "... moving in the established ruts and routes of the organized world", H.J. Blackham, Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 93) is not ultimately incompatible with the classical Christian notion of sin, because of its inadequacy.

(4) THE TRUTH IS GIFTED IN THE MOMENT AND ALSO THE CONDITION FOR APPREHENDING IT.³⁶

The condition of which Kierkegaard speaks is faith, which enables the learner to perceive the Truth. It is by means of this condition only that the learner can learn the Truth, that is, receive God's disclosure of himself. The condition is gifted only in the Moment, it has no antecedent existence in the learner. This assertion is so crucial to the argument of the Fragments that it must be examined further.

First, we note that Kierkegaard makes a break with traditional "immanentist" theology which is so thoroughly un-:temporal that it has no need of the idea of "impartation" or encount-:er. With an assertion that man stands as a subject in relation to himself as object in order for revelation to occur Kierkegaard will have nothing to do. "Impartation" is a necessity. But it may be asked if Kierkegaard does not go too far in asserting that nothing is required but the imparted condition for revelation to occur. Is there nothing in man which acts as a revelatory

³⁶Fragments, pps. 10, 21.

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catalyst ? Is all that is required for revelation to occur a completely transcendent gift from the God-ward side ?

We can perhaps develop a preliminary criticism of Kierkegaard by means of several comparisons. First let us compare him to Bultmann. We remember that in The Question of Natural Revelation,^{*} Bultmann argued that man's experience of transience, decay, bondage, guilt, determinism, helps man to recognise God when God discloses himself in the 'moment'. It is most important to realise that experience of these elements is universal in human existence qua human, and quite antecedent to the occurrence of any 'moment' of revelation. Our exasperation with bondage and determinism, our craving for freedom in the existential sense, make us eager to meet with and recognize God. They prepare us for the 'moment' when God speaks to us his highly concrete word in the here and now, liberates us, and grants us fresh possibilities for existence. Thus in Bultmann, faith is not only gifted by God to us directly in his momentary approach (we should never deny it), but is also provoked and engendered in us by God's approach. Faith has therefore two roots. One is the direct "impartation" of God; and the other is man's existential situation. To use terminology popularized in the Barth-Brunner controversy, man's existential situation is the

^{*}Analysed in full in chapter II above.

'Anknüpfungspunkt'² without which man could not possibly receive the revelation of God. In view of this, it is hard not to reach the conclusion that Kierkegaard is here over-occupied with the wholly transcendent, and that he attaches too little importance to the structure of antecedent human existence.

Second, let us compare Kierkegaard with Buber. For Buber too, God, antecedent to his approach to man in the 'moment', is not wholly unknown. For Buber, in analysing the human situation, can say that man has a sense of the 'Thou', 'from the beginning'. 'Thou', for Buber, is the primary word of human existence. This sense requires fulfilment and realization (as did the longings and cravings in Bultmann's analysis of man), and this fulfilment is reached when man actually encounters the living God in the historic 'moment'. Therefore for Buber also, the condition is not completely that which is gifted for the first time in the 'moment'. Buber, as a Jew, is well aware that God is the 'wholly Other', but as an existentialist he is aware that God is the very near. To describe God adequately we need both these dimensions of faith --- does not Kierkegaard over-emphasise only one ?

²A concept to which we shall return in greater detail in our conclusions when we deal with the problem of existentialism and ontology.

Or in other words; if man is truly historical and temporal, does the authentic 'moment's' occurrence not require both God's 'time' and our 'time' ? Kierkegaard's doctrine that the condition of faith granted only in the Moment is all-sufficient is one that we cannot accept without grave qualification.

We have spoken of God's self-disclosure. For Kierkegaard, it is God, the Teacher, who is disclosed in the Moment.^{*x} The Moment is significant because God discloses himself to the learner in it. Man receives in the Moment the Truth, and the Teacher is the Truth. For our theme in this thesis, this is extremely important, for in this assertion we have the roots of a great deal of modern theological and philosophical thinking.

The Teacher is Truth, the Teacher is God, who comes to man in the servant-form; this is the Paradox, and the Moment is the Paradox in its most abbreviated form. It is Kierkegaard's assertion that God himself is the 'content' of the Moment that concerns us here.

About this Kierkegaardian insight we may perhaps make the following comments. Throughout this thesis, (we might almost

^{*x}See Fragments, chapter II, pps. 17-28, 'God as Teacher and Saviour: An Essays of the Imagination'.

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say on every page of it), we have pointed out that in theologians of the existentialist tradition we find that what is revealed and imparted in the Moment is not propositions, nor information, nor ideas, out^{of} which could be constructed a Weltanschauung or system into which man is able to fit and adjust his experience. We have seen in chapter I how Bultmann is almost terrified of a notion of revelation of this kind. Buber too, scorns it. Both of these reiterate that the 'content' of the disclosure-'moment' cannot be abstracted from its real-life situation and transmitted generally from man to man or from group to group. Buber, we saw in chapter III, can go as far as to say that the 'moment' has no content. Man receives in it a Presence as power; he is unable to say what has come to him in the 'moment'; what comes in the 'moment' is a 'Thou'; there is no objectifiable content which could become generally current. The content of the revelatory 'moment' for Buber is personal; in the supreme, consummating 'moment', the 'content' is God.

Now I am convinced that it is possible to find the seeds and roots of this type of modern theology in the Kierkegaardian revolution against the Hegelian system and Weltanschauung. So Kierkegaard writes : "Let a doubting youth, an existing doubter, imbued with a lovable and unlimited youthful confidence in a hero of thought, confidently seek in Hegel's positive philosophy the truth, the truth for existence:.....let him submit himself unconditionally, in feminine devotion, but with sufficient vigour of determination

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to hold fast to his problem: he will become a satirist without suspecting it. The youth is an existing doubter. Hovering in doubt and without a foothold for his life, he reaches out for the truth --- in order to exist in it. He is negative and the philosophy of Hegel is positive --- what wonder then he seeks anchorage in Hegel. But a philosophy of pure thought is for an existing individual a chimera, if the truth that is sought is something to exist in. To exist under the guidance of pure thought is like travelling in Denmark with the help of a small map of Europe, on which Denmark shows no larger than a steel pen-point --- aye, it is still more impossible. The admiration and enthusiasm of the youth, his boundless confidence in Hegel, is precisely the satire upon Hegel".^x His dislike of the Weltanschauung-type of philosophy is revealed also by his choice of titles for two of his most important philosophical works, Philosophical Fragments, and Concluding Unscientific Postscript, as by the title of one of the sections of another, Diapsalmata.^{xx} One of Kierkegaard's expositors, Mr. H.J. Blackham, describes Kierkegaard's philosophical mission this : "He is a prophet denouncing a generation which has sold its birthright of inquisitive ignorance for a mass of information".^{xxx} Thus he witnesses to the fact that for Kierkegaard knowledge did not consist of 'items of information' (Buber), or of

^xConcluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 275.

^{xx}Either/Or, 2 vols., (Oxford 1946), 'Diapsalmata', vol. 1, pps. 13 f.

^{xxx}Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 6.

'ideas', 'propositions', or 'Weltanschauungen' (Bultmann). "The object of faith", writes Kierkegaard, "is the reality of the teacher, that the teacher really exists. The answer of faith is therefore unconditionally yes or no. For it does not concern a doctrine as to whether this is true or not; it is the answer to a question concerning a fact: 'Do you or do you not suppose that he has really existed?' And the answer, it must be noted, is with infinite passion. In the case of a human being, it is thoughtlessness to lay so great and infinite a stress on the question whether he has existed or not. If the object of faith is a human being, therefore, the whole proposal is the vagary of a stupid person, who has not even understood the spirit of the intellectual and the aesthetic. The object of faith is hence the reality of the God-man in the sense of his existence".* Thus the content of the Moment for him is personal, a Thou, and not propositional or conceptual. And here we have a satire upon the 'philosopher' who is bogged down only with information: "In Greece, philosophizing was a mode of action, and the philosopher was therefore an existing individual. He may not have possessed a great amount of knowledge, but what he did know he knew to some profit, because he busied himself early and late with the same thing. But nowadays, just what is it to philosophize, and

*Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 290.

what does a philosopher really know ? For of course I do not deny that he knows everything".[¶] Here we have a contrast between a vast, vague, Weltanschauung on the one hand, and the small, concrete, definite geometrical point of the Moment on the other. Mr. Blackham sums up Kierkegaard's philosophical mission perfectly when he says : "The only way to vitalize accumulating knowledge and sift its relative importance was to call attention to the neglected HOW of appropriation and ignore the venerated WHAT of approximation, raising the question of its relation to the will, to human interests, not least the primary interest of becoming a human being".^{¶¶} And, of course, the focal point of this 'HOW', as we shall see, Kierkegaard found in the Moment. Thus when we consider such a protest against the Weltanschauung-type of philosophy (of which Hegel's is the classical example), against the veneration of propositional systems, against the dissipating quest for the 'infinite' in universal knowledge, as against concentrating intensely upon the geometrical point, upon the concrete here and now of the Moment, the Moment of appropriation, it is very hard not to conclude that here we have the seed-plot of a great many of the theological and philosophical growths of the XXth. century. This will perhaps become a little

[¶]Op. cit., p. 295.

^{¶¶}Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 15.

clear^{er} if we proceed a little further. Throughout this thesis we have reached the conclusion that revelation has a two-fold character, and the two aspects of revelation we have called (i) Primary, and (ii) Secondary revelation. Primary revelation is the disclosure of God by himself, His person, presence, a revelation which is 'momentary', concrete, highly personal, shaking, transforming. Secondary revelation consists of Christian insights, 'information about divine matters' (Tillich), the dogmatic repercussions^e for our thinking and acting of primary revelation. Now it is absolutely clear that Kierkegaard's notion of revelation would be confined to the primary type. The 'content' of his Moment is God, the Saviour, the Teacher, and God alone. We do not mean that Kierkegaard's is an adequate definition of revelation (it may be that he narrows down too much the possibility of Christian ethical and social concepts), but we contend that from the point of view of historical theology, it is of the first importance. Without it it would be hard to explain the emphases of much modern theological thought, and not least that of Bultmann and Buber. We conclude then, that the work of Kierkegaard is a striking testimony to the insight that the 'content' of the Moment of disclosure is above all personal.

(5) THE MOMENT IS 'FULLNESS' OF TIME --- IT IS FILLED WITH
ETERNITY.

We have seen that the Moment is decisive in that it brings conversion and re-birth, in it the course of man's life is turned about; in it man passes from nonbeing to being, from Error to Truth; these demarcate the Moment off from other occasions within time.* Yet there are similarities too; all moments and occasions of time are brief, temporal, transient, past. But the Moment is different in that it is the fullness of time; it is filled with the eternal.*

Let us make the following comments upon Kierkegaard's meaning here. First, and obviously, the Moment is eternal for him because it is filled with the Eternal One, with God himself. This is certainly one of Kierkegaard's meanings. Second, the Moment is eternal because it possesses eternal, that is, lasting, significance and decisiveness. One quality possessed by time is expressed by the term 'flux'. One instant is not only rapidly succ-

*Fragments, p. 13.

succeeded/ by another, but is also rapidly absorbed by another. Poetically, it can be described thus : "Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away... They fly forgotten, as a dream dies.....".^{*} The result is an appalling sameness, against which

Kierkegaard protested with all his life and thought. He compared contemporary life to an ocean, smooth, glassy, undisturbed. Thus writes Blackham : "Kierkegaard had the ... vision of the tendency of the age which reached its limit in an unlimited panorama of abstract infinity, unrelieved by even the smallest eminence, undisturbed by even the smallest interest, a sea of desert".^{**}

Kierkegaard's doctrine of the Moment is an important aspect of this protest; it is his protest against the sameness of time, against its unremitting flux. For him, the Moment is that eruption into the glassy sea of time from eternity, not at all subject to that flux of time which 'bears all its sons away'. Firmly rooted in the eternal, having lasting significance, it remains whilst other human occasions disappear into the maw of time. It stands out firmly and unmistakably like a lighthouse piercing unruffled water. It is hard not to conclude here that Kierkegaard's anxiety for the Moment's lastingness, its eternity, has radically affected Rudolf

^{*}Isaac Watts (1674-1748), R.C.H. No. 601.

^{**}Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 34.

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Bultmann's concern for the 'moment', for the concrete here-and-now. So Bultmann writes : " ...if man really saw God and lived from God, it would not be permissible for him to characterize the here and now as transient and symbolic, but, on the contrary, it would be necessary for him to see it as having finality and reality and as being that in which he really does hear God's word, and the sphere in which he really does God's will".* And Bultmann thus gives expression to that vision which Kierkegaard deplored and attacked in his doctrine of the Moment : " ... man has no life of his own; life in time is not taken into consideration; there is no 'moment' which tells him anything specifically or brings anything new** to him, but all is just the same; man has no longer any destiny of his own, and just as nothing that comes his way can do harm to him, so nothing can endow*** him with anything; nothing that confronts him concerns him".*** This is a most interesting illustration of how Kierkegaard's anxiety for the Moment's eternity has infected a modern theologian in the existentialist tradition. But third, the Moment is eternal for another reason : the peculiarity of occasions within time is that they are separated from each other and that no direct relation can exist between them. For Kierkegaard, it does not matter whether

*R. Bultmann, Essays, p. 107.

**Impartation again.

***Essays, p. 99.

occasions are separated by ten years or ten thousand, they are separated and therefore disjointed. There is no common factor binding them together. Kierkegaard sets his problem (the solution of which occupies both the Philosophical Fragments and the Concluding Unscientific Postscript) on the title page of the Fragments -- 'Is an historical point of departure possible for an eternal consciousness; how can such a point of departure have any other than a mere historical interest; is it possible to base an eternal happiness upon historical knowledge ?' And, of course, this is still one of the greatest problems that face the theologian. Kierkegaard's solution is that there is a common factor in that Moment, several thousand years ago, when the Christ-event occurred, and that Moment of time when that event is appropriated now. This common factor is the eternal. In both Moments there comes the Word of God. This comes from outwith time and is not subject to the flux of time. To all intents and purposes, Kierkegaard would say that both Moments are identical. They are fused together, although separated in clock-time, by the timeless, by the eternal. And we see right away the influence of Kierkegaard upon Bultmann's position, analysed in chapter I, that the Christ-event is EPHAPAX precisely because it is repeatable. Kierkegaard's position here has been well-noted by his commentators. Thus Channing-Pearce writes of him : "The instant is not an atom of time but of eternity it is short indeed, and temporal as every instant is, gone like all instants, the following instants, and yet it is decisive, and yet it is full of eternity".* Channing-Pearce quotes Walter Lowrie :

*M. Channing-Pearce, Søren Kierkegaard: A Study, p. 71.

"An instant, if it is only an instant in time, is 'filled with emptiness'. What fills it with eternity is the apprehension of the paradox that God became man. It is then the decisive Instant of faith". And commenting on this, Channing-Pearce says : "And that instant is eternity; it is the instant of 'repetition' in which past, present, and future are fused in an 'immortal moment'".^x Channing-Pearce quotes Paul Claudel's Le Père Humilié that "Eternity and Resurrection are ceaselessly renewed in the Instant", and states his opinion that "the instant is thus a fundamental Christian category".^{xx} The identity between the Moment of Christ in universal history and our Moment of appropriation is finely stated in this passage from Channing-Pearce : "In that instant the inward and the eternal meet in a timeless here-and-now reached through and within, yet ever beyond, our space-time continuum. There is the point of intersection when the longitudinal line of human life, love (EROS), thought and time meet the vertical line of eternity and the down-pouring love (AGAPE) of God. For the Christian, for Kierkegaard, that instant of intersection, is the cross of the incarnate Christ. There is the paradox of faith".^{xxx} And this identity between Christ's Moment and ours is further emphasised when Channing-Pearce states : ".....In Kierkegaard's language ... the 'appropriation'

^xOp. cit., p. 72.

^{xx}Op. cit., p. 73. We shall argue in our conclusions that the particular events of Christ's life and ministry are transferred to man's historic life, and that this makes the 'moment', from a Christian point of view, an inevitable and important theological category.

^{xxx}Op. cit., p. 73.

of that 'timeless moment' 'is the occupation for a saint'. * We have stated already that Kierkegaard's influence in modern theological thought has been powerful in producing an emphasis on temporality and thus on the temporal 'moment'; Channing-Pearce voices a similar opinion when he writes : "His (i.e. Kierkegaard's) conception of this inward meeting of time and eternity in an Instant filled with eternity, the fulfilment and perfection of time and existence, is one which grows increasingly salient in modern thought and feeling".^{xxx} In other words, Kierkegaard's Moment and its exposition has been a seed-bed for a great deal of recent and contemporary thinking. I am convinced that this striking influence comes out in no one stronger than in Bultmann. We have noted already Bultmann's opinion that the Christian, in his faith, " ... is already above time and history".^{xxx} For Bultmann, " although the advent of Christ is an historical event which happened 'once' in the past, it is, at the same time, an eternal event which occurs again and again in the soul of any Christian in whose soul Christ is born, suffers, dies, and is raised up to eternal life".^{xxxx} This quotation from the Gifford Lectures is not an isolated one; we have seen in chapter I how its like could be multiplied many times over from Bultmann's

*Op. cit., p. 74.

^{xxx}Op. cit., p. 73.

^{xxxx}History and Eschatology, p. 153.

^{xxxxxx}History and Eschatology, p. 153; thus again we have the identity posited between Christ's 'moment' in past history, and our contemporary 'moment' of appropriation.

other works. It is difficult not to conclude that much modern theological thinking, typified by, say, Bultmann, has its roots partly at least in Kierkegaard's doctrine of the Moment, the 'Fulness of Time', the Instant filled with Eternity.

... but also to ...
... Kierkegaard's doctrine of the Moment ...
... theological thinking which focuses itself on the
of human existence.

... Kierkegaard devotes his attention
of the two states, one preceding the Moment's coming, the
other the state that the Moment brings about. If
he describes as bondage and freedom. Let us look
at what Kierkegaard has to say about these two states.
(man) is in reality unfree and bound and exiled; the
Truth is to be exiled from the Truth, and to
own self is to be bound."² "He (man) was not
bound himself"³ "(Man) ... forges his
bondage with the strength of his freedom, since he
is not compulsion; and thus his bonds grow strong,
until he can say: 'I am the slave of sin'".⁴ ...

(6) FREEDOM IS GIFTED IN THE MOMENT.

We include this section not only for the sake of completeness, but also to further develop our argument that in Kierkegaard's doctrine of the Moment we have the roots of much modern theological thinking which focusses itself on the decisive 'moments' of human existence.

Kierkegaard devotes his attention to a consideration of the two states, one preceding the Moment's occurrence, and the other the state that the Moment brings about. These two states he describes as bondage and freedom. Let us look, very briefly, at what Kierkegaard has to say about these two states. "Yet (man) is in reality unfree and bound and exiled; for to be free from the Truth is to be exiled from the Truth, and to be exiled by one's own self is to be bound."^{*} "He (man) was not aware that he had bound himself".^{*} "(Man) ... forges the chains of his bondage with the strength of his freedom, since he exists in it without compulsion; and thus his bonds grow strong, and all his powers unite to make him the slave of sin".^{**} Speaking of God who comes

^{*}Philosophical Fragments, p. 11.

^{**}Op. cit., p. 12.

in the Moment, Kierkegaard asks : "What now shall we call such a Teacher ?..... Let us call him Saviour, for he saves the learner from his bondage and from himself; let us call him Redeemer, for he redeems the learner from the captivity into which he had plunged himself, and no captivity is so terrible and so impossible to break, as that in which the individual keeps himself".* As for 'freedom', references are plentiful in the pages cited.** The terms 'saviour' and 'redeemer' also imply it. Kierkegaard introduces this argument in order to show that the two states are so different one from another that the Moment in which the transition is made must be absolutely decisive.

But in Bultmann too, the 'moment' is precisely that instant of time in which freedom is gifted and exists. We have seen that in Bultmann's thought the causal connection between past and future is broken by a lacuna, the present, in which man may decide what to accept and reject of his past, and what meaning his future is to have. For Bultmann, freedom exists only in the 'moment' of the present for man. We have seen to how Bultmann holds that Christianity holds that natural man does not in fact possess the freedom necessary for a decision of this kind. That man's

*Op. cit., p. 12.

**Op. cit., pps. 11-12.

bondage is his own fault is thus expressed by Bultmann : "In actual fact, man is not free to respond to the future, nor is he free in his decisions, for he ^{has} always in reality decided in favour of his past as it is. He remains involved in dread and sin, and in everything he does he gets more and more securely attached to them".* So for Bultmann too, man's antecedent state is that of bondage.

For Bultmann too, the Moment comes next, intervening between man's antecedent state, bondage, and his authentic state, which is freedom. The 'moment', for Bultmann, involves a highly concrete word spoken to you or to me. In the 'moment' man is set free from various inauthentic motive forces from his past, and set free for his genuine, future, self. Thus freedom is not a possessable quality, but is only a 'momentary' event, at a given time. We have seen also that the 'moment', in Bultmann, removes man from under the sway of the causal process; thus man is historical because he is free, and not pre-determined as he appears to be in those philosophies of history which Bultmann terms 'historicism'. In all these many ways, there is the closest connection between the 'moment' and the event of freedom, and of the gift of new

* Essays, p. 84; an interesting comparison is that just as Bultmann holds that man has bound himself by deciding for his inauthentic past, Kierkegaard, in Fragments, p. 11, says that man incurred guilt through his bondage; man put himself into bondage through abuse of his own freedom.

possibilities. It should now be clear how much Kierkegaard anticipated our important modern discussions of existential freedom, and the possibilities of fresh modes of existence in a world which has become increasingly conscious of the pressure of motive forces from without, in face of which humanity has felt so much despair and hopelessness.

... on aspect of continuity between past and present, a basis which the "moment" would stand revealed as a false basis for a theological supersession. (Various remain expressible after the occurrence of the "moment" obviously there can be something inherent in the past to be remembered, that can not be forgotten.

... according to the existentialist understanding, there are several functions of memory which are inauthentic. The first one is that memory should be a mere record of past events, facts, etc. If this were the case, the remembering person would thereby be cut off from his own essential historicity and temporality. Memory would replace man's immersion of himself in history

(7) THE TEACHER IS UNFORGETTABLE.

The subject of 'history and memory' is of course immensely important for our subject, and we have already made reference to it elsewhere. It is important in so far as memory is an aspect of continuity between 'moments', a continuity without which the 'moment' would stand revealed as a flimsy and inadequate basis for a theological superstructure. Obviously something must remain as retainable after the occurrence of the 'moment'. And obviously there must be something inherent in the 'moment' that must be remembered, that must not be forgotten.

According to the existentialist understanding of history, there are several functions of memory which must be judged inauthentic. The first one is that memory should preserve concepts, insights, ideas, propositions, Weltanschauungen, which are utilizable in subsequent experience. If this ^{were} memory's function, the remembering person would thereby cast off, rid himself of, his own essential historicity and temporality. Memory, that is to say, would replace man's immersion of himself in history and thus his experience of the 'moment'. The second one is that memory should preserve past events as history 'wie es eigentlich gewesen'; that is, past events in their 'purely worldly actuality', as they were in their mere outwardness, in their purely causal connections to other

events within a stream of events; that is, past events in their sheer worldly actuality without the self-understanding which their reproduction involves. Memory, understood in either of these two ways, must be rejected by any understanding of history which holds to the radical historicity of man.

We have indicated already that the interpretation of memory within the existentialist understanding of history, stems, historically in the modern (i.e. XXth. century) period from the Kierkegaardian notion of memory. But what is that? What function does Kierkegaard ascribe to memory within his doctrine of the Moment? Let us now turn to that.

It seems that memory is indispensable to Kierkegaard's argument. For Kierkegaard, as we have seen over and over again, the Moment must be decisive. In it occurs liberation, the new birth, conversion; in it man meets God who is his Saviour, his Redeemer, the Eternal One. Thus the Moment must be decisive. Now the point about this decisive Moment is that it is filled with the Teacher; not with ideas, propositions, concepts, insights, but with a person encountered in time, the Teacher. He is, so to speak, the 'content' of the Moment. Since the Teacher is God, and God is in the Paradox, and the Moment is the Paradox in its most abbreviated form, we may say that for Kierkegaard, the Moment and God are identical. After the Moment, what is the relationship between learner and Teacher? It is this: "Such a Teacher the learner will

never be able to forget. For the moment he forgets him he sinks back again into himself, just as one who while in original possession of the condition forgot that God exists, and thereby sank into bondage".* What comes to man in the Moment is a trust for which man is required to render an account to God the Judge.*** The means by which man alienates this trust is by forgetting. Kierkegaard tells us what the object of memory is : "Even when the learner has most completely appropriated the condition,*** and most profoundly apprehended the Truth, he cannot forget the Teacher, or let him vanish Socratically".**** The function of memory is a necessity because decisiveness is a necessity : " ... the moment in time must have a decisive significance, so that I will never be able to forget it in time or in eternity; because the eternal, which hitherto did not exist, came into being in this moment".***** Once more Kierkegaard emphasises what the object of memory is : "When the Teacher is gone from the disciple in death, memory may bring his figure before him; but it is not on this account that the disciple believes, but because he received the condition from God, and hence is enabled to

*Fragments, p. 12 ; can we deduce from this that according to Kierkegaard man's original transgression was 'forgetting' ?

***Op. cit., p. 12.

****According to Kierkegaard, faith is in some sense possessable and retainable; it is for this reason that Kierkegaard, in his schema of the Fragments (see title-page) describes faith as 'a new organ'.

*****Op. cit., p. 12.

*****Op. cit., p. 8.

see, in memory's trustworthy image, the person of God. So the disciple, who knows that he would have seen nothing without the condition, since the first thing he learned to understand was that he was in Error".^{*}

We are now perhaps in a better position to sum up Kierkegaard's views on the function of memory and their relation to contemporary theological discussion. We may do this by making the following three comments. First, and negatively, there is not the slightest hint in Kierkegaard's thought that the function of memory is to retain knowledge of propositions, conceptual knowledge of God, ideas, the framework of a Weltanschauung. This function will be seen to be absolutely excluded by our second comment. Second, and positively, what memory does record is strictly personal; it is 'the Teacher', the Teacher's 'figure', the 'person of God', that is retained by memory. Hence again Kierkegaard's notion of revelation is strictly primary. In this of course he comes very close to Bultmann and Buber. Third, memory renews a past encounter; a man does not recall by memory past facts in their worldly actuality; he remembers a past encounter with God by means of the condition,

^{*}Op. cit., p. 53.

faith, granted in the Moment. Thus man, by memory, recalls the person of God as God was to his faith in a past Moment. Thus man remembers an intensely subjective experience. We ~~can~~ say therefore that man re-encounters past revelatory events through memory, which is Bultmann's view also. But we ought not to overlook either that Kierkegaard says quite definitely^x that man ought not to forget that a Moment has happened in time in which the eternal came to him; is this not tantamount to saying that man ought not to forget that he is a temporal creature in that he encounters reality in and through his time, and is this not Bultmann's view also? We have already pointed out that for both Bultmann and Buber the only possessable and retainable Weltanschauung is that man is a radically historical and temporal creature. And certainly Kierkegaard would agree that for the Moment to be the Moment, for it to be decisive, man must retain the knowledge that it has occurred in time and that he has encountered the ultimate reality, God himself, in it. Therefore, in holding that memory enables man to encounter the past existentially, and that man must retain knowledge of his own temporality, we conclude that Kierkegaard's influence on the modern existentialist view of memory's function has been potent indeed.

^xOp. cit., p. 8.

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8.15.11

At the same time, a comment differentiating the thought of Kierkegaard from that of Bultmann and Buber requires to be made. It is that obviously Kierkegaard makes much more of 'continuity between moments' through memory than do Bultmann and Buber. It is clear that memory plays a much more vital and well-developed part in Kierkegaard's argument than in the theology of Bultmann or of Buber. Bultmann find his 'continuity' more in man's awareness of his historicity and temporality pushing him into the future; historicity means that man thinks of himself as someone future, as someone who will receive his future genuine self in and through future events, people, 'Widerfahrnisse'. So also in the case of Buber; a 'momentary' encounter with the 'Thou' makes man long to re-engage the encounter with the 'Thou' in the future. Indeed, we saw in chapter III that Buber holds that reflection to the 'Thou' in a past moment can be inauthentic in making redundant man's present and future historicity and temporality. I am convinced that in the case of both Bultmann and Buber it is their powerful emphasis on man as a future being that leads them to seem to ignore continuity through memory.* What this adds up to of course is that Kierkegaard seems weak on future encounter, and indeed, on

*We have spoken in connection with Bultmann of 'the existentialist understanding of memory'; in fact, in the Entmythologisierung controversy, Bultmann dealt with memory ^{only} because by introducing memory, J. Schniewind criticized his argument. See Schniewind's criticisms of Bultmann on this score, Kerygma and Myth, pps. 79-80, and Bultmann's reply, where he deals with memory, op. cit., pps. 115-116.

'encounter' in general. For encounter implies an 'other'; the world, persons, events, happenings. And it is very hard to find that these are involved in Kierkegaard's Moment. The encounter of which he speaks seems to be merely an encounter of man with the eternal in time, that is, separated in time from God's original disclosure in Jesus. Thus Kierkegaard so emphasises 'temporality' that he seems to have left very little room for 'historicity'. This is a preliminary criticism of Kierkegaard, one that will be developed later, but one that does spring out of Kierkegaard's account of memory; it points to a weakness, a grave weakness, in his thought, which has been corrected in the thought at least of Bultmann and Buber. But, as I have said, we shall return to this criticism later.

as in the case of the man who is moved by some great need, what else can move him but love? For in affection within and not without. His resolve, an equal reciprocal relation to the occasion, must be though when realized in time it constitutes proof for when the occasion and the occasioned correspond.

(8) THE MOMENT IS NOT AND DOES NOT REQUIRE A HUMAN OCCASION.

That the Moment is not itself and does not require for its occurrence what Kierkegaard terms an 'occasion', is expressed especially in the Philosophical Fragments, pps. 18, 47, 56-57. We can perhaps do no better than quote a paragraph which is typical of the whole argument of the book. "But God needs no disciple to help him understand himself, nor can he be so determined by any occasion that there is as much significance in the occasion as in the resolve. What could then move him to make his appearance ? He must indeed move himself, and continue to exemplify what Aristotle says of him : AKINETOS PANTA KINEI. But if he moves himself it follows that he is not moved by some need as if he could not break out in speech. But if he moves himself, and is not moved by need, what else can move him but love ? For love finds its satisfaction within and not without. His resolve, which stands in no equal reciprocal relation to the occasion, must be from eternity, though when realized in time it constitutes precisely the MOMENT; for when the occasion and the occasioned correspond, and are as commensurable as the answer of the desert and the cry that evokes^{it}, the Moment does not appear, but is lost in the eternity of Recollection. The Moment makes its appearance when an eternal resolve comes into relation with an incommensurable occasion. Unless this is realized we shall be thrown back on Socrates, and shall then have

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neither God as Teacher, nor an Eternal Purpose, nor the Moment".^x

The general motive behind Kierkegaard's thought here is easy enough to ascertain. It is simply a certain anxiety. Kierkegaard is anxious to preserve the Moment's decisiveness; he feels that if the Moment were reduced to a mere crisis or occasion in everyday humdrum life, it would vanish tracelessly into the flux of the many human instants, crises, occasions, of which life consists. Thus he states that a human occasion is not sufficient to move God, nor does God move himself in response to a mere 'need'. The Moment is not merely God's answer to man's 'cry'. Such a divine response would not, Kierkegaard feels, be the Moment. Why must the Moment be so decisive? Because the Moment of appropriation for Kierkegaard must be identical with the Moment of the Christ-event. And that event is "that historical phenomenon which refuses to be reduced to a moment of merely occasional significance"^{xx} since it brings the eternal, since it is the beginning of eternity. Now we must sympathise with Kierkegaard in his anxiety to preserve the utter decisiveness of the Moment, so that it does not disappear tracelessly. To interpret Kierkegaard against the Hegelian background, we must

^xFragments, p. 18.

^{xx}Op. cit., p. 47.

perceive that he felt obliged to represent the Moment as the quite shattering, vertical, unprepared-for and unlooked-for stroke of a transcendent God which cuts across and into the stream of human time--so that it will be decisive and unforgettable. But at the same time, there is surely another side to the matter in which modern existentialist thought has corrected Kierkegaard's over-emphasis. Thus it would seem that the following criticism of Kierkegaard is not unreasonable. May we not say that Kierkegaard is too concerned with a God who is Wholly Other? Does not his doctrine of the Moment imply that God is uninterested in and unconcerned with the crises and events and needs of everyday life, and is this not therefore incompatible with the biblical picture of God?^{*} Is there not something to be said here for the views of both Bultmann and Buber over against the views of Bultmann? We have already seen that in the theology of Bultmann there is posited a preparation^{**} for God's self-disclosure within the structure of human existence as existence-in-the-world, in man's relation to time and history, in his sense of finitude, obligation, guilt, transience, decay, unachievement, all of which open a door at least to God's "impartment" of himself. It would

^{*}Cf. Mt.6:32 " ...your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things".

^{**}See again Bultmann's essay, The Question of Natural Revelation.

seem that a valid theology would need in some sense to correlate man's longings, lacks, and needs, with the fulness of God. And if so, does not the Kierkegaardian argument radically ignore man's concrete life here in the world, and leave us wondering about the relevance, if any, of man's historical (worldly) existence? We saw in chapter III how vitally concerned Buber is with man's everyday life, with man's obligation to hallow the everyday, in order to meet God and his fellows. We saw too how Buber deplored a 'moment' of heavenly bliss which has 'nothing to do with my poor earthly moment'. When we come to our concluding chapter we shall refer again to Erich Auerbach's classic on realist literature, Mimesis, where we shall find that Auerbach contends that it was only with the writing of the New Testament Gospels that there emerged a recognition of the real world of everyday events and happenings and crises as the sphere in which reality is encountered. According to Auerbach, that was the really great gift that Christianity gave to the literature of the Western world. And, of course, it this insight in Auerbach's book that makes Bultmann admire it so much. But it is doubtful indeed if any of these insights into historicity in its radical sense can be found in the thought of Kierkegaard. These criticisms add up of course to the criticism which we started to develop in our preceding section --- that compared, say, to Bultmann or Buber, Kierkegaard is gravely deficient in this recognition of man's vital connection to the 'Widerfahrnisse' which continually stream towards him, and in response to which he becomes a genuine human person.

To develop this not unimportant criticism a stage further, we must refer to two specific criticisms of Kierkegaard, the first by a Jew, the second by a humanist. First, there is the radical criticism of Buber, the Jew, directed against Kierkegaard, the Christian. Thus W. Herberg points out that Buber " refuses to limit the dialogue to the self with itself and God. As against Kierkegaard's assertion that 'everyone should be chary about having anything to do with 'the others', and should essentially speak only with God and with himself', Buber insists that that fundamental relation is TRIADIC --- the self, God, and the 'other'. 'Real relationship with God cannot be achieved on earth if real relationships to the world and mankind are lacking', (Buber, At the Turning: Three Addresses on Judaism, p. 39), but real relationship with other human beings is possible only in terms of a real relationship to God. (The triadic relation of K., the Castle, and the Village in Kafka's The Castle will occur to the reader). What is more, Buber points out, Kierkegaard's ^{joining} ~~joining~~ of the 'with God' with the 'with himself' is a serious incompatibility that nothing can mitigate ... Speaking with God is something TOTALLY different from 'speaking with oneself'; whereas, remarkably enough, it is not something TOTALLY different from speaking with another human being' (Between Man and Man, p. 50). Buber refers Kierkegaard to Jesus, who when he linked the two 'great commandments' --- the commandment to love God with all one's heart and the commandment to love one's neighbour as oneself --- made it clear that the 'absolute' relation to God is as inclusive as it is exclusive: while barring

all other 'absolute' relations, it not only makes room for but demands an authentic relation to one's fellow men' (Between Man and Man, pps. 40-65). 'He who enters on the absolute relation . . . (for him) everything is gathered up in the relation' (I and Thou, p. 78) ".^{*} Buber of course develops his criticisms of this line of Kierkegaard's argument in 'The Question to the Single One', in Between Man and Man, of which this comment by Buber is typical : "Kierkegaard, the Christian concerned with 'contemporaneity' with Jesus, here contradicts his master".^{xx} Thus it is most significant that a Jew can criticize the theology of Kierkegaard because of Kierkegaard's infidelity to the teaching of Jesus, and we must admit that such criticisms flow also out of Rudolf Bultmann's view of historicity.

Second, there is the significant criticism of Kierkegaard by a humanist, Mr. H.J. Blackham. Blackham writes of Kierkegaard's doctrine of the Moment : "Kierkegaard's case is peculiar. His perpetuation of the moment of absolute choice is morbid, not a perpetuation in a sequence of phases in which the choice is made good in the developement of a personality and of a 'work', but a concentration of the whole life in a repetition of the empty

^{*}W. Herberg, The Writings of Martin Buber, Introduction, p. 16.

^{xx}Between Man and Man, pps. 40-61, 65, 69-71 = Herberg, op. cit., pps. 63-88, see p. 74.

abstract decision itself with increasing intensity. This fatal hypertrophy of will has a terrible fascination for one sees in the dilated organ a living decision repeating itself like an accelerating pulse, separated from the withered body it should have animated".³ Exactly, there is a most dangerous gap in the theology of Kierkegaard between the Moment itself, and the remainder of the historical-concrete-worldly-relational life of man with which the Moment should be intimately involved. Thus we conclude that Kierkegaard's conviction that the Moment is not itself and does not require a human 'occasion' leads us into an unhistorical strand in his thought incompatible with and unacceptable to not only Christianity, but also Hasidic Judaism and ethical humanism.

How can we account for this? The answer is simple.

Consider the following: Kierkegaard's view of the Moment as a

preparation for the future, a moment which is itself

incomprehensible and therefore unacceptable.⁴ And

scholars would point to many elements in the Danish

and Hebraic series which were essential to the

New Testament itself. Especially Paul Tillich,

who criticized Kierkegaard's view of the Moment as

³See *The Sickness of Death, The Sickness of the New Testament* (1958), pp. 11-12.

⁴Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 22.

APPENDIX AND NOTE TO SECTION (8).

The identity posited in Kierkegaard's thought between the Moment of the Christ-event in the past and our present Moment is not without importance. Kierkegaard ascribes to our present Moment attributes derived from the Christ-Moment of past history. Thus he makes the point that our present Moment must be absolutely shattering, decisive, unforgettable, unlooked-for and unprepared-for because this was how it was with the original Christ-Moment in past history. But is this really so ?

Kierkegaard's argument comes up against the hard fact today that many theologians (including both Old and New Testament scholars) hold that, for example, the Old Testament revelation is a preparation for the New, without which the New itself would be incomprehensible and therefore unacceptable.* And New Testament scholars would point to many elements in the first century Judaistic and Hellenistic worlds which were essential to the reception of the New Testament KERYGMA. Certainly Paul Tillich, for example, can be thus classified.** Thus writes Tillich : "Without the symbols

*See Hoskyns and Davey, The Riddle of the New Testament, (London 1958), pps. 57-59.

** See his Systematic Theology, vol. 1, 'The History of Revelation', pps. 153 f.

created by universal revelation the final revelation would not be understandable".[¶] " ... if a revelation whose historical preparation is denied is final, the necessity of its historical reception ~~makes~~ ^{marks} the unique revelatory event a strange body which has no relation whatsoever to human existence and history".[¶] And speaking of the Old Testament revelation, Tillich writes : "The biblical terminology is full of words whose meaning and connotations would be completely strange to listeners and readers if there had been no preceding revelations in Judaism as well as in paganism".^{¶¶} To think thus of revelation has a grave result : "To assert that a revelation is final revelation without pointing to a history of revelation in which there has been a preparation for it dehumanises man and demonises God".^{¶¶}

I include this appendix not only to further demonstrate the totally unhistorical nature of Kierkegaard's Moment in universal history and in existence. In the concluding chapter I am going to argue that the Christian existentialist understanding of history logically implies an analogy between, on the one hand, the Heilsgeschichte pivoting on the final revelation in Christ, and, on

[¶] Syst. Theol., 1, p. 154.

^{¶¶} Op. cit., p. 155.

the other, the authentic, personal, existence of the Christian, bounded by his life-span, on the other. Thus, preliminarily, we may say that both entities involve a three-fold division, with the Christ-Moment in the centre, thus : the preparatory stage, the final stage, and the receiving or appropriating stage. We shall argue that this three-fold schema, (though perhaps not just in these terms), derived from the Heilsgeschichte finally revealed in Christ, must be capable of application to the authentic, personal, Christian life, if the radical historicity and temporality of man be accepted. The point is raised at this point because section (8) of our study of Kierkegaard reveals that the work of Kierkegaard, in so far as it is relevant for a historical analogy, is weak so far as the first, preparatory stage of the schema of revelation is concerned; strong from the point of view of temporality indeed, but weak from the point of view of historicity. It does seem though, that Kierkegaard has allowed his view of what the appropriating-Moment ought to be (in view of his contemporary Hegelian background over against which his thought is worked out) to influence what he considers the circumstances of the original Christ-event to have been. The valid order, of course, should be a reversal of Kierkegaard's. But to this question, the question of an historical analogy, we shall return in our final and concluding chapter.

(9) GOD DISCLOSES HIMSELF IN THE MOMENT, IN THE PARADOX, IN THE
SERVANT-FORM : THIS IS A CAUSE OF OFFENCE.

We come now to that part of the Kierkegaardian argument which is perhaps better known than any other, and which has received a great deal of attention in recent philosophy and theology. The Moment, says Kierkegaard, is the Paradox.* The Moment is the Paradox in its most abbreviated form. The Paradox is the appearance of God in the servant-form. The poles of the Kierkegaardian Paradox are (i) the divine, and (ii) the human, between which he holds ^{there} to be an infinite qualitative difference. Any conceptual conjunction of them, such as that postulated by the traditional 'doctrine' of the Incarnation, Kierkegaard holds to be an absurdity. The Moment is an offence, a scandal, to the consciousness of the learner. The Moment sets Reason aside, plots its downfall. The Paradox is that which cannot be apprehended, absorbed, digested, by Reason. This is certainly a cause of offence --- but the Moment is also a cause of offence for another reason --- because it implies for man a new beginning in time, and thus the judgement that man's antecedent state was that of Sin, Error. It is therefore not to be

*For this section of our study see Philosophical Fragments, pps. 18, 38, 41, 42, 43.

wondered at that the offended consciousness regards the Moment, the Paradox, as folly. This is but consciousness's absurd retaliation to the Paradox's contention that Reason must resign and abdicate from its haughty position. It is therefore an 'acoustic' illusion, the echo of the Paradox's charge against Reason. The two sides of the Paradox must be lived out in passionate awareness of the disparity of and the distance between the two sides --- these two cannot be brought into a reconciliation by Reason.

Kierkegaard's argument here has provoked, of course, in both philosophical and theological circles, the most violent criticism and disagreement. His disjunction between Faith and Reason has been described as schizophrenic, his delight in 'absurdity' as neurotic. His statements have been taken from their context in his life and thought, and have been thus analysed to show their inconsistencies and illogicalities. But we doubt whether this is a fair or possible procedure.

For one thing, in interpreting Kierkegaard's position here, we must note again Kierkegaard's anxiety. In establishing the Moment firmly, he believed that he was engaging in a life-or-death struggle for the survival of Christianity in his time. "Here again", he writes, "we have the Moment, on which everything depends.....".* Thus Kierkegaard develops his position over

*Fragments, p. 41.

against the 'Socratic' procedure in which the occasions of man's time are swallowed up and digested in the insatiable maw of time. This position Kierkegaard assaults vigourously in the Fragments, as the extremity of his language shows. And he carries out this assault by making the Moment catastrophic, shattering, disturbing, by making it immovable and startling in the glassy sea of man's time, a protuberance which cannot be eliminated or got round. The Moment is thus the spearhead of his assault on the 'Socratic point of view' in which 'the Moment is invisible and indistinguishable....'.³

Now it is in analogy with this situation that we must interpret Kierkegaard's assault on 'Reason'. Actually the core of this discussion is in the question : what does Kierkegaard mean by Reason ? If he means by it cognitive reason, and if he means that the appearance of God destroys man's rational structure, then he obviously lies open to all those criticisms which have been brought against him. There then would be an end to the discussion-- Kierkegaard could be dismissed as an irrationalist or as an anti-rationalist. It is therefore to this question --- what does Kierkegaard mean by 'Reason' ? --- that we now apply ourselves.

³Op. cit., p. 41.

It is not just a coincidence that we find that what Kierkegaard means by 'Reason' is completely in accord with what is meant by it in both Bultmann and Buber, as that which finds its highest aptitude in constructing a Weltanschauung. In a note to p. 39 of the Fragments,^{*} the late Professor David F. Swenson makes the point that within the argument of the Fragments the term 'Reason' is not employed in 'any abstract-intellectual sense', but, as over against the Paradox, "the reflectively organized common sense of mankind, including as its essential core a sense of life's values. Over against the 'Paradox' it is therefore the self-assurance and self-assertiveness of man's nature in its totality. To identify it with any abstract intellectual function, like the function of scientific cognition, or of general ideas, or of the a priori, or of self-consistency in thinking, &tc., is wholly to misunderstand the exposition of the Fragments. Specifically, Kant's distinction between Reason and Understanding, or any other similar distinction, is wholly beside the point. The Danish word here translated 'Reason' is FORSTANDEN; but this should not mislead anyone into thinking that it ought to be translated by 'understanding', and interpreted in contradistinction to 'Reason'." Exactly, what

^{*}See Fragments, pp.s 99-100.

Kierkegaard intends by 'Reason' is defined essentially by self-assurance and self-assertiveness; thus Kierkegaard has in mind, we contend, the rationalist who asserts that he already possesses truth within his own system or ideology; the rationalist who believes that already he grasps self-awareness in his Weltanschauung, and that there is no need for something further to be imparted from without, simply because this "impartation" implies the judgements 'Error', 'Sin', and a 'new beginning'. Reason thus cries back to the Paradox its own accusation, 'Folly'. Thus we are lead to suspect that by 'Reason', in the context of the Fragments, Kierkegaard intends to convey not only man's ingeniousness in constructing thought-systems, in finding a place within them for everything that occurs, but also his pride and self-assertiveness in their possession. For if it were possible for this type of rationalist to slip Kierkegaard's Moment into his ^ssystem, then the whole argument of the Fragments and the Postscript would be in vain! We have used here the term 'system'. This we have done deliberately, because even a cursory examination of the argument of the Postscript leads us to the conclusion that in Kierkegaardian thought there is the closest possible connection between Kierkegaard's criticisms of 'Reason', his criticism of 'Pure Thought' and of 'Abstract Thought', ^{and} the Hegelian thinker armed with his ^ssystem, the 'hospitable' system of Hegel,

the systematist; that thought which although valid enough in examining the world of external phenomena ~~which is~~ is invalid when turned back in upon an existing individual; the (Hegelian) system which includes all but the all-necessary, Ethics (which investigates the agonizing decisions and choices of an existing person).^{KK} Pure or abstract thought, valid in the scientific sphere, is set over against what Kierkegaard calls 'concrete thought', which is that type of thought apposite to human existence. "What is concrete thought? It is thought with a relation to a thinker, and to a definite particular something which is thought, existence giving to the existing thinker thought, time, and place".^{KKK} Kierkegaard's violent polemic is thus directed against the invasion by pure (i.e. abstract) thought of the sphere of existence. " ... Although ... Kierkegaard makes some excessive remarks which obscure the true import of his position, his main thesis is not that faith conflicts with reason as such, but rather with reason which has forgotten its own proper limits. ⁴~~Doubtless~~ he was wrong to assume that to philosophize is, almost necessarily, to forget those limits, and yet the history of metaphysics provides copious support for his assumption".^{KKKK}

^{KK}References to these themes can be found in Concluding Unscientific Postscript, pps. 16 (note 1), 97-99, 101-3, 106, 108, 110-113, 223-4, 269, 270, 272 (note), 273-9, 283, 292, 296, 298.

^{KKK}Op. cit., p. 296.

^{KKKK}Existentialism and Religious Belief, David E. Roberts, (New York 1959). p. 110.

The late Profesor David E. Roberts points out that life, based on pure, abstract, scientific thought alone would be nightmarish; he describes a type of insanity to be found in that type of 'rationalist' which we have already described; this insanity is to be found " in the sort of man who knows a great deal about natural science or psychology, but who himself has become dehumanized. His habit of viewing the world as raw material for experiment, observation, and the dispassionate discovery of laws has made him insensitive to those dimensions of nature and man that can only be apprehended as the unique and mysterious THISNESS of each individual which awakens in us an answering response of feeling. This man has, like a chameleon, taken on the color of his view of the world. It is as though he had a card file, a calculating machine, a laboratory inside of himⁱⁿstead of a heart".* Thus we conclude that the Kierkegaardian polemic directed in the Fragments against 'Reason' is not to be taken as against reason in the philosophical or scientific-cognitive sense, but against a quite historically conditioned type of 'reason', represented by that which has given rise to the Hegelian 'system' and 'systematist', against a sinful self-assertion which claims to have discovered and to possess truth within a closed ideology, against an application of the objective scientific approach to the fragile, delicate, elusive entity we call human existence.

*David E. Roberts, op. cit., p. 106.

We have yet to enquire about the effect this trend of Kierkegaardian thought has had in more recent theological thought. Certainly, in respect to Bultmann and Buber, the other two thinkers whom we have investigated, Kierkegaard seems to have had his effect. Thus too, for Bultmann, one bitter enemy of the 'moment' is that element in man which makes him want to construct and hold on to Weltanschauungen, a 'system' which he brings ready-made to the changing situations of life and by means of which he is enabled to escape from the claims, the enigma, of the mysterious 'moment' of impartation. And we have seen how Bultmann criticizes that aspect of human rationality which occupies itself with ideas, propositions, generalizations, when that aspect oversteps itself and interferes with the occurrence of true belief in God. Buber too distinguishes between the 'idea of knowledge' current in the It- world and the glimpse, the insight, brought by the 'moment' of the Thou. The It-world's idea of knowledge is that it consists of 'items of information' constructed into a vast system of knowledge; the 'moment' 'offends' the It-world by the 'exclusiveness' claimed by the 'moment'. The amazing similarity between Kierkegaard and Buber on a certain vital point cannot possibly be explained by mere coincidence: that is Buber's conviction that a 'moment' may enter the It-sphere and become hardened into an It, swallowed up by It and left dead within the great mass of It, and the Kierkegaardian conviction that the Moment (in 'Socratic' procedure) may be swallowed up and lost in the maw of merely human time, passing away as a human occasion buried in the mass of infinite human occasions. This, I repeat,

as sheer coincidence, is too good to be true. And there can be little doubt as to the general similarity between, on the one hand, Buber's distinction between the ^{Thou}~~It~~-world approach and the ~~It~~ ^{It}-world approach, and, on the other, Kierkegaard's distinction between 'Faith' and (system-building, self-assertive) 'Reason'.

We conclude this section then, ^{by insisting} that Kierkegaard, in launching his polemic against 'Reason' in the Fragments, was actually attacking a falsification of Reason, an overstretching of its proper limits, and that so far as the works of Bultmann and Buber are concerned, this aspect of Kierkegaardian thought has had its influence in formulating the notions that existential knowledge cannot be possessed in a system, just as the 'knowledge of God' cannot, and that the proper approach to the religious and existential realities involves something a lot more than "pure reason", and that "pure reason", in so far as it is ^{ex} imported out of the territory proper to itself, and in so far as it is itself falsified, can be a great hindrance to the achievement of genuine belief in God and of authentic personal existence.

APPENDIX TO SECTION (9).

One subject given considerable attention in recent discussion is hermeneutics, to which we have already made extensive reference. Hermeneutics is the science which concerns the interpretation of historical documents and texts. In our discussion of Kierkegaard in section (9) certain existentialist hermeneutical principles have obviously been utilized. In order to enquire about their validity we must ask : are works like Kierkegaard's Fragments and Postscript historical documents ? The answer is yes ; their concern is with man, and they were written over a hundred years ago. Throughout our discussion we have treated these texts as having grown out of a quite distinct, concrete, historical background, and have said that if interpreted apart from this background, they are handled with violence. One hermeneutical rule elucidated by Bultmann (from the philosophy of Dilthey probably) is that the interpreter must have the same attitude to life as had the original writer or recorder. Unless this is so, the interpretation will fail to yield the meaning at which the original writer was aiming. He must approach the recorded problems with something of the same thoughts, feelings, aims, assumptions, sympathies, as the original writer had when he wrote. This is what we have been trying to do in section (9). We have tried to share Kierkegaard's anxious and desperate concern that the Moment should remain and not be eliminated. We have seen that if we do this, his main concepts (Error,

Sin, the Paradox, Folly, Absurdity,) take on a certain meaning and unity which otherwise they would not have. In the words of R.G. Collingwood, we have so approached the Kierkegaardian texts as to make what is recorded in them 'vibrate in our minds' ; if Collingwood's standpoint is correct, our failure to make them vibrate in our minds, our failure to make a past recorded 'moment' blaze up into presentness (Buber), would have been a judgement of the texts on ourselves, and not wholly a judgement on the texts. Our agreement in the main (or our disagreement) should therefore be directed towards Kierkegaard's burning concern elucidated from the texts, the concern that the Moment, utterly decisive, should remain, and not pass away like any mere human occasion, and not towards Kierkegaard's individual propositions interpreted apart from their historical context.

NOTES TO SECTION (9).

Throughout this chapter we have been looking for the roots of much modern theological thinking in the thought of Kierkegaard. The impression that this section leaves us with is that revelation and the achievement of genuine existence are achieved in time. They are events, happenings, which punctuate time and give it meaning. Thus revelation and the achievement of authentic existence are in Kierkegaard's thought conceived of as dynamic processes. This is of course the drift of much modern thought of which we have already observed Bultmann's ^{to be} ~~the~~ typical. But there is a not unimportant difference. Bultmann says that " since human life is lived out in space and time, man's encounter with God can only be a specific event here and now".^x The importance of such a quotation is that it demonstrates that whereas Kierkegaard is strong in emphasising that man's life is lived out in time and therefore can only encounter God now, he is weak in that strand that insists that since man's life is lived out in space his encounter with God can only be an event here, that is, in concrete historical happenings. We can put this another

^xKerygma and Myth, p. 196.

way by saying that while one set of Bultmann's existential categories (the temporal ones, in time, in the 'now'), might be described as Kierkegaardian, the other ones (the historical ones, in space, here), could not.* Whereas Bultmann (and also Heidegger, Buber) would insist that man is a historical-temporal creature, we must conclude that Kierkegaard's view is that man is essentially temporal. Kierkegaard's thought does not betray an awareness that man lives a concrete psychosomatic spacial-historical existence, although vividly aware that man lives in and is subject to a flux of temporal instants.

This is is a criticism and a limitation of Kierkegaard's thought. I think that the roots of the insight that man is a historical creature (in being 'Dasein') must be sought elsewhere

*"Christian faith ... believes that God acts upon us and addresses us in the specific here and now", Kerygma and Myth, p. 197. "...Faith can only be an event occurring on specific occasions, and it can only remain alive when the believer is constantly asking himself what God is saying to him here and now", Kerygma and Myth, p. 198. "That Scripture is the Word of God is something which happens only in the here and now of encounter....", Kerygma and Myth, p. 201. "Jesus Christ is the eschatological event not as an established fact of past time but as repeatedly present, as addressing you and me here and now in preaching", History and Eschatology, pps. 151-2. Marcel's views on historicity would also seem to distinguish his thought from that of Kierkegaard. Thus Marcel writes : "My most intimate and unshakable conviction --- and if it is heretical so much the worse for orthodoxy --- is, whatever so many of the pious and learned people may have said about it, that God does not at all want to be loved by us over AGAINST the created, but to be glorified through the created and starting from it. This God standing against the created and in some way jealous of his own works is in my eyes nothing but an idol. It is an escape for me to have written this. And I declare till a new dispensation that I shall be insincere each time that I shall seem to affirm anything contrary to what I have just written", Being and Having (London 1950), pps. 196-7.

than in the thought of Kierkegaard. This criticism does not invalidate the contribution that Kierkegaard made to thought in teaching that revelation and the achievement of existence must be temporal, dynamic processes. It could be argued that the categories time and space always imply each other, but this is not evident in Kierkegaard. We must conclude that theology and philosophy have added a major category to our understanding since Kierkegaard, that of historicity in its radical sense. We can perhaps see something of this modern addition from something that Tillich has written : "Historical revelation is not a revelation in history, but through history. Since man is essentially historical, every revelation, even if it is mediated through a rock or a tree, occurs in history. But history itself is revelatory only if a special event or a series of events is experienced ecstatically as miracle".^x

^xSyst. Theol., I, p. 134.

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(10) THE MOMENT INVOLVES DANGER, RISK, ANXIETY.^{*}

We have already discovered the 'mysteriousness' of the 'moment' in both Bultmann and Buber. Again and again Bultmann describes the 'moment' as 'enigmatic'.^{xxx} The 'moment' throws man into mystery, into a dilemma, from which man attempts to escape by means of a Weltanschauung, or of mysticism, or of a false form of living-together, community. The 'moment' is dangerous for Bultmann because it represents the needle-like balancing-point between inauthentic and authentic existence; in it there is given the possibility of gaining or losing one's real existence. In the 'moment' man ventures his all; his life hangs precariously in the balance in the 'moment'. Buber too realises the precariousness of the 'moment'. In it man is invited to renounce the visible, tangible, secure world of aims and practical concerns for a sphere of insecurity and unreliability, having neither duration nor continuity, which no sooner comes than it is gone. Buber speaks of 'the graciousness of its comings and the solemn sadness of its goings'.^{xxx} Upon this 'moment' too depends man's becoming a real ^{person.} ~~real~~ [^]

^{*}For this section of our study, see especially Philosophical Fragments, pps. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

^{xxx}See e.g. Essays, pps. 8, 19.

^{xxx}I and Thou, p. 33.

If he says 'yes' to this mysterious approach he grasps his destiny, if he says 'no', his real existence remains unachieved. For Buber too the 'moment' implies decisiveness, danger, and risk.

Kierkegaard surveys the Moment's occurrence 'sub specie aeternitatis', from the side of God, and finds in it incalculable risk, danger, and anxiety. Thus Kierkegaard strikes his opening note: "If the Moment is to have decisive significance, how unspeakable will be God's anxiety".* God is anxious for the Moment's decisive occurrence, and the structure of God's anxiety is this. There is a great qualitative gulf separating God from man. Kierkegaard points out that the Jews held that no man can see God and live. How therefore is revelation possible? How can God disclose himself to man and yet not destroy him? There is sorrow in heaven because God must deny man something --- man with his human eyes cannot look upon the unveiled glory of God. The Moment must be absolutely decisive (i.e. non-Socratic), and yet must come about without shattering the learner with a blast of the glory of God. The dilemma is needle-sharp; the learner must owe everything to God, and this is identical with the learner becoming as nothing.

*Fragments, p. 23.

Therefore the only way for the Moment to come about without the learner being shattered is by, says Kierkegaard, the process of condescension, the appearance of God in lowly servant-form, a servant-form which is not a disguise nor a mere cloak, but is actually God's nature; God is in reality the servant of all. Therefore we have the necessity for the 'condition', faith, which opens man's eyes and enables him to see that this is God, the servant without a resting-place for his head. Therefore we have danger, risk, anxiety. This is the suffering of God in which the learner's real existence and its achievement must share. God is anxious because the servant-form involves the possibility of being misunderstood! The Moment involves the danger of wrecking man's confidence so that after the Moment he cannot live --- how could he live if it were disclosed to him that he really was as nothing!? So Kierkegaard can write, " . . . how close each moment to misunderstanding".^{*} Kierkegaard's Moment is decisive because it is the precarious, risky, dangerous transition-point between nonbeing and being, Error and Truth, it is the point of re-birth, conversion. Once again we conclude that Kierkegaard's argument for the Moment is rooted in anxiety for its quite decisive occurrence, an anxiety which Kierkegaard believed to be rooted in and a reflection of the anxiety of God for the learner's authentic conversion.

^{*}Fragments, p. 27.

(11) THE MOMENT IS A 'LEAP' --- IN IT GOD'S EXISTENCE IS PRESUPPOSED.

Kierkegaard argues against the validity of the traditional, classical arguments for the existence of God.^{*} For him it is an impossibility to argue for the existence of a person. He rightly perceives that when a man argues for the existence of God, he does so because he is already convinced of that existence. The classical proofs, contends Kierkegaard, assume, presuppose the existence of God. When I begin a discussion by saying, 'I will now prove God's existence thus ...', the 'proof' is no proof at all; by introducing in my opening remark the term 'God' I have 'let the cat out of the bag'; I reveal to my hearers that prior to the 'proof' I am convinced of God's existence. Kierkegaard points out that his master Socrates gave an exposition of the so-called teleological argument for the existence of God. But he did it honestly; he presupposed the truth of God's existence, and then armed with this belief in a purposive God, he searched nature for examples of purpose to support his presupposition. For Kierkegaard therefore, God comes at the beginning of the 'argument', not at the end! He is

^{*}For this eleventh section of our study of Kierkegaard, see the Philosophical Fragments, pps. 33 f., and 46 f.

the premiss, not the conclusion. Nowhere is it more apparent that much recent theological thinking has its roots in Kierkegaard than in his rejection of the possibility of arguing for God's existence from nature or from history. Modern Protestant theology hardly ever attempts to 'prove' God's existence at all. For example, we have already seen over and over again that while Bultmann admits that an examination of human existence affords man a 'notion' of God, this is not genuine knowledge of the living God, which is always dynamic, temporal, and historical.* Someone has written somewhere that human nature, according to Bultmann, just fails to give give knowledge of God, and this is tantamount to holding that man is unable to argue from existence to God. Tillich too, although his thought (as we shall see in our concluding chapter) is so strongly ontological, acknowledges the radical inadequacy of the classical arguments for the existence of God.** The so-called ontological argument, for example, is a description of the actual human situation which brings out the way there is included the awareness of infinity in man's consciousness of finitude. But this procedure, Tillich is at pains to insist, is not a logical proof which ends with the existence of God. Buber, too, pays no tribute to the classical arguments. Examination of human existence yields nothing more than

*See again Bultmann's The question of Natural Revelation.

**Cf. Syst. Theol., I, pps. 228 f.

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a mere sense of the 'Thou', which requires fulfilment and realization in the historical encounters of the everyday world. The realization of the inadequacy of the classical proofs of God's existence does seem to stem from the work of Kierkegaard, partly at least.

Kierkegaard starts from the presupposition of God's existence, and at the point at which this presupposition makes itself most obvious is the Moment, the temporal point of revelation. The Moment is brief, it is the 'now', perhaps only an instantaneous 'now'; it is a 'leap'.^{*} It is a leap between striving to demonstrate God's existence and seeing that existence as there.^{**} This will perhaps let us see more clearly what is really meant by the Kierkegaardian 'leap', which has caused so much bitter controversy ^{on} and account of which Kierkegaard has been accused of irrationalism and obscurantism. Thus Kierkegaard asks : " . . . how does the learner come to realize an understanding with the Paradox ? . . . It comes to pass when the Reason and the Paradox encounter one another happily in the Moment; when the Reason sets itself aside and the Paradox bestows itself".^{***} Now the act

^{*} Fragments, p. 34.

^{**} Op. cit., p. 47.

in which the Reason 'sets itself aside' is absolutely identical with 'the act of letting go', (i.e. the act of letting go hold of a demonstration of the existence of God), through which the actuality of God's existence exhibits itself to the learner. This 'exhibiting of itself' is absolutely identical with the act in 'which the Paradox bestows itself'. It is most interesting that Buber, in the same kind of context, also speaks of this 'letting go' : "In contrast to religion so understood, philosophy is here regarded as the process, reaching from the time when reflection first became independent to its more contemporary crisis, the last stage of which is the letting go of God".³

What does this mean ? Does it mean that Kierkegaard's act of faith, his 'leap', is irrational and unacceptable. Not at all ; it is not irrational in the philosophical, cognitive, sense. To assert this⁴ to forget that Kierkegaard's use of the term Reason is highly polemical and acutely historically conditioned. We have already seen that 'Reason' (in both Kierkegaard's Fragments and Postscript) indicates man's faculty for constructing systems and finding a place for everything in them. This is obviously an anti-

³Buber, Eclipse of God: Studies in the Relation Between Religion and Philosophy, chapter VIII, 'God and the Spirit of Man', = Herberg, pps. 108-113, see p. 108. There is no doubt from the context that the philosophy which 'lets go' of God is the one ~~that~~ which imprisons God within concepts, or within a conceptual image, cf. p. 109.

Hegelian use of Reason, the reason obsessed with the 'system'.^{*} And we have already examined Professor Swenson's definition of the Kierkegaardian 'Reason' as the concrete 'reflectively organised common sense of mankind including as its essential core a sense of life's values. Over against the Paradox, it is the self-assurance and self-assertiveness of man's nature in its totality'. Keeping this in mind, let us now re-examine Kierkegaard's 'leap of faith'.

First, there is 'the act of letting go.' This is the act in which I will to relinquish hold of the faculty obsessed with system-building. It is also the relinquishment of the existing system as the criterion and the vessel of truth. In letting go of the systematic demonstration of that which cannot be demonstrated, and the attitude of mind that lies behind it and produces it, I bring myself into that existential state wherein God can disclose his existence to me. As Kierkegaard says, "When I let the proof go, the existence is there" (Fragments, p. 34); he also says, "As

^{*}See Alexander Dru's Introduction to the shorter version of Kierkegaard's Journals (London, Collins, 1958), p. 22 : "Kierkegaard's insistence on 'the choice' and the 'leap of faith' are so prominent in his work that, in the context of his attack on rationalism and humanism, they are sometimes allowed to suggest a narrow, fanatical, and irrational philosophy of religion. In fact his argument is altogether different. The choice and leap of faith are not counsels of despair nor a 'bet' as in Pascal's argument but a necessary step towards the fusion of thought and existence. Faith and reason are opposed as long as reason is the reason of the rationalist, that is to say isolated from every other faculty in man and consequently divorced from existence. 'In the fantastic medium of abstraction', faith is absurd, because existence itself is absurd. It can only be seen as a paradox, since the language of rationalism is of its nature incapable of grasping and expressing existence. But man is not a rational animal and thought which is not the expression of a fully mature and developed personality in whom intellect, will, and feeling are harmonised, is thought divorced from existence".

long as I keep hold on the proof . . . the existence does not come out, if for no other reason than that I am engaged in proving it . . .
 . ".³⁶ Thus self-assertive system-obsessed reason is actually an enemy of real belief in God. Second, there is the first part of Swenson's definition of the Danish 'Forstanden'. 'To set Reason aside'³⁷ is absolutely identical with the suspension of my already organised common sense with its already formulated sense of values. The more advanced is the 'organization' and the 'formulation' inherent in this, the less room there is obviously for anything new to be imparted;³⁸ the less room there is for the imparting³⁹ of something that hitherto was not included in my consciousness or understanding. Therefore, as Kierkegaard says, when Reason (in this sense) sets itself aside, "The Paradox bestows itself".⁴⁰
 Third, to deal with the second part of Swenson's definition of 'Forstanden'. The 'setting aside of Reason' (which is the indispensable condition of revelation) is absolutely identical with the relinquishment of man's self-assurance and self-assertiveness, which really means repentance of his intellectual and spiritual HUBRIS. For the Moment to come about, man must realize that truth is not

³⁶ Fragments, p. 33.

³⁷ Op. cit., p. 47.

³⁸ The theology of 'impartation' again.

³⁹ Op. cit., p. 47; it is hardly necessary to point to the process of 'impartation' once more.

something eternally possessed by him, not his 'achievement'; to use Pauline language, it is not something which is his 'work' and in the possession of which he can 'boast' himself. The Moment therefore requires breaking with HUBRIS and entering upon humility, which in our present context means the realization that man is, in his intellectual achievement (viewed as the construction of a system^x or Weltanschauung, or as the discovery of immanent truth), as nothing in the sight of God. "The truth then is that the learner owes the Teacher everything . . . that the learner becomes as nothing and yet is not destroyed; that he comes to owe everything to the Teacher and yet retains his confidence . . . that he apprehends the guilt of his Error and yet that his confidence rises victorious in the Truth".^{xxx} One implication of these words is that genuine revelation means humility, and a break with pride and self-assertiveness. Truth, in Kierkegaard's sense, can only be imparted to man as a gift. What we have been here describing links up with the teaching of Jesus on the virtue of humility, on meekness, on childlikeness of heart, and no doubt a full exposition of

^xIn his Dogmatics, Hermann Diem makes the following interesting comment : "In fact, on the basis of his ~~own~~ presuppositions, Kierkegaard would surely have seen that same 'hybris' against which he himself had striven ~~so fiercely~~ now, in Heidegger's existentialist ontology, undertaking the impossible task of constructing a 'system of existence'", (p. 22).

^{xxx}Fragments, p. 24.

Kierkegaard's argument in the Fragments would require to refer to the New Testament passages dealing with these virtues.* In this leap there is something wholly mine, something which I alone can contribute and without which God is unable to act; "this act of letting go . . . is indeed a contribution of mine".** This act, which is wholly human, is the leap; this leap is between two points, and we are now ready to define it in three simple ways. First, it is a leap from the limit of my system-building faculty to that point where I am able to receive a new (existentially speaking) imparted truth incapable of being systematized. Second, the leap is from the limit of my organized and formulated sense of values to that point where I am able to receive an imparted gift for which I am not required to find a prepared place in my system. It is constituted, third, from the limit of my intellectual arrogance, self-assurance, and self-assertiveness, to that point at which I repent of my intellectual HUBRIS and am humble enough to receive the truth as a gift from the hand of God. Without the leap there is no Moment, and without my part which really is my part, there can be no leap.

*In Mimesis, (Princeton 1953), a book much admired and cited by Bultmann, Erich Auerbach makes this point : " ... Holy Scripture favors those whose hearts are simple and filled with faith; that such a heart is a prerequisite to 'sharing' in it, for sharing and not a purely rational understanding is what it seeks to offer as Augustine puts it in the Confessions, that one must read it as a child would . . .", (p. 155).

**Fragments, p. 34.

The thought of Kierkegaard at this point is of course closely paralleled by that of Bultmann and Buber. In the thought of Bultmann, we saw that man must make a breach with the cares and concerns and plans of everyday life in order that he may be ready for the Moment. Man must see that his longing for the possession of a Weltanschauung is inauthentic and is a stumbling-block to the occurrence of the 'moment'. The will to make such a breach, is, of course, a mark of authentic man's dialectical relationship to the world. In the thought of Buber we have found the demand being reiterated that man, sunk in the means and ends and concerns of the world of It must resolve or will to make such a breach, and step into relationship with the unreliable reality which approaches him in the 'moment' and which then vanishes again. For the occurrence of the 'moment', man must break with that conception of knowledge which is current in the scientific and technological sphere of It. Thus the Moment requires the leap, and this leap is man's act, and his alone : " . . . this act of letting go is surely also something; it is indeed a contribution of mine. Must not this also be taken into account, this little moment, brief as it may be --- it need not be long, for it is a 'leap'. However brief this moment, if only an instantaneous now, this 'now' must also be included in the reckoning".*

theology of Kierkegaard, does not hold, as do certain theologies

*Fragments, p. 34.

(12) A CHANGE IN THE IMMUTABILITY OF THE PAST IS BROUGHT ABOUT IN
THE MOMENT.

We have seen throughout this study that the Moment is indispensable in that there can be no human 'progress' or 'advance' without it. Without it, man cannot move from Error to Truth, nonbeing to being, bondage to liberty. Without the Moment, Error continues as Error, nonbeing as nonbeing, in the inexorable flux of succeeding instants. This flux is comprised of the past into the future via the present, without any decisive, interrupting, breach. From this point of view, the whole argument of the Fragments points to the Moment as a decisive breach in the sway of causality within human existence. We have already seen in Bultmann that the 'moment' is one of decision, relating the past authentically to the future in the present; the 'moment' thus dislocates the causal effect of the past in man's present, and offers to him the possibility of a new and open future. In Buber we saw that the sphere of 'It' was characterized by the 'unlimited sway of causality'. But the reality into which man is invited in the 'moment' of meeting is one that does not know this sway of causality and one in which man is delivered from its power, and enabled to become a real person in accordance with his own decision. It is rather hard not to reach the conclusion that the thought of Kierkegaard has anticipated many of these views in more modern thought, and that here again we come across the roots of much modern theology and philosophy.

Kierkegaard is anxious to invalidate the thought that the past and its events possess ~~any~~ necessity.* The immutability of the past consists only in that that a certain event has happened, and that, of course, cannot be altered. That is the limit to the definition of necessity. But this is quite different from asserting that a past event had to happen in the way that it did; as Kierkegaard says, ^{from} the thought that " . . . the past's possible 'how' could not have been realized in a different manner".* Kierkegaard is anxious because if the past is necessary, then so is every event in it, and this comes to include all events of the present and the future. That is, past, present, and future would come to comprise a solid and irresistible stream of time, without breach or interruption. "If the past had become necessary it would not be possible to infer the opposite about the future, but it would rather follow that the future was also necessary. . . If necessity could gain a foothold at a single point, there would no longer ~~be~~ any distinguishing between the past and the future".* If a generation held such a view of the past it would be a prophesying or predicting generation.** Such prophesying would consist in following the causal line from the past through the present into the future; the study of necessity

* Fragments, pps. 63 f.

** Op. cit., pps. 63-4; we remember that Buber, in the same sort of context argues against 'prediction'.

would suggest hypotheses and causal laws, analogous to the laws of the natural sciences; the result would be what Bultmann has called historicism, or history understood in analogy with nature. But according to Kierkegaard, our relation to past events is of quite a different order. The value of the study of the past is that it reveals to us that the past has come into being through changes. That is, it reveals to us that what we call immutability has been brought about by a past change, and if this is so, it is clear that change is not excluded from the temporal process. The past has been brought into being by 'becoming' and by this Kierkegaard means " . . . a change in actuality brought about by freedom".^x Our relationship to the past therefore involves a search for freedom rather than for necessity. We (and the historian) should therefore examine past events in order to discover in them the freedom which allowed them to enter actuality. In the flux of instants, in past, present, and future, " . . . all change is excluded . . . only by being excluded in every moment".^{xx} The positive way of putting this is to say that change is included within the temporal process in the moment. Without the Moment we have man as animal and history as brute existence. Without it we would have the It-sphere's

^xOp. cit., p. 64.

^{xx}Op. cit., p. 63.

'unlimited sway of causality', or Bultmann's historicism. But the Moment offers itself as a radical dislocation in that process by which man would otherwise be constituted by his past through his present into his future. Without the Moment, man would have no history. Thus the Moment is yet another dimension of Kierkegaard's intense anxiety that man's real, genuine self should stand out firmly from nonbeing, out of that placid sea of sameness and anonymity which Kierkegaard detested above all else.*

*The view that history as ⁹study is most valuable because it yields evidence in the past of free becoming through human decision in face of causal forces, finds striking expression in Miss Barbara Ward's Faith and Freedom : A Study of Western Society, (London 1954). The book is a study of the history of the West in which Miss Ward illustrates significant periods of spiritual and cultural advance, in spite of determining forces; the study of history indicates that freedom is not an illusion, and that necessity has not always the last say; she assesses the contribution to this of the great world-religions, amongst which she has many interesting comments to make on Judaism; she finds freedom in the Life of Christ in the Gospels. If a scholar convinced of the truth of 'historicism' were to search past history for economic, geographical, climatic causal factors, he would find many instances of free and utterly unexpected becoming that would cast serious dubiety on the truth of his thesis. See Faith and Freedom, pps. 5, 7-8, 8-9, 11, 21, 22, 23, 27, 33-5, 44, 56. Miss Ward has not failed in her task of showing that historical investigation demonstrates that what 'happened' in the past 'came into being', and by doing so proved that it did not always do so by necessity, but also by freedom.

(13) IMMEDIATE CONTEMPORANEITY WITH CHRIST IS NO ADVANTAGE : TO
ENCOUNTER HIM THE MOMENT IS REQUIRED.*

We have actually already touched on Kierkegaard's argument here, when in chapter I we considered the meaning Bultmann gives to the concept EPHAPAX. We noted then that Kierkegaard holds that even an immediate contemporary of Christ believed only because God gave a Moment in which there was gifted the condition, faith, by which the witness was able to perceive God in the servant-form. The witness's confession of faith could serve only as an occasion for our contemporary belief, no more. The only importance that Kierkegaard could ascribe to the apostolic witnesses to Christ is that their testimony is the first in a series of Moments the common element in which is the condition, faith, by means of which belief becomes a possibility; there is no possibility of our being able to believe now by means of the apostolic testimony alone. It does seem that for Kierkegaard those who believe in Christ today are in exactly the same condition as his contemporary believers. In the Moment, all

*For this thirteenth section of our study, see especially Fragments, pps. 56 f.

believers are 'contemporaries' with Christ possessing an identical status. We have already linked these Kierkegaardian views with Bultmann's views on the 'moment'; indeed, it is not going too far to say that Bultmann's views on contemporaneity are identical with Kierkegaard's. Thus Bultmann can write : " . . . although the advent of Christ is an historical event which happened 'once'^{XX} in the past, it is, at the same time, an eternal event which occurs again and again^{XX} in the soul of any Christian in whose soul Christ is born, suffers, dies, and is raised up to eternal life.^{XXXX} In his faith the Christian is a contemporary of Christ, and time and the world's history are overcome".^{XXXXX} We must not underestimate the importance of such Bultmannian and Kierkegaardian views for Christ-ian theology as a whole. Traces of them can be found on almost every page of this thesis, and we shall have to re-assess them finally in our conclusions. But there is one criticism of them which we have so far left unmentioned, and to it we now turn. It is to be found in Oscar Cullmann's important Christ and Time,^{XXXXXX} especially in the 4th. section of Part II, 'The Present Stage of Redemptive History and Its Relation to the Christ-event at the Mid-Point'. There we find criticisms of Kierkegaard's notion of contemporaneity. The kernel of Cullmann's criticism is that

^{XX}EPHAPAX.

^{XX}i.e., in 'moment' after 'moment'.

^{XXXX}In our conclusions we shall see another significance in such a Bultmannian passage, in transferring the 'particularity' of the events of Christ's life to the personal life of the Christian.

^{XXXXX}Rudolf Bultmann, History and Eschatology, p. 153.

^{XXXXXX}London 1951.

" . . . the emphasis on our being 'contemporaneous' with that event of the past, a position so dear to the heart of Kierkegaard, must not lead us to use this position to abolish the time character of the redemptive process".^{xx} For Cullmann, it is not competent for the believer to "leap over the periods of time".^{xxx} Cullmann comes closer to the core of ^{his} criticism when he writes : " . . . Kierkegaard, with his concept of 'contemporaneity', mistakes the significance of the present for redemptive history. According to him, faith transfers us back into the time of the incarnation; it makes us contemporaries of the apostles. In this view it is correct that faith permits us actually to survey the entire redemptive line and share in its fruits, as we have explained in the chapter concerning the divine Lordship over time. But the concept of contemporaneity presupposes that basically time as redemptive time has already come to a standstill with Jesus Christ; hence we can only go back to him in order to enter the realm of salvation. But is this the conception of Primitive Christianity ? . . . The redemptive history continues; CHRIST SITS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, now, today".^{xxxx} He repeats much the same thing in different words : " . . . we . . . emphasise . . in contrast

^{xx} Cullmann, Christ and Time, p. 53, n. E.T.

^{xxx} Op. cit., p. 76.

^{xxxx} Op. cit., p. 146.

to the extreme conclusion of Protestantism, as it has been drawn, for example, by Kierkegaard --- that the return to the Christ-event at the mid-point must not so mislead us that we fail to recognize that the post-Easter present signifies a continuance in time of the redemptive process".^{*} Again Cullmann attacks Kierkegaard's notion of contemporaneity : " . . . All talk concerning a 'contemporaneity' which ~~the~~ faith should establish with the incarnate Jesus lacks support in the writings of the New Testament. Kierkegaard, who has emphasised most strongly this contemporaneity, thereby implicitly ~~destroys~~ destroys the redemptive line, inasmuch as he really abstracts the present from it. He emphasises the necessity of an 'overleaping', because otherwise, as our distance in time from Christ's death continues to increase, we would also be removed ever farther from this event's essential meaning, that is, its significance for salvation. But he thereby overlooks the fact that, according to the New Testament faith, Christ now rules invisibly over heaven and earth, and works visibly in and through the Church; his function in every relation, including his high-priestly work, is now continuing, in that he intercedes for us with the Father and brings all our prayers before him (John 14:14 f.)".^{**} Cullmann again attacks

Kierkegaard's disregard for the Church's present : " . . . In

^{*}Op. cit., pps. 146-7.

^{**}Op. cit., p. 168.

Kierkegaard the time from the present to the Christ-event at the mid-point is, so to speak, overleaped in a backward direction In Kierkegaard the peculiar significance of the present for redemptive is undervalued".^{*} Cullmann again emphasises the importance of the present for redemption over against Kierkegaard's emphasis on return to the past : " . . . in opposition to a cramped Protestantism we have emphasised that the redemptive history has been advancing continuously ever since the ascension of Christ, and that our present period has its particular meaning for redemptive history".^{**}

At the outset, there does seem to be something in what Cullmann says about Kierkegaard's theology. There does seem to be an apparent lack in his work of a present ecclesiastical background, and to those of us who have come to Christianity through the Church it may seem that Kierkegaard's thought is deficient in its almost complete lack of reference to the Church's present. Mr. H.J. Blackham has these interesting words about Kierkegaard : "Kierkegaard's argument deals with the object of Christian faith and the manner of apprehending it. That a man born and

^{*}Op. cit., p. 169.

^{**}Op. cit., p. 174.

living in history says that he is God and dies in humiliation plunges into a dilemma those who would build their lives on him and his word. Nothing has happened since to lighten by one scruple the strain on belief. The historical success of Christianity is worthless evidence. The present generation is exactly in the position of the contemporaries of Christ who witnessed his humiliation on the cross. Faith today, unless it is faith in the faith of the Apostles, is not other than their faith in the man who makes the most absurd of claims. The truth of this claim cannot in the nature of the case be made objectively certain, or even investigated : on the contrary, the absolute discontinuity between the human and the divine which inheres in the conception of God makes it unthinkable, so that it cannot by any human mind be recognized as true, cannot be entertained as a possibility".^x We ought not fail to recognize that Kierkegaard's thought focuses upon a geometrical point which is the point

^xSix Existentialist Thinkers, p. 4. Although we shall argue that Cullmann's criticisms of contemporaneity do not count against Kierkegaard in any radical sense, it is easy to see how people like Cullmann reach such criticisms. There is a trace of truth in Cullmann's dislike of Kierkegaard's undervaluing of the present in so far, as we have already pointed out, Kierkegaard's Moment is almost purely temporal, and not historical; in Kierkegaard's Moment man's present, with its concrete relations and problems and questions, does not seem to be involved. 'Contemporaneity with the apostles', in Kierkegaard's sense, almost involves a mystical procedure! But Cullmann's criticisms of 'contemporaneity' do not count at all against Bultmann, because Bultmann is always crystal clear that to the contemporaneous Christ whom we encounter in the 'moment' we bring our concrete historical present existence, and allow it to **inter-**act with him and his word.

of transition between non-Christianity and Christianity, upon the problem (which dominates both the Fragments and the Postscript) of becoming a Christian.³² Kierkegaard was a Christian 'apologist' (in the classical and correct meaning of the term). Thus we see that the standpoint of Kierkegaard was radically different from that of Cullmann, who takes his stand squarely within the Christian Church and her Tradition.³³ He seems to presuppose the truth of the dogmas of the Church, including, for instance, the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture, a presupposition which is bound to be shared by many (but not all) of his readers. In a sense therefore it is natural for his conclusions to be quite different from those of Kierkegaard, whose presupposition is undoubtedly that his readers are passionately concerned to find a truth by which they can live. To put the same thing in a different way, Cullmann is quite clear that the perceptions of which he writes (e.g. the Lordship of Christ over heaven and earth) are perceived by faith; but Kierkegaard, and it is vital to grasp this, takes his stand with the 'learner' without faith, and traces, with him and for him, the transition into faith, via the Moment. Kierkegaard, as a theologian, takes as his standpoint that tense and risky boundary-line between faith and unbelief,

³²We shall argue in our conclusions that the 'problem of becoming a Christian' is the starting point of the theologies of both Bultmann and Kierkegaard, and that whoever does not appreciate this, fails to understand both theologies.

³³We shall argue in the conclusions that many pseudo-theological statements are really ecclesiastical 'readings-back' from the experience of Christians.

nonbeing and being, Error and Truth. Things therefore which are obvious for Cullmann and his fellow-churchmen are not at all so obvious for Kierkegaard and the learner with whom Kierkegaard identifies himself.

We must note that whatever value is ultimately ascribed to Cullmann's criticism of Kierkegaard, it cannot possibly be a radical criticism. This is because Cullmann realizes that the 'present age', the 'intermediate period', draws its significance from the past. So in the knowledge of the present Jesus (for example in community phenomena like the Sacraments), " ... we are constantly referred back to the unique deed at the mid-point".^{*} Now it is precisely with this 'unique deed at the mid-point', contemporaneity with Jesus, that Kierkegaard's Moment is concerned. And what is this referring back but an 'overleaping of time in a backward direction' to which Cullmann elsewhere takes so much exception? When Cullmann says that " ... the ecclesiastical 'tradition' may not be regarded as of equal importance with that which then took place at the mid-point"^{*}, Kierkegaard simply goes further and says that God's deed at the mid-point completely over-

^{*}Christ and Time, p. 168.

overshadows / in significance what has happened since ecclesiastically. So much so, that we must come to terms with it existentially first of all. To use Tillich's terminology, the deed at the mid-point is our 'ultimate concern'.

To be fair to Cullmann, he does recognize the harm done by the Catholic Church in absolutizing the ecclesiastical period in history and writes of it : "The centre is neither the present nor the future, but rather the earthly work of Christ".^x Kierkegaard concerns himself with this centre in the past, and tries to show its vast significance for man's present. Of the whole argument of Christ and Time Cullmann writes : "The necessity, which we have indicated in this work, of constant orientation to the unique, once-for-all event of the mid-point is indeed granted throughout".^{xx} Again we must be permitted to suggest that this constant orientation towards the past in the present (as posited by Cullmann) does imply in some sense an 'overleaping of time backwards' which Cullmann finds so objectionable in Kierkegaard's theology. It is for reasons like these that I maintain that whatever value is ascribed ultimately to Cullmann's criticisms of Kierkegaard's 'contemporaneity', his criticisms cannot be radical ones.

^xOp. cit., p. 168.

^{xx}Op. cit., p. 169.

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It is evident from Christ and Time that the significance of the intermediate period in history is derived from the significance of the Church, the Christian community. The Church is historically significant for the following reasons.* The Church is the spatial centre of Christ's Lordship. The Church is the sphere of the activity of the Holy Spirit, present as 'earnest', 'first-fruits'. The Church is God's highest gift of salvation in the intermediate period. (Here, we hope that Cullmann has in mind the Church as an intermediary agency, as a proclaimer of the KERYGMA). The Church is the place where the Eucharist (the greatest of God's 'eschatological miracles') is celebrated, in which Christ is present, pointing towards both past and future. The missionary proclamation of the Church, rooted in the mid-point in the past, gains its meaning from Christ's present Lordship, and is significant because 'it hastens history towards its end', which will end when all have had an opportunity to hear the Gospel. The Church dominates, then, the intermediate period, and it is this, says Cullmann, that Kierkegaard ignores by his emphasis on contemporaneity, in which this 'present age', this 'intermediate period', is overleaped in time.

*Op. cit., pps. 154-8.

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This criticism is important because it raises the whole question of Kierkegaard's relationship to the Church, and of the way in which the Church figures in his writings. To that we now turn. We must note that each 'mark' or 'note' of the Church, for Kierkegaard, refers to the mid-point deed, the Christ-event. For him, none of these 'marks' " . . . lightens by one scruple the strain on belief" (Blackham). "The historical success of Christianity", says Blackham, writing of Kierkegaard's philosophy, "is worthless evidence".^{*} That means that the divine 'marks' themselves are not objectively obvious to historical research qua historical research^{**}; it also means that they are related to the Christ-event in depending upon it for their validity, and not vice-versa. What the believer, or more strictly speaking, the learner, concerns himself with is therefore the Christ-event, which is Kierkegaard's dominant emphasis. The 'marks' of the Church are marks only for faith, and this faith is primarily and crucially faith in God's deed at the mid-point. These marks could not possibly prove the truth of Christianity. They are all question-begging, and all raise the crucial question as to the identity and significance of Jesus of Nazareth, enshrined at the heart of each of them. Kierkegaard himself sums

^{*}Blackham, Op. cit., p. 4.

^{**}We have argued in chapter I against Tillich, Owen, and Macquarrie, that the act of God is not open to the examination of the objective historian independent of his subjective existential decision.

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this up neatly when he writes : "If this fact came into the world as the Absolute Paradox, nothing that happens subsequently can avail to change this. The consequences will in all eternity remain the consequences of a paradox, and hence in an ultimate view will be precisely as improbable as the Paradox itself; unless it is to be supposed that the consequences, which as such are derivative, have retroactive power to transform the Paradox, which would be about as reasonable to suppose that a son had retroactive power to transform his own father. Even if the consequences be conceived in a purely logical relation to their cause, and hence under the form of immutability, it still remains true that they can be conceived only as identical and homogeneous with their cause; least of all will they have a transforming power. To have the consequences as a datum is then precisely as dubious an advantage as to have an immediate certainty; whoever takes the consequences immediately to his credit is deceived, precisely as one who takes the immediate certainty for faith".* This demonstrates what is meant when we said that the marks of the Church are derivative from the deed at the mid-point, and depend on it for their validity.

It also seems certain that Kierkegaard would have said that the 'marks' of the Church, spread throughout the whole

*Philosophical Fragments, pps. 79-80.

world (we can have a clear idea of what this means from Professor Latourette's books), have the dubious advantage in giving the impression that the Church and what it is based upon is a quite natural phenomenon. The Church becomes absorbed into the social and political and cultural structures; men become used to it there; they come to feel that there is nothing more natural and logical that the Church should be there! This is probably what Kierkegaard means when he speaks of the 'naturalization' of the Christian fact.* Now when we read Christ and Time, it is hard not to conclude that Cullmann implies that the existence of the world-wide Christian community adds weight to the Christian Gospel. Kierkegaard would insist that this process of naturalization is invalid, as he would of the argument that Christianity is very probable because of the world-wide existence and spread of the Church over twenty centuries. Unless we grasp that Kierkegaard holds that the marks of the Church (what he calls the 'consequences') derive from the absurd premiss of the Incarnation, we fail completely to grasp his meaning.

Kierkegaard is clear how the world-wide spread of

* Fragments, pps. 80 f.

Christianity has come to pass --- it has done so by 'a succession of steps'.^{*} Each step consists in coming into a direct relationship with the Christ-event (the Paradox). In the transmission of Christianity, the nature of ecclesiastical phenomena, of the 'consequences', must be made clear : " . . . consequences founded on a paradox are humanly speaking built over a yawning chasm, and their total content, which can be transmitted to the individual only with the express understanding that they rest upon a paradox, are not to be appropriated as a settled estate, for their entire value trembles in the balance".^{***} In so far as Cullmann's argument in Christ and Time imply a 'naturalization' of the Church's KERYGMA, then the above is clearly Kierkegaard's reply to such a description of Church and KERYGMA.

Further, Cullmann perceives the great difficulties inherent in arguing that the existence of the Church does anything to 'prove' the truth or probability of Christianity, and in holding that the Church really is 'God's greatest gift of salvation'.^{***} "Just as the entire redemptive history can only be believed but not proved, so above all the Church also can only be believed, and it really takes a quite special courage of faith to see the centre of

^{*}Op. cit., p. 82.

^{***}Op. cit., p. 82 ; within the context of this thesis, we could apply these same words to a Christian Weltanschauung or to a propositional theology, which cannot be transmitted without reference to the concrete 'moment' or 'moments' from which they are derived.

^{***}See Christ and Time, p. 155.

the present Lordship of Christ in this Church which from its very beginning is so imperfect and all too human".* Cullmann cites 'ecclesiastical conflicts' (beginning in Apostolic times), and 'murmurings' of members against each other (sometimes for quite wordly reasons) as further difficulties in the way of the Church being believed to be God's highest gift of salvation in the present age.** Against these, Cullmann cites 'eschatological miracles', glossolalia, healings, and such like, but this only serves to show that the Church's history, from the point of the view of the KERYGMA, is fragmentary and ambiguous, and requires decision for identification with it. Ecclesiastical history clearly shows that scandals are more or less apparent in different periods.*** And in Kierkegaard's time ecclesiastical scandals of a theological type seem to have been so apparent that to posit that Church as the ground of divine revelation was a dangerous, not to say ludicrous, procedure. Kierkegaard felt moved to bring this fact to light in a way that can only be described as a corrective. "Christianity does not exist", (Walter Lowrie, Kierkegaard, Oxford 1938, p. 525). "Parsons canonize bourgeois mediocrity", (Kierkegaard, Journals, transl. Dru,

*Op. cit., p. 155; as we shall see shortly, Kierkegaard could say the same thing, except much more strongly and satirically. We shall argue in our conclusions (in 'The Problem of Church and Community') that a decision for the Church is just as necessary and as subjective as a decision for the KERYGMA itself.

**It is possible to go much further than Cullmann does in his criticisms of the Church. To read those periods in ecclesiastical history when the Church persecuted, say, witchcraft, is to come to the conclusion that periods in the Church's history shows the (visible) Church to have been demonic and diabolical.

***'I could stand Christ, did he not come dragging His leprous Bride the Church with Him' - Swinburne (1837-1909).

Oxford 1938, 1134). "Official Christianity is both aesthetically and intellectually ludicrous and indecent, a scandal in the Christian sense".* Thus the Church at a given period may hinder rather than help the achievement of belief, which is what Cullmann supposes it does. Thus Kierkegaard avowed that he "came out polemically against his age".~~xxx~~ If the Danish Lutheran Church of Kierkegaard's day was as bad as he tells us, then this is adequate enough explanation of that 'lack' in his thought of which Cullmann complains. To state, with Cullmann, that the Church is God's highest gift of salvation in the present, would have been a calamitous statement for Kierkegaard to make. Kierkegaard, like every other theologian, must be interpreted against his historical background.

What was the exact relationship between Kierkegaard and the Church? Kierkegaard grew out of the background of ecclesiastical Christianity and without it Kierkegaard would perhaps not have developed as he did. "As a child I was strictly and austere brought up in Christianity --- a child crazily travestied as a melancholy old man".~~xxxx~~ As a child Kierkegaard got to know the official contemporary Christianity from his father, whose spiritual adviser

*Walter Lowrie, A Short Life of Kierkegaard, Oxford 1943, p. 246.

~~xxx~~ Journals, p. 588; i.e. against his ecclesiastical as well as his philosophical age.

~~xxxx~~ Walter Lowrie, Kierkegaard, p. 48.

was Bishop Mynster. Adulthood did not mean for him a break with the Church and its ordinances. Writing of his 1838 'conversion', Channing-Pearce says : "It is to be noted that for him return to God also implied return to his Church; in July he went to public confession and received holy communion".^{xx} Lowrie tells us that "Kierkegaard was a regular churchgoer".^{xxx} Kierkegaard was a 'high churchman' in that he " . . . holds to the custom of infant baptism . . . and he expresses his antipathy to sectarian movements".^{xxxx} Even his death-bed act of refusing Communion from an official of the Church demonstrates that he is still related to the Church. There is truth in what Channing Pearce says of him : that Kierkegaard's reconception of what he believed to be a real Christianity " . . . led him to a profound religious realism which could only reject much of the religion of his time as unreal, and to what may be termed an authentic Christianity of the spirit".^{xxxxx} It does seem as though the 'lack' of which Cullmann complains is not so much an unconscious lack as a positive rejection, because of the spiritual condition of the Church of Kierkegaard's day, and that his work can legitimately be regarded as an attempt to bring the existing Church into line with

^{xx} Soren Kierkegaard: A Study, p. 19.

^{xxx} Concluding Unscientific Postscript, note on p. 569, cf. p. 418.

^{xxxx} Walter Lowrie, in a note on p. 519 of the Postscript, cf. p. 42.

^{xxxxx} Melville Channing-Pearce, op. cit., p. 43.

the somewhat ideal Church described by Cullmann in Christ and Time. Channing-Pearce further writes of the Church's effect on Kierkegaard: "His early training in Christianity, his father's influence and the force of his own conversion in 1838 had rooted within him a fundamental faith in God and the Christian vision of life which no storm could destroy. His soul, like that of the modern Western world, was too deeply christianized to permit of any pre- or sub-Christian faith. He might rebel against the form of Christianity which he encountered; he might flirt with infidelity as a gesture of defiance; but he could not really escape from the Christian pattern of life and thought".^{*} Thus Kierkegaard's Christian upbringing and ecclesiastical background do seem indispensable to his development.

It seems to me that the main fault of the ecclesiologist is (and Cullmann is not free of it either), that the Church which really does influence the 'man in the street', the Church which really mediates redemption to us, is not some ideal Church described in Ephesians or in the book of Revelation, not a Church that 'used to be' or that 'will be', not the Church of ^{the} Apostolic Age or of the sub-Apostolic Age, but the Church, so to speak, 'round the corner',

^{*}Op. cit., p. 44.

the Church that we know and see and that confronts us amongst the institutions of society. Otherwise the term 'present age' becomes meaningless. In ecclesiastical history we are continually finding ecclesiastics overleaping time in a backward direction.* And this overleaping is done so that the present ecclesiastical position is judged by the Church of a former age; the modern Roman Church continually returns to the mediaeval Church as example and criterion; Newman and the Tractarians returned to the Church of the Apostolic Fathers and of the Caroline divines in order to judge and reform the early XIXth. century Church of England; the Reformers returned to the Church of New Testament times in order to judge and criticise the late Latin Church. Kierkegaard but carries out the same procedure radically. And by returning to the Christ-Moment as criterion, Kierkegaard finds one absolutely free from sinfulness and distortion. The Church that Kierkegaard knew was one that he considered hindered rather than helped the KERYGMA. The exact offence of which Kierkegaard believed that Church to be guilty was that it had approximated itself and its KERYGMA to the contemporary world.

*This 'overleaping' (which displeases Cullmann) is an interesting process. There is a process described by Tillich which is not wholly unlike it in intention. Tillich deals with critical mysticism: "Mysticism has criticised the demoniacally distorted sacramental-priestly substance by devaluing every medium of revelation and by trying to unite the soul directly with the ground of being, to make it enter the mystery of existence without the help of a finite medium. Revelation occurs in the depths of the soul; the objective side is accidental. The impact of the anti-demonic fight of mysticism on large sections of the people has been and still is, tremendous", (Syst. Theol., I, p. 156). The differences are obvious, but the similarities are interesting.

To use Cullmann's language in Christ and Time, it had made the 'intermediate era' so dominant that it had forgotten the deed at the 'mid-point'.^{*k} The Danish Established Church of Kierkegaard's day (attacked by Kierkegaard in Der Augenblick) had forgotten the supreme and normative position of the Christ-Moment. In his book Kierkegaard, Dr. Walter Lowrie has stated that Kierkegaard "remained a conservative to the end of his days".^{***} One meaning of this is that he preached a return, a reversion, an 'overleaping' to that unique Moment which initiated Christianity, and beside which the contemporary dogma of the Church paled into insignificance. We must conclude therefore that Cullmann's criticisms of Kierkegaard's position, (that God discloses himself in a Moment of time so that in a sense we become contemporaries of Christ), are not so serious as they at first seem, and that they are based upon an interpretation of his works apart from their historical and ecclesiastical background.

There are two other important points that must be examined before we leave our consideration of Cullmann's Christ and Time. The first is this : Cullmann's criticisms imply that Kierkegaard's Moment means a complete overleaping of time to the Christ-

^{*k}This is a fault with which Cullmann has charged the Church of Rome.

^{***}p. 91.

event without any reference whatsoever to what has happened in the 'Heilsgeschichte' since. This is in fact not so. Kierkegaard has pointed out that the conversion of a past believer may serve as an occasion for the conversion of someone in the present : "The successor believes BY MEANS OF (this expresses the occasional) the testimony of the contemporary, and IN VIRTUE OF the condition he himself receives from God. --- The testimony of the contemporary provides an occasion for the successor, just as the immediate contemporaneity provides an occasion for the contemporary".* Kierkegaard does not of course identify the past believer with the Church of any period, but these words show clearly that he was not blind to the potential significance of ecclesiastical phenomena. They could be used as the foundation of a doctrine of the Church's mediatorship, but this aspect of Kierkegaardian thought Cullmann seems to ignore.

The second point to be considered is the validity of the 'time-line' of Christ and Time itself. It is hard to discover from Cullmann's book the exact significance he ascribes to the intermediate period, the present age, but it seems not unfair to conclude that Cullmann gives the impression that the redemptive-line represents some continuous advance or 'progress', so that the situation

* Fragments, pps. 87-88.

faced by the potential Christian disciple today is quite different from that which faced Jesus' contemporaries, (and, we might add, more hopeful). It is I think for this reason that Cullmann accuses Kierkegaard of not seeing that with the Ascension time did not stop. Cullmann is fond of the term 'continuous advance'; "In opposition to a cramped Protestantism we have emphasised that the redemptive history has been advancing continuously ever since the Ascension of Christ".³² " . . . The post-Easter present signifies a continuance in time of the redemptive process . . . ".³³ This language seems to me dangerous in so far as it may suggest that 'history' implies progress along a line, inevitably and inexorably; if so, then Cullmann would leave himself open to the objections brought against Herbert Spencer and his disciples, as to objections from the New Testament itself, which does not at all regard history as a clearly defined line of progress or advance on the earthly level. It may also be argued that there are periods in ecclesiastical history which represent regress rather than progress. For reasons like these, it seems far from certain that redemptive history appears as a continuous line of advance since Christ's Ascension. It is of course perfectly true that each period of history has its own significance for God, the Lord of Time, who, transcending the historical process,

³² Christ and Time, p. 174.

³³ Op. cit., pps. 146-7.

can see a pattern in the course of the centuries. But we are only men, and these things, it seems, are concealed from us. For us, immersed in the historical process, history has sometimes the character of ambiguity^x and sometimes of fragmentariness. The notion that history is from our standpoint fragmentary is to be found in Dr. John McIntyre's book to which we ~~have~~ already referred.^{xxx}

McIntyre writes : " . . . history is unitary for God and fragmentary for us, except in so far as God, through His Revelation of Himself and of His purposes, makes known to us in some measure its unitariness. I should prefer to say, however, that for God, while history is unitary, it is not unified . . . there are certain things within history, irrationalities and evils, which cannot be included in some comprehensive system in which they lose their essential character. They persist even in a universe where God is sovereign, and they will persist until the Last Judgement".^{xxx} This position leads McIntyre to criticise Cullmann's Christ and Time radically. Thus he writes : "It is the reality of this fragmentariness of history which would lead me to question the continuity of the 'redemption-line' which Cullmann traces through history. Since the Bible would

^xThe notion that history is for our interpretation highly ambiguous is to be found in Bultmann's volume of essays. Thus Bultmann writes: "In short, every phenomenon of history is ambiguous, and none reveals God's will in itself; and now more than ever EVERY HISTORICAL PHENOMENON is ambiguous . . . THE MESSAGE OF HISTORY IS OBSCURE . . . and there is a risk if we pay heed to it . . . MAN IN THE FACE OF GOD is a SINNER . . . AND HIS HISTORY IS A HISTORY OF SINFUL MEN, and therefore in actual fact enshrouds God in a veil", Bultmann, Essays, pps. 105-6.

^{xxx}The Christian Doctrine of History.

^{xxx}Op. cit., p. 42.

appear to know nothing of the continuity of which Cullmann speaks it would be interesting to learn whence he derived the notion. It would be, to say the least, embarrassing, if after all, the origin of this idea of continuity were Greek. We have not only Aristotle's explicit statement that 'time is a CONTINUOUS flux' (Physics, IV, xi, 219b), but also the whole interest of the pre-Socratics in the nature of infinity, which is the same problem as that of continuous series.^x It may be simply that Cullmann has unwittingly accepted an evolutionary type of theory concerning the nature of history and transcribed it into his own terms of the redemptive time-line. This suggestion would be confirmed by his otherwise un-Biblical and incomprehensible statement that the redemptive time-line is UPWARD SLOPING. But the Hebrew mind and the Christian mind (even when it is Hellenistically inclined) within the limits of Old and New Testament thought have shown no concern about the problems of philosophy and physics connected with infinity and continuity; whereas the introduction of evolutionary concepts into the interpretation of the Biblical view of time and history is the grossest anachronism and immediately invalidates any theory which commits this sort of error".^{xx}

^xIn a note on p. 22, McIntyre again ascribes Cullmann's notion of time to Aristotle. "The continuity of the time-series is not a Biblical notion --- for time is the countable thing that we are counting".

^{xx}Op. cit., pps. 42-3.

We conclude then that Cullmann's criticisms of Kierkegaard's notion of a Moment of 'contemporaneity' depend, in the last analysis, on the integrity of the continuous redemptive time-line of history (which introduces 'progress' in such a way that the state of affairs which faced the actual contemporaries of Jesus is now essentially altered), and that the time-line notion of Christ and Time is of very doubtful validity.

CHARLES RILEY

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CHAPTER FIVE

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INTRODUCTION : THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF PARTICULARITY AND THE
HISTORICITY OF HUMAN EXISTENCE

In the introductory chapter we raised and ponder-
ed the question, 'What is the meaning of history ?', and interpreted
it finally as meaning 'What is the essentially historical ?',
'What is the nature of history ?', 'what is the essence of history
and the 'historical' ?'. We discovered that if there is a specific
ly Christian doctrine of history, if Christianity has something
distinctive and unique to contribute to the discussion, it must be
something like this; that within the context of the time-process,
there are certain quite definite, concrete, times and events in which
'meaning' is imparted to man. The 'events' and 'times' of the
biblical revelation (culminating in the life and career of Christ)
~~are~~ ^{are} the basis of this doctrine. We may call this doctrine the
doctrine (and also, the scandal) of particularity. This scandal
of particularity with which the life of Christ confronts man is
transferred to man's own personal life. Because within the total
salvation-history there occurred (for faith) certain events and a
certain concrete life, which shed meaning on the rest, it must
follow that within the total personal life, there is the possibility
of certain events and times which offer meaning to that personal

life as a whole.^{3E} The general meaning of the Kerygma for man is that it proclaims that man must attain to authentic existence in and through quite concrete and particular events and encounters and 'moments' within the context of space and time. To "preach the Bible" and to "preach Christ" is inescapably and simultaneously to preach historic particularity. We may call this doctrine the doctrine of the particularity of times, 'moments', events, and encounters.

Thus we see that the 'doctrine of the moment', the basic concern of this thesis, is not merely or even mainly an aspect or implication of modern existentialist philosophy, nor the discovery or formulation of any individual philosopher. The doctrine is a logical and necessary consequence of the essential historicity of biblical revelation in general, and of the doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in particular. The life, death, and resurrection of Christ reveal the cruciality of certain spacial-temporal events in a way unknown to 'liberal' XIXth. century theology. They confront man with the doctrine (and scandal) of particularity,

^{3E}Thus Bultmann can write: ". . . the advent of Christ is . . . an eternal event which occurs again and again in the soul of any Christian in whose soul Christ is born, suffers, dies and is raised up to eternal life . . . the process of history has gained a new meaning as the pressure and friction . . . under which the Christian has to refine his soul and under which, alone, he can fulfil his true destiny", History and Eschatology, p. 153.

with the doctrine (and scandal) of fragmentariness. If the events of Christ's career are not to remain meaningless for human existence, they must be permitted to transfer their own particularity to personal existence. This 'particular', from the temporal point of view we have designated throughout this enquiry the 'moment'. Thus we must conclude that the 'moment' as ^akey-category of theology follows inexorably from belief in historic biblical event and from the confession of significance in the life and work of Christ.

If this is so, if the life and career of Christ, properly interpreted, involves us in the doctrine of the 'moment', certain crucially important things follow logically and necessarily. Critics of the category should be made aware that their criticisms, directed in the first instance against the 'moment', are ultimately directed against the thoroughly Christian doctrine and scandal of particularity, against the concrete, spacial-temporal life and ministry which stand behind the doctrine of the 'moment' and which form its basis. Naturally care must be taken that critics are not really rejecting mis-statements of the doctrine. Therefore, to be involved in Christian commitment (within existence) is to be involved by necessity in the doctrine of the 'moment'; from this situation there is no valid escape. The full historicity of Christ's life, and its implication, the 'moment', are so intimately linked together, that it

is hard to make any statement about the one which does not have implications for the other. Thus, if the doctrine of the 'moment' were criticised on account of its alleged fragmentariness, the logical reply would be to point to the fact that God's revelation to man in time and history is itself extremely fragmentary and particular : "God, who at SUNDRY TIMES and in DIVERS MANNERS spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son . . . "(Heb. 1:1,2). The life of Christ and the authentic human life are both deeply involved in the scandal of fragmentariness. Any valid criticism of the doctrine of the 'moment' would therefore require to be stated in such a manner that it would not invalidate the essential historicity and temporality of the life and ministry of Christ. In this sense, the doctrine of the 'moment' is but a logical exposition of the significance of the basic events of the Christ-revelation. It is really no help at this point to suggest that Christian "particularity" is transferred from the events of Christ to the life, doctrine, worship, sacraments of the Church, so that the Church becomes the Christian particular 'par excellence'. This will not do, as we shall see more clearly (when we come to deal with the problem of the Church and community), for this assertion begs the question 'how is the man without faith to relate himself to the Church's life and teaching ?' As we shall see, even his decision for the Church's Kerygma and life involve him in historical and temporal particularity again. The existence

of the Church (and this point also we shall have to re-examine), simply cannot cancel out the essential historicity and temporality of man as man-in-the-world. We shall take these points up again when we consider the problem of Church and community.

It is not by chance that ^{two} ~~two~~ of the chief expositors of this doctrine of history are within the Christian tradition (Kierkegaard and Bultmann), and that the third (Buber) is within the Hebrew tradition, holding to the radical historicity of the biblical revelation. A rejection of the doctrine of the 'moment' as a key-category of human existence would therefore seem, in the long run, to commit one to a view of biblical event which is thoroughly 'liberal', in the XIXth. century meaning of the word. We therefore conclude that the terms 'historicity' and 'temporality', so current in contemporary theological discussion, must not be regarded merely as terms which theology has borrowed from fashionable existentialist philosophy, but thoroughly Christian categories without which the events of the Bible (both in Old and New Testaments) would become meaningless and irrelevant for the achievement of authentic human existence today. To argue for them, and for the 'moment' which they imply, means simply to argue for biblical revelation and its relevance to existence. The Bible and Christianity imply historicity and temporality and both of these imply the 'moment'.

One subject in modern theology which has not been tackled inadequately is of course the effect which existentialist thought has had on Christian theology. But the doctrine of the 'moment' raises the converse question which is perhaps equally important but which so far has not received anything like the same question; namely, how far has Christian theology in its various forms influenced the existentialist tradition? It has of course been pointed out that the effect of Christianity can be seen even in the case of a thinker like Heidegger who seems to deny God, or at any rate to leave the question of his existence open. Heidegger's earliest work, says E.L. Allen, " . . . was done on medieval philosophy, and this concern with Christianity in its Catholic form has deeply coloured his thought ever since. That, as we shall see, is even more true of Sartre".³ Now so far as the their doctrine of the 'moment' is concerned (and it is pretty basic to their works as a whole), the effect of biblical religion on Bultmann, Buber, and Kierkegaard is clear enough, and to this subject we must now briefly turn.

Not only can the effect of biblical revelation on Bultmann's theology be seen clearly from his works as a whole, but we

³Existentialism from Within, p. 19 ; Allen mentions at this point Heidegger's Die Kategorien -- und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus (1916).

perceive it most obviously perhaps in Bultmann's great admiration for Auerbach's classic, Mimesis.^{*E} In a 1949 essay Bultmann has called Mimesis 'impressive', in a 1950 essay 'excellent', and in the 1955 Gifford Lectures 'brilliant'.^{**} The core of Bultmann's admiration for Auerbach's book is to be found in his strong agreement with Auerbach's contention that the historicity of Christ's life gives new meaning to everyday human life as the sphere where reality is to be met. Auerbach contends that in the life of Christ 'sublimitas' is revealed in and through 'humilitas' (through the 'menial'). This has as an implication that 'sublimitas' can only be attained in and through the moments of our everyday 'humilitas'. Thus we have Auerbach's main literary conclusion in Mimesis that the Christian scriptures first produced radically realist literature. The influence of Christianity upon Kierkegaard's Moment is almost too apparent to require comment. The original Christ-Moment and our Moment of appropriation are identical. In chapter III on Buber we discovered the strong influence that the biblical revelation has had on Buber's doctrine of the 'moment' especially through the effect of the Hasidic interpretation of the Bible, with its strong stress on 'everydayness'. There can be very little doubt that the

^{*E}E.T. Princeton 1954 ; cf. especially Bultmann, Essays, pps. 231, 265-6, 105.

^{**}See History and Eschatology, pps. 105 f.

Old Testament as well as the New implies the 'moment' as a key-category of existence. Auerbach, discussing the Old Testament notion of revelation and how the Old Testament narratives imply the radical historicity of existence³², has this to say: "The sublime influence of God here reached so deeply into the everyday³³ that the two realms of the sublime and the everyday³⁴ are not only actually unseparated but basically inseparable".³⁵ Rudolf Bultmann, speaking of the mixture of 'sublimitas' and 'humilitas' characteristic of Christian literature, says this; "That here not only Jewish Old Testament literature but also Christian literature is an operative influence is self-evident. But this differentiation plays no part from the standpoint which we have taken up, as the literature of the New Testament is for the most part stamped with the spirit of that of the Jewish Old Testament".³⁶ Thus we conclude that it is arguable that the 'moment' as an existential category is a logical and necessary implication of biblical revelation, and this conclusion we shall presuppose through^{out} this concluding chapter.

From what has already been said in this introduction

³²In Mimesis, chapter I, pps. 3-23.

³³Interestingly, this is also Buber's term.

³⁴Mimesis, pp.s 22-3.

³⁵The Significance of Jewish Old Testament Tradition for the Christian West, in Essays, pps. 262 f.; see p. 266. This essay is of considerable interest and importance for our subject here.

to our conclusions, the following implication would seem to be true also. The core of this introduction asserts that the particularity and fragmentariness of the life of Christ reveals the necessary particularity and fragmentariness of personal existence. It would therefore seem that there is some kind of analogy between, on the one hand, the 'Heilsgeschichte' culminating in the Christ-event, and personal existence on the other. Let us investigate further the nature of this historical analogy. In, for example, the theology of Bultmann, the Christ-event is the temporal fulcrum between the 'old life' and the 'new life' (eschatological existence) within the context of the New Testament history; there would seem to be an analogy between this and the 'moment', the fulcrum separating the 'old man' and the 'new man' in the personal existence of the Christian.^{*} Thus, it is hard not to hold that there is a clear analogy between the whole New Testament 'Heilsgeschichte' and the personal life of the Christian. There are hints of a not dissimilar analogy in the theology of Tillich also.^{**} ~~Tillich~~ Tillich divides the history of revelation (what might be called the Heilsgeschichte)

^{*}See the schema of Part II of Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament, vol. 1, in the 'Contents', pps. viii-ix, MAN PRIOR TO THE REVELATION OF FAITH, and MAN UNDER FAITH, which are obviously separated by the advent of Christ.

^{**}See his Systematic Theology, vol. 1, pps. 153 f., 'The History of Revelation'.

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into three definite stages, the so-called Preparatory Stage, the Final Stage (Christ), and the Receiving Stage. Tillich hints that these terms may be applied to the lives both of individuals and of the Church.* Some of these may still be in the Preparatory Stage. And of course there is the danger that the churches can lapse back into the Preparatory Stage. We ought to note that Tillich's analogy differs from Bultmann's in two respects; for him the first stage (or the first head of the analogy) embraces the Old Testament revelation and does not exclude pre-Christian profane (or pagan) history.** And for Tillich the analogy can apply not only to the personal life, but also to the lives of churches, congregations, and groups. But the two analogies are not dissimilar; they are both rigidly threefold. In Tillich the analogy would seem to be the pre-Christian revelation (both inside and outside the Old Testament), the Final Stage (in Jesus as the Christ), and the Receiving Stage. An analogy in the thought of Kierkegaard would also seem to be implied by the late Professor David E. Roberts.*** He writes: "There is a coincidence --- for him (i.e. Kierkegaard) momentous --- between (a) Christ as the point in time where the Eternal offers

*Op. cit., p. 160.

**Op. cit., p. 155.

***See his Existentialism and Religious Belief, pps. 77f.

salvation, and (b) faith as the point in time where man's relationship to God is decisively determined".³² Roberts is convinced that although Kierkegaard was at great pains to attack the system-builders (e.g. Hegel) in his works, his passionate protest should not blind us to this schema which underlies his own point of view!³² At any rate, we do seem to have here an analogy of sorts between the Heilsgeschichte on the one hand and the personal existence of the Christian on the other, an analogy which resembles those of Eultmann and Tillich in being rigidly threefold with a 'moment' of revelation or of appropriation at its centre. But we ought not to overlook that Kierkegaard's thought is not the best source for such an historical analogy simply because Kierkegaard's 'first stage' is so deficient; as we indicated in Chapter IV there is no room in Kierkegaard's thought for a 'preparation' for revelation, for an 'Anknüpfungspunkt'; as we have indicated, Kierkegaard's Moment seems^{to} strike down vertically into man's time without any previous preparation for its occurrence or appropriation being necessary. Thus, the following criticism of Tillich's would seem to be quite valid against Kierkegaard's type of theology : " . . . if a revelation

³²Op. cit., p. 81.

whose historical preparation is denied is final, the necessity of its historical reception makes the unique revelatory event a strange body which has no relation whatsoever to human existence and history".^x

It does seem to me rather striking that we do seem to have this definitely threefold analogy in the works of these three thinkers who, whatever the divergences between them, are broadly speaking within the existentialist tradition. It does seem that if the particularity of Christ's career is transferred to the personal life this leads to some kind of analogy between history (especially the salvation-history) and the authentic personal existence as a whole. The elaboration and criticism of such an analogy falls unfortunately outside the scope of this thesis, but if this work were carried out, it would seem to be a not unfruitful enquiry. For example, it might make the whole Bible relevant to personal existence, perhaps shedding some light on the many and not altogether satisfactory attempts to find some allegorical meaning in Old Testament history.^{xx} Also, the elaboration of such an analogy might

^xSyst. Theol., I, p. 154 ; criticisms of this type could be multiplied from pps. 154 f.

^{xx}One of the best treatments of the allegorical or typological interpretations of Scripture is to be found in Alan Richardson, Christian Apologetics, especially VIII, 'The Argument from Prophecy', pps. 177 f. See more especially § 5, 'The Re-statement of the Argument from Prophecy', pps. 199 f., where Richardson has sketched in outline a typological history of the Church.

help to produce a more positive account of pagan-profane history as being in a 'preparatory stage' and therefore being imbued with hope and possibility; this would be preferable to the negative interpretations of profane history (as being unrelievedly sinful), interpretations which do a great disservice for Christian theology. Also, such an analogy might well preserve the thoroughly biblical notion of historicity, and help to inculcate the process of 'nacherleben' which historicity seems to imply. We must make one more point before we leave this question of an historical analogy. The absence of Buber will have been noticed at this point. This is because so far as the history of past salvation is concerned, Buber denies the existence of a fixed mid-point, and this makes the construction of an analogy impossible in the threefold sense outlined above. Thus Buber writes: "The Jewish Bible does not set a past event as a mid-point between origin and goal. It interposes a movable, circling midpoint which cannot be pinned to any set time, for it is the moment when I, the reader, the hearer, the man, catch through the words of the Bible the voice ^{which} from earliest beginnings has been speaking in the direction of the goal . . . The Revelation at Sinai is not this midpoint, but the perceiving of it, and such perception is possible at any time".^x Thus it would seem that the analogy of which we have been speaking is a thoroughly

^xIsrael and the World, 'The Man of Today and the Jewish Bible', p. 94.

Christian concept.

In the foregoing chapters of the thesis, certain differences between Bultmann, Buber, and Kierkegaard in their doctrines of the 'moment' have been analysed and evaluated. But, at the same time, we should stress that there is also a great and pretty obvious unity between them on this matter, so great that modern theology ignores it at its peril, so great that we must reach the conclusion that these three thinkers do constitute a tradition, or even a 'school' with common roots, with the 'moment' as the underlying common factor. In this connection Mr. H.J. Blackham has certain wise words which are worth remembering: "It is time to discriminate between these thinkers; they are not exponents of a school, and yet not the least impressive thing about their highly individual thought, separated by age, nationality, and temperament, is the interrelatedness of their thinking : they lead into each other; they form a natural family; each throws light on the others, and together they develop the content of certain common themes".^x It is a conclusion of this thesis that one of the most basic of these common themes is simply the 'moment' as an existential category.

^xSix Existentialist Thinkers, p. v.

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The three thinkers with whom we are mainly concerned all hold the radical temporality (Bultmann, Buber, Kierkegaard), and two of them (Bultmann, Buber) hold the radical historicity of man. Let us now ask these questions: what implications are common to all three in their doctrines of the 'moment' ? What minimal characteristics does such a 'moment' necessarily possess (i.e., if historicity and temporality are posited) ? We shall, in the first place, try to answer these by sketching, in the briefest form possible, the main characteristics of their 'moment' which has emerged out of our research, and we shall do this under five main headings. Then, in the second place, we must admit that postulating such a 'moment' as a theological key-category does involve us in certain grave difficulties, in so far as it seems to conflict with, and implies a radical re-thinking and re-evaluation of certain traditional theological emphases. These emphases are discussed in the problem of propositional theology, in the problem of the Church and community, and in the problem of immanence (in the sense of 'natural theology'), problems which seem to be of outstanding importance in the context of this thesis. We shall therefore have to relate the concept to basic themes such as these in such a way that we discover how the concept criticizes their traditional presentations, and how it is criticized by them.

The following, then, are the main characteristics of the concept, the 'moment', and the theological problems with which

~~the~~ the concept must reckon, problems which, as we shall see presently, are also interrelated in a special way, leading into one another at one point after another.

the ...
happening ...
one ...
the glimpse; and in both Bultmann and Buber, ...
now'. In Buber the 'moment' is 'immortal'; ...
'eternal', filled with eternity; in Bultmann, ...
of history into eternity and simultaneously the ...
very, or Bultmann can also say, if it history ...
yet, paradoxical; history continues. In both ...
the 'moment' is religious, spiritual, risky. ...
is unapproachable and unmanageable. It is not ...
and investigation in the scientific sense, and ...
utilitarian-technological application to life ...
Kierkegaard too, the Moment is extremely risky ...
in it as great a chance of concealing God as in ...
both Bultmann and Kierkegaard the 'moment' is ...
Buber: one of meeting, relation. Living in ...
the sphere of It. Man reveals the demonic aspect ...

(1) THE REALITY OF THE PRESENT 'MOMENT'.

In both Bultmann and Buber we find synonyms for the 'moment'; e.g., in Bultmann, encounter, meeting, concrete event, happening, &c.; in Buber, the present, the instant when . . ., the act of relation, the meeting, the appearance, the hour when . . ., the glimpse; and in both Bultmann and Buber, the concrete 'here and now'. In Buber the 'moment' is 'immortal'; in Kierkegaard it is 'eternal', filled with eternity; in Bultmann, in it man is lifted out of history into eternity and simultaneously thrust back into history, or Bultmann can also say, in it history has come to an end, and yet, paradoxically, history continues. In both Bultmann and Buber the 'moment' is enigmatic, mysterious, risky, and thus its 'content' is unpossessable and unmanagable. It is not open to arrangement and investigation in the scientific sense, and it does not have a utilitarian-technological application to life in this world. In Kierkegaard too, the Moment is extremely risky, in so far as there is in it as great a chance of concealing God as revealing him. For both Bultmann and Kierkegaard the 'moment' is one of encounter, for Buber one of meeting, relation. Living in a world of things, in the sphere of It, man regards the moment's appearance as enigmatic, mysterious, ~~mythical~~ (Bultmann), as uncanny, even magical (Buber). The 'Moment' is one in which a recorded past 'moment' becomes present, amongst other ways, in Kerygma, speaking to us, challenging us, presenting for our decision new, developing, and correcting self-understandings. Scripture becomes the Word of God only in the

'moment', it is not such continuously in any substantial sense; ^mhermeneutics involves the recurrence of 'moments' (Bultmann). Historical interpretation involves the nacherleben of experiences through the medium of Erlebnisausdrücke ('expressions of experience', W. Dilthey).^{*} So too for Buber historical interpretation involves communication 'between men', 'between man and man'. Proper historical interpretation involves an interpersonal, intersubjective communication. A past recorded 'moment', embedded in an historical record as an 'It', can blaze up again and again, assuming and re-assuming presentness in the present. R.G. Collingwood, whose reflections on the nature of history are admired by Bultmann, also speaks of reliving past experiences, and of the historical interpreter re-thinking past recorded thoughts by means of a sympathetic subjective approach to the documents. For Kierkegaard too, the Moment is repeatable, for our present Moment and the original Christ-Moment are both filled with the Eternal; in both, God discloses himself. Both are 'timeless', because both are filled with God and the Paradox. For Kierkegaard therefore 'Moments' are identical, they are infinitely repeatable. The Moment of Christ's historical appearance is but the first in a

^{*}The germ of a notion of Nacherleben can be found in Auerbach's Mimesis. Thus Auerbach contends that events described in the New Testament narratives " . . . lay claim to being limitless and the direct concern of everybody" (p. 43). Peter is " . . . the image of man in the highest, deepest, and most tragic sense" (p. 41). Events of Peter's career and of the whole New Testament are " . . . concerned with the same question, the same conflict with which every human being is basically confronted and which therefore remains infinite and eternally pending" (p. 43). It is by virtue " . . . of the fact that we too are human beings and thus are subject to fate and passion, that we experience fear and pity . . ." with the New Testament characters (p. 43). Peter and the other New Testament characters are caught in a universal movement " . . . which lays claim to being limitless and the direct concern of everybody" (p. 43). The Peter-story (i.e. the denial) "speaks to everybody; everybody is urged and indeed required to take sides for or against it. Even ignoring it implies taking sides" (p. 48).

series, and ultimately indistinguishable from other members of the series. A contemporary of a past Moment enjoys no advantage over a successor --- for insight into the meaning of any Moment the condition, faith, is necessary. In their teaching on the 'moment', all three (Bultmann, Buber, Kierkegaard) show a profound distrust of the institution and of the organization. For Buber the institution is 'momentless' because 'relationless'; compare Bultmann's suspicion of organization and of institutions in his essay, The Idea of Freedom for Western Civilization. Kierkegaard's distrust of institutions is rooted in his attack on contemporary society and on the Danish 'Volkskirche' in Der Augenblick. In the 'moment' I have the possibility of grasping being (Buber). For Bultmann the 'moment' is likewise the point at which my old life may be done away and a new life imparted; it is the point where authentic eschatological existence may begin. For Kierkegaard too, the Moment is the decisive instant separating nonbeing from being, it is the point of rebirth, the point of 'conversion'. For Buber, the 'moment' necessarily involves decision (it is the 'primal mysterious decision'). A devil for Buber is not one who decides against God but one who comes to no decision at all! For Buber, the 'moment' involves the decision to decide over and over again, "from time to time, at every parting of ways"; man retains and must possess knowledge of this obligation of his, to approach and re-approach his destiny through decision. For Bultmann too, of course, the 'moment' involves man in decision, giving him the opportunity to decide how his past is to be related to his future. Radical freedom so to decide, Bultmann

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contends, is only the gift of God in his word in Christ. The possibility of this decision demarcates history off from nature, authentic existence off from inauthentic, real historical interpretation off from historicism. For Kierkegaard too, the effectiveness of the Moment depends very radically upon my decision. I must decide to allow the Paradox to confront my 'Reason' and offend it; in it, "I must let go"; without my decision, my part, there could be no Moment. All three (Bultmann, Buber, Kierkegaard) are united in stressing that thought ought to concentrate its attention upon 'this side' rather than upon 'the other side'. In the words of Buber, upon immanence rather than upon transcendence, upon 'our side' rather than the 'other side', upon will rather than grace. Bultmann's theology has been so oriented that it has been called 'anthropology'; Bultmann warns us that if God has transcendent depths unknowable to man these cannot possibly be the concern of theology. Kierkegaard too is only interested in God so far as he can be realised within the life of an existing individual, in dogma in so far as it can become 'effective'.^{*} Both Bultmann and Buber^{are} strongly convinced of man's essential historicity and temporality. Faith 'grows out of' man's continual, repeated, encounter with events and persons (Bultmann). Man encounters the unfathomable, the ineffable, in a continual exploration of "the life of things and of conditioned being", here in

^{*}Hermann Diem, Dogmatics, p. 20, quoting Kierkegaard.

this world; the man who is aware of his historicity is he who "hallows this life" and thus "meets the living God" (Buber). Kierkegaard, although holding man to be essentially temporal, shows no evidence of holding man to be essentially historical; he does not link up man's becoming (as do Bultmann and Buber) with the stream of events, persons, and things, which cultivate and mature man.

(2) THE 'MOMENT', AND THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY REVELATION.

What comes to man in the 'moment' is not retainable and possessable, for instance, within a 'Weltanschauung'. The Knowledge of God is not available within propositional descriptions, generally and universally communicable. Revelation is not 'information about divine matters' (Tillich's phrase). For Buber, propositions, characterisations, ideas, are 'representations of incidents and situations which are specifically relational'. A 'moment', when it has run its course, becomes an It, embedded in the world of things. But the 'moment' does not impart, Buber insists, 'items of knowledge' generally current in the world of It. In both Bultmann and Buber, secondary revelation is firmly rooted in primary. Secondary revelation is always called in question; it derives its validity from the primary, and is ultimately undetachable from the primary. The disclosure of the primary is always interpersonal, intersubjective, between men. For both Bultmann and Buber, one type of propos-

proposition/ is valid. This is one which enshrines historicity, one which has (sometimes concealed) existential reference. In Bultmann, we find that 'Weltanschauungen' expressing historicity are forever recurring in history and are valid. In Buber, valid 'teaching' is only that which invites the pupil, by becoming a 'Thou' for him, into the sphere of 'Thou-ness' and presentness, that which invites the pupil to face up to his own historicity, whose content, essence, the teaching is unable to impart. The true teachers says "I am" (without prescribing essence), and directs his pupil "know thyself" (again, without prescribing essence), so that the 'content' of the 'moment' is exclusively personal. Thus it seems that dogmas, propositions, and ideas, are always objectifications of this interpersonal encounter, never wholly meaningful apart from the encounter itself. Neither Bultmann nor Buber are happy about reflexion to a past 'moment' and its encounter as the practice of historicity --- rather do they find the experience of the past 'moment' valuable in its imparting of historicity, that is, in convincing the person that his authentic becoming lies in future repetition; in the plunging and continual re-plunging into the oncoming stream of history as that force ^{which} moulds and re-moulds man as a real person. But 'reflexion' to the past Moment through faith is enjoined by Kierkegaard. Both Bultmann and Buber seem to fear that such reflexion might become an escape from the obligation to become through future encounter. For Bultmann, the exercise of memory is only authentic when it makes a past encounter a present reality for the whole person.

From the point of view of the history of theology,

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Kierkegaard's thought is vitally important here. His work pioneered the notion that the content of the Moment is personal, that is, God, the Teacher, the God-man. Kierkegaard's intense dislike of propositions and systems of thought ^{is} ~~are~~ revealed in the titles Philosophical Fragments and Concluding Unscientific Postscript.³² Kierkegaard, says H.J. Blackham, conceived his mission thus: " . . . to call attention to the neglected how of appropriation and ignore the venerated what of approximation". "The objective accent", says Kierkegaard, "falls on WHAT is said, the subjective accent on HOW it is said".³³

A PROBLEM RAISED BY SECTION (2) --- THE PROBLEM OF PROPOSITIONAL
THEOLOGY.

Here is one important point where the doctrine of the 'moment' can expect difficulty and conflict --- traditionally, theology has been regarded as a supremely propositional business. From the point of view of this thesis, the trouble would seem to be that if

³²"The object of faith is the reality of another . . . The object of faith is not a doctrine . . . The object of faith is not a teacher with a doctrine . . . The object of faith is the reality of the teacher, that the teacher really exists . . . The object of faith is hence the reality of the God-man in the sense of his existence . . . The object of faith is thus God's reality in existence as a particular individual, the fact that God has existed as an individual human being", Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 290. " . . . Every misunderstanding of Christianity may at once be recognized by . . transforming it into a doctrine, transferring it to the sphere of the intellectual", op. cit., p. 291.

³³Postscript, p. 181.

propositional knowledge of God is available (i.e., knowledge of God attained in some way apart from encounter and event in space and time), this would constitute a wholesale attack upon human historicity, which is a logical and necessary implication of the historicity of Christ (and of the historicity of biblical revelation in general); thus it would seem that strictly propositional knowledge is ultimately incompatible with the notion of biblical revelation itself.

Now certainly a protest against this can be made in so far as many may think that such an abolition of propositional theology will mean an impossible restriction of Christian action in the world. It may be objected that if Bultmann and his colleagues are right, communication between the Church and society will be seriously restricted. Let us consider, for instance, a book like the late L.H. Marshall's The Challenge of New Testament Ethics.^{*} Marshall there addresses himself to the unbeliever, and attempts to show how sane, sound, and healthy modern society would be if it investigated and followed the ethical teaching of Jesus. Admitting that Marshall ignores the eschatological and unworldly aspects of Jesus's teaching, can we really regard his book as completely irrelevant and out of place? Is it impossible to regard his book as at least a basis for discussion between believers and unbelievers? Or let us consider another 'ethical' matter --- the matter of

^{*}London 1950.

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racial discrimination and persecution. Is not the Christian 'doctrine' of man a propositional matter ('God is the Father of all men', 'Christ died for all men'), and in the case of racial persecution must not the Christian take his stand for a secondary type of revelation? Is not secondary revelation here the basis of Christian prophetic action? Now I do not think that such criticisms of Bultmann's position count for very much in the long run. For in both cases, the raising of ethical issues by Christians, raises implicitly, whether it is realised or not, the basis of ethical insights, that is to say, the Kerygma. For in the case of Marshall's book, the issues raised beg the question of the identity of Jesus, and in the second instance the prophetic protest raises the question of God and of the work of Christ. Thus we see that in both cases what is fundamental in Christian communication is the primary kerygmatic communication from which are derived secondary ethical insights, a position identical with Bultmann's. This is not an argument against prophetic action and protest against social injustice, it is simply an elucidation that this cannot be done without a proclamation of the Kerygma itself; secondary revelation (propositional or otherwise) cannot be detached from primary and attain to an independent validity.

This discloses to us a not uncommon misunderstanding. For what Bultmann's standpoint demands is not an abolition of propositional theology, but a new interpretation of it. For both Bultmann and Buber, all propositions are not tabu. One class is both valid and necessary, propositions enshrining man's essential historicity and temporality. In brief, existential propositions, propositions with (sometimes concealed) existential reference. " . . . Only such statements

about God are legitimate", says Bultmann, "as express the existential relation between God and man".^{xx} Bultmann holds that our language unavoidably involves speaking in terms of general conceptions, but this does not mean, Bultmann insists strongly, that the issue in hand is a general one. The real issue, he insists, is always a particular, concrete, here-and-now one.^{xxx} If Bultmann is correct here, then the history of dogma appears as the history of the objectification through general-conceptual language of the action of God in the 'moment', in the here-and-now of encounter.^{xxxx} Thus, if I say, "God is Almighty Father", this refers in the first instance to God's Fatherly care and protection over me disclosed in a particular 'moment'. But because 'God' and 'Father' are conceptions, they become regarded as general and universal, acceptable and valid in abstraction from, in detachment from, God's action upon me in the concrete, 'momentary' encounter. Now we know already that in the 'Entmythologisierung' controversy, one of Bultmann's objections to myth was just that it speaks of God in this-worldly terms as an impersonal thing, as a worldly force.^{xxxxx} Myth, that is to say, depersonalizes God. Now in a sense, in Bultmann's view, so ~~does~~^{do} dogma, theological propositions. It 'generalizes' God and makes him into an object. And just as myth requires 'demythologizing' so does dogma.

^{xx} Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 69.

^{xxx} See op. cit., pps. 66-67.

^{xxxx} This view of the history of dogma is, interestingly, that of Alfred Loisy also, a view condemned by the Roman Church in 1907. See Ludwig Ott, Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma, (Cork 1960), p. 5; cf. H. Denzinger, Enchiridion Symbolorum, (31st. edit., Freyburg 1946), 2022, 2078 f.

^{xxxxx} See Kerygma and Myth, pps. 10-11.

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But in the case of dogma I should like to suggest another translation of 'Entmythologisierung' than 'demythologising'[⌘] --- either 'de-objectification' or 'de-generalization'. ~~This~~ I contend that a more fruitful approach to Church dogmas would be to investigate them with a view to giving them a concrete, particular, here-and-now, existential reference, which, it may be claimed, has been in them ever since their formulation, and which was the motive towards their formulation in the first place. But just as Bultmann has pointed out that the task of demythologising is one that will task the resources of a theological generation, so too, we must insist, is the task of degeneralizing Church dogma. This task will involve the re-investigation of Church dogma with a view to isolating those existential situations out of which the dogmas grew. Thus the view we put forward here is a theological hypothesis, but it seems to me to be a probable one, because of the essential historicity of man enshrined in biblical revelation.

Certainly the Bible itself lends strong support to this view we have suggested. We remember how the Old Testament speaks of the living God as "the God of . . .", the God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob". This preposition "of" expresses the existential, relational

[⌘]On reflection, it seems a pity that 'Entmythologisierung' was ever translated as 'demythologising' in the debate in this country, because of the negative, derogatory, meaning of the term 'myth' in English.

reference. Martin Buber writes: " . . . the deepest basis of the Jewish idea of God can be achieved only by plunging into that word by which God revealed himself to Moses, "I shall be there" (Ex. 3:14; part of the phrase commonly translated "I am that I am"). It gives exact expression to the personal 'existence' of God (not to his abstract 'being'), and expression even to his living presence, which most directly of all his attributes touches the man to whom he manifests himself. The speaker's self-designation as the God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob (Ex. 3:15) is indissolubly united with that manifestation of "I shall be there" and he cannot be reduced to a God of the philosophers".^{XX} Thus Buber also locates statements about God in concrete experience of him in history, and distinguishes such a God from the God of speculation. Another distinguished Old Testament scholar comes to something very like the same conclusion.^{XXX} Professor Edmond Jacob of Strasbourg writes : "Yahweh's action goes from the particular to the general . . . God's presence in history is that of the hidden God whose intentions always remain full of mystery in men's eyes (Is. 45:15, 55:8), but the hidden God is also the one who comes at certain moments in time to demonstrate through certain events the totality of his being and of his action".^{XXXX} Jacob seems to regard this 'generalizing' as a valid and probably

^{XX}Buber, Eclipse of God: Studies in the Relation between Religion and Philosophy, (New York 1952), chapter IV, 'The Love of God and the Idea of Deity', pps. 67-84 = Herberg, op. cit., pps. 97-107, see p. 106.

^{XXX}See Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, (London 1958), Part Two, IV, 'God the Lord of History', pps. 183 f., especially (c) The Historical Foundation of Israel's Faith, pps. 188 f.

^{XXXX}Op. cit., p. 189.

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unavoidable procedure, but to his view we must add Bultmann's view that just because generalizing is involved, the correct approach to such statements about God is that of 'degeneralization'.^{*}

It would be a mistake to assume that there was anything radically new (i.e. XXth. century) in Bultmann's approach to dogma. We know for instance that J.G. Hamann, an XVIIIth. century precursor of Kierkegaard, (whose thought was a potent influence on Kierkegaard's), favoured this existential approach to Christian doctrines. Ronald Gregor Smith thus describes Hamann's approach to creation and second coming: "The clue lies in our personal, and in the present recognition of all history as God's history. The mythological is simply a description, a sign or allegory, of our actual existence. That God has created

^{*}It is possible to hold that the Jewish Bible is a collection of encounters. Thus Buber can write : "The theme of the Bible is the encounter between a group of people and the Lord of the world in the course of history, the sequence of events occurring on earth. Either explicitly or by implication, the stories are reports of encounters. The songs lament the denial of the grace of encounter, plead that it may be repeated, or give thanks because it has been vouchsafed. The prophecies summon man who has gone astray to turn, to return to where the encounter took place, promising him that the torn bond shall once more be made whole" - Israel and the World, pps. 89-102 = Herberg, pps. 239-250, see p. 239. Erich Auerbach regards the New Testament as the product of the pre-theological era of Christianity, and thus also a 'book of encounters'. For Auerbach, the Christian movement is one that "...can as yet be neither clearly grasped or expressed (it is after all one of its essential characteristics that it does not lend itself to simple definitions and explanations), its effects are already described (i.e. in the New Testament) in numerous examples of its driving dynamism, its surging hither and thither among the people", (Mimesis, p. 43). In the New Testament "...time and again the impact of Jesus' teachings, personality, and fate upon this and that individual is described", (op. cit., p. 43). "...In the New Testament writings any raising of historical forces to the level of consciousness is totally 'unscientific': it clings to the concrete and fails to progress to a systematization of experience in new concepts" (op. cit., p. 44). In Auerbach's opinion the categories of the New Testament (e.g. the eras of law, sin, grace, faith, justice, &c., concepts like love, power, spirit, sin, death, &c.) are closely connected with inner rebirth and change; they represent an intrahistorical transformation (on an eschatological level), (op. cit., pps. 44-45).

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ME is the existential significance, for me, of the creation story. That I live under the promise and in hope is the existential significance, for me, of the second coming. To transpose this significance into any other would-be objective terms, or stubbornly to cling to the images *per se*, is to empty them of their historicity, and to edge man out of his central place, with God, in the whole story. The images are truly historical when they become signs for me in my present historical existence".^{xx} We see that a thinker's view of the Bible determines his view of dogma; and we also see that Hamann knew well enough the danger of dogma in transposing dynamic existential images into objective dogmas, thus emptying them of their power. Kierkegaard also approached Church dogma from an existential standpoint, attempting to 'degeneralize' it. So Kierkegaard describes the existential approach: "While abstract thought seeks to understand the concrete abstractly, the subjective thinker has conversely to understand the abstract concretely. Abstract thought turns from concrete men to consider man in general; the subjective thinker seeks to understand the abstract determination of being human in terms of this particular existing human being".^{xxx} Thus we can see clearly the foundations that were laid for views like those of Buber and Bultmann in the 'existentialist tradition'. We must not miss the main

^{xx}R. Gregor Smith, J.G. Hamann: A Study in Christian Existence, (London 1960), p. 101.

^{xxx}Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 315.

point though; this negative view of dogma does seem to spring from a view of the Bible as a 'record of encounters', as a history-book of God and man in discontinuous relation one with another. If this view is held, a negative view of objective dogma follows logically and necessarily; but if one holds to the objectivity of dogma, this certainly presupposes a different view of the Scriptures than that held by the existentialists. Dogma, after all, (even Roman Catholic dogma), claims to be an extension of, a working out of the implications of, Holy Scripture.

This existential approach to dogma has another immense advantage; it sheds a vast deal of light on the history of dogma in so far as it shows that seemingly insoluble problems in dogmatics never were valid problems at all, meant for our 'solution'. If dogma, (like the Scriptures), addresses itself primarily TO ME in my concrete historical situation, certain consequences of the first importance at once follow. The poles of existential paradoxes must be LIVED OUT, but they may not be THOUGHT OUT, in abstraction from existence! But how can I live out the poles of another person's paradox? Certainly I cannot; but I may (quite invalidly) generalize, abstract from, the existential situations of others, and puzzle endlessly (quite literally, endlessly) over them. The existentialist approach to dogma suggest that this is what has been happening in the history of dogma. Consider, for example, the so-called 'problem of suffering'. Does the problem exist? Are we obliged to find a solution to this problem? Is it not rather the case that each one of us has our own share of contradictory experience, and that from within it we are obliged to live out the contradictions? Thus ~~are~~ ^{are} 'suffering', ~~or~~ ^{and} 'evil', ~~or~~ ^{and} 'contradictory experience', not strictly speaking 'generalizations' (or 'abstractions'), which can only be dealt

with by a process of 'degeneralization', or 'particularization' or 'concretization' ? This, I think, is the conclusion of existentialist thought. We have already found this in Bultmann's stress on 'Entmythologisierung' ('degeneralization'), in Hamann's interpretation of history, and in Kierkegaard's definition of the subjective, concrete, thinker. But the same stress is present in, say, (the existentialist) Tillich, and in Buber. Thus Tillich can write: "All theological statements are existential; they imply the man who makes the statement or who asks the question. The creaturely existence of which theology speaks is 'my' creaturely existence, and only on this basis is the consideration of creatureliness in general meaningful".^{xx} So far Tillich's stress is clear; but he gives this principle concrete illustration: "Double predestination is not a genuine religious symbol; it is a logical consequence drawn from the religious idea^{xxx} of predestination. But it is a wrong consequence, as are all logical theological consequences which are not rooted in existential participation. There is no existential participation in the eternal condemnation of others. There is the existential experience of the threat of one's own self-exclusion from eternal life. This is the basis of the symbol of condemnation".^{xxxx} Tillich goes on to speak of a polarity between freedom and destiny.^{xxxx} There is little doubt that Tillich's thought at this point exhibits his indebtedness to the 'existentialist tradition'. Martin Buber also

^{xx} Systematic Theology, I, p. 299.

^{xxx} i.e., abstraction, generalization.

^{xxxx} Op. cit., p. 317.

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(from the standpoint of his interpretation of the Jewish Bible as a record of a 'dialogue', of encounters, between God and man), regards the transposition of this dialogue into objective concepts as leading thought into a frustrating blind-alley from which only the existential stress can rescue it. "It is only", writes Buber, "when reality is turned into logic, and A and non-A dare no longer dwell together, that we get determinism and indeterminism, a doctrine^{*} of predestination and a doctrine of freedom, each excluding the other. According to the logical conception of truth, only one of two contraries can be true; but in the reality of life as one lives it, they are inseparable.....The unity of the contraries is the mystery^{xx} at the innermost core of the dialogue".^{xxx} Buber's emphasis on the existential approach to the Bible and to dogma is clear. And when we understand it, we appreciate even more fully the vast implications of the XIXth. century Kierkegaardian revolt, and Kierkegaard's insistence that 'Reason' (as that faculty apposite to investigating the reality of the objective world of things) cannot 'think existence', and that 'Reason' (so understood) must allow itself to be offended by Him who approaches man in the 'moment' and establishes a dialogue with him.

We conclude then that the existential approach to dogma, derived from the existential approach to Scripture, is a most fruitful

^{*}i.e., an idea, a generalization, an abstraction, again.

^{xx}i.e. a 'mystery', not a 'problem' capable of being 'solved'.

^{xxx}Israel and the World, 'The Faith of Judaism', pps. 13-27 = Herberg, pps. 253-265, see pps. 256-7.

approach that modern theology ignores at its great peril. This approach safeguards and enshrines that radical historicity at the heart of the Bible; it thus makes biblical revelation relevant to our sometimes very contradictory existence; and it makes a great deal of sense of the history of dogma in showing the unreal nature of many traditional and insoluble theological problems.

A SECOND PROBLEM RAISED BY SECTION (2) --- THE PROBLEM AS TO THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH AS POSED BY MARTIN BUBER'S 'TWO TYPES OF FAITH'.

According to Buber, Christianity differs from Judaism mainly because of their two different kinds of faith, PISTIS as contrasted with EMUNAH. According to Buber, the differences are these.*

(a) THE FAITH OF ISRAEL, 'EMUNAH'.

Emunah, contends Buber, originated in the actual experiences of the nation Israel, based on the fact of the guidance experienced by early Israel. This, which happened only once, is the birth of Emunah. Emunah is the state of 'persevering', 'trust' in the existential sense. The personal Emunah, insists Buber, remains embodied in that of the nation and draws its strength from the living memory of generations in the great leadings of early times. Therefore Emunah, says Buber, has a PSYCHICAL^{***} foundation.

*See especially Two Types of Faith, (London 1951), translated by N.P. Goldhawk, pps. 170 f.

**Op. cit., p. 171; a term of the first importance.

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In much the same way, Buber makes the point that the faith of the Jews that, for example, on Sinai there took place a divine revelation confirms the ~~HEREDITARY~~^X actuality of the faith of the Jew who hears it. Jewish faith is not only psychical and hereditary, it is also PRIMEVAL. "Judaism" says Buber, "will live only if it brings to life the primeval Jewish relationship to God . . .".~~XXX~~ He also writes: "One center of the Jewish soul is the primeval experience that God is wholly raised above man, that he is beyond the grasp of man, and yet that he is present in an immediate relationship with ... human beings...".~~XXXX~~ Thus, in contradistinction to Christian faith ('Pistis'), Jewish faith is psychical, hereditary, and primeval.

(b) THE FAITH OF CHRISTIANITY, 'PISTIS'.

In comparison with Emunah (which confirms the faith of the Jew), Pistis is distinctive in that it changes the believer's faith, by challenging him to believe THAT Pistis was born outside the historical experiences of nations, in the souls of individuals, to believe that 'a man crucified in Jerusalem was their saviour'.~~XXXXX~~ Such faith is 'logical' and 'noetic', meaning the accepting and recognising as true of a proposition pronounced about the object of faith.~~XXXXX~~ The typical attitude of the Christian, says Buber, is shown by his confession, 'I believe that it is so'. "Faith", insists Buber, "should not be taken in the sense given to it in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as faith that God exists".~~XXXXXX~~

^XOp. cit., p. 98; another term of the first importance.

~~XXX~~ At the Turning, (New York 1952), 'The Silent Question', p. 44.

~~XXXX~~ Israel and the World, 'The Two Foci of the Jewish Soul', pps. 28-40 = Herberg, pps. 266-276, see p. 268.

~~XXXXX~~ Two Types of Faith, p. 172.

~~XXXXXX~~ 'The Two Foci of the Jewish Soul' = Herberg, p. 267.

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And this, in Buber's opinion, is a Greek attitude, the acknowledgement of a fact beyond the current circle of conceptions; this Christian assent or acknowledgement (in contradistinction to Jewish Emunah), separates the believer from the community of his nation.[¶] Therefore, in Christendom, the individuals as individuals, not the nations, become Christian, that is, subject to Christ.^{¶¶} "Christian believers possessed at every period a twofold being: as individuals in the realm of the person and as participants in the public life of their nations".^{¶¶} The great problem for Christianity lies in " . . . the disparity between the sanctification of the individual as such and the accepted unholiness of his community as such, and the disparity is necessarily transferred to the inner dialectic of the human soul".^{¶¶}

Now all this is very interesting for existentialist theology as a whole. It is interesting and significant that, for example, both Kierkegaard and Bultmann, are agreed that 'faith' is not merely a matter of believing 'that' such and such a proposition is true; Christianity would then be reduced to a matter of sheer factual credulity, and the Christian faith would become a 'Weltanschauung' which one could possess and utilize. Both Kierkegaard and Bultmann regard this as anathema. Kierkegaardian and Bultmannian notions of 'faith' are thus much nearer

[¶]Two Types of Faith, pps. 171-2.

^{¶¶}Op. cit., p. 173.

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Buber's Emunah than many other Christian notions of 'faith'. Also, Buber's analysis of the strain placed on Christian belief by modern history is acute; his analysis hinges on the difficulty of getting people to 'believe that . . . '. This difficulty is basic to the theologies of both Kierkegaard and Bultmann, both of whom, of course, concentrate their attention on the PRIMARY stage of Christian belief, the problem of initiation, the problem (to use Kierkegaardian terminology) of 'becoming a Christian'. The disparity between the Christian individual and contemporary society is focussed upon and magnified almost grotesquely by Kierkegaard, and is present also in the work of Bultmann. Buber is quite right that this is one of the great perennial problems that faces Christianity.

Let us now examine a little more deeply Buber's analysis of Christian Pistis. I think that Buber uses Emunah in a psychological-primeval-hereditary sense so that he overcomes Kierkegaard's basic problem, that of becoming (for the first time), a believer. But is Buber's 'solution' to this acute problem acceptable to theology? I do not think that it is. First, we should like more assurance that a psychological-hereditary-primeval 'trust' ^{will} survive for long in the modern world of criticism and pluralistic societies. Such a 'trust' would not, I feel sure, survive for long that blast of criticism which would undoubtedly come from modern science and psychology and philosophy. Emunah would have to face the charge that its basis appeared to many as irrational. It seems to me that the only chance of Emunah's survival is if Israel could live in a ghetto, hermetically sealed off from the fierce winds of empirical criticism which blow strongly in practically every part of the XXth. century world. Indeed, it is arguable that Emunah has only

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survived into our modern world in the way it has because of two factors, the ghetto-like^{*} isolation of the Jewish community both in Europe and in America until comparatively recent times, and the comparatively recent founding of the new State of Israel. And as for this matter of a 'national' or community trust, is it not always in danger of lapsing into a mere formalistic lip-service, as witnessed by Kierkegaard's raging^a against the 'faith' of Christendom, and the many criticisms that have been brought against Constantine's 'christianization' of the Empire? But what ultimately separates Buber's notion of faith from the Kierkegaardian and Bultmannian one, is simply that there is an obligation on both of these latter that is not so strong for the Jew --- namely the missionary obligation on the Christian to preach the Gospel of Christ to all men, an obligation which, we shall argue later, is taken very seriously by both Kierkegaard and Bultmann. This missionary obligation can be interpreted of course as love, as the desire to see men achieve authentic existence; I do not mean that Buber does not experience this desire. He does, but he gives it expression by wanting to see a revival within Israel of Israel's religion. Buber is, in fact, intensely Jewish.^{**} On the other hand, Kierkegaard and Bultmann tend to conceive of their task as involving the conversion of persons actually existing now within a secular, pluralistic society. Thus the stress of Bultmann on 'kerygma', preaching, proclamation.

^{*}See the interesting discussion of these themes in the sociological study, THE GHETTO, by Louis Wirth, (University of Chicago Press, 1928 and 1956), especially Chapter XII, THE VANISHING GHETTO, 1st section, 'The Flight from the Ghetto', pps. 241 f.

^{**}Buber's intense Jewishness is criticized by W. Herberg in his introduction to The Writings of Martin Buber; Herberg argues that Buber tends to see the solution of great problems too much against the background of the new agricultural State of Israel. Thus Buber is, says Herberg, a 'religious-social Zionist'; see pps. 21-22.

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On the other hand, we must face the fact the Kierkegaard and Bultmann may be criticized for being weak just where Buber is strong. It is possible to say that Kierkegaard and Bultmann have in their theologies contributed too little to the question of religious community in general. For instance, there is almost totally lacking from their thought the notion of the Church as a social vehicle of an existential attitude to reality, a vehicle transcending individuals, generations, and centuries. Is the call to the actually existing individual to come to terms with his own personal existence, while ignoring or even denigrating the community or nation (Buber), enough? Many will want to know if the theologies of Kierkegaard and Bultmann have anything more to say of community than that it is constantly in danger of degenerating into a menace to authentic personal existence. We shall not take up these criticisms here because we shall have to examine them in our next problem (the problem of Church and community), especially when we consider Bultmann and Kierkegaard as missionaries rather than theologians.

Both Buber and Bultmann are agreed that 'faith' is related to historical event, in one way or another. But I doubt whether the ways in which Judaism and Christianity regard historical event in the past are so radically different as Buber asserts. I do not think that Emunah, in the last analysis, can dispense altogether with 'believing that . .'. Thus when Buber says that the Emunah of the Jew is confirmed and strengthened by the fact "that on Sinai a divine revelation took place",^{*} he

^{*}Two Types of Faith, p. 98.

admits the possibility that if a Jew were to conclude that on Sinai no such revelation took place, his hereditary Emunah would not be strengthened but weakened, and threatened with extinction. This, as Louis Wirth's book proves, is the very danger for the modern Jew who emerges from either the compulsory or voluntary ghetto into the modern world of criticism. Thus, in the circumstances of our pluralistic world, I do not think that Buber's rigid distinction between Emunah and Pistis can be maintained. Israel faces as much as does the Christian community the problem of 'becoming a believer' over against the 'emancipated', 'secularized', assimilated Jew.

We must raise a further question. Is not Christianity unique because of a unique scandal of particularity? Has Buber really come to terms with that element in the Christian faith which asserts that God is present in Jesus Christ in a way that he was not manifested in Abraham or Moses or at Sinai? And is this not the Christian scandal? And is this Christian scandal not the Jewish scandal (historic particularity) raised to an infinite power? I think that it cannot be denied that it is.* I do so because I can see no grounds for holding there to be a radical difference between the historicity of the Old Testament and the New. If this is so, then much of the sting is taken from Buber's criticisms of the nature of Christian Pistis.** When Buber suggests that a

*H.P. Owen, in his Revelation and Existence, p. 118, rightly perceives that according to Bultmann, the essence of the Christian scandal is identical with the scandal of 'God's revelation on Sinai'.

**As we shall see later, it is more than probable that when Buber criticizes Pistis, his notion of it is pretty much that of the Western Latin Church. The Roman Church insists of course that 'faith' contains a strong element of 'assent' to the truth of dogmatic propositions. It seems clear that Buber's notion of Christian faith is not that of modern 'subjectivist' Christian theology.

certain double-movement may yet give a certain unity to Judaism and Christianity he seems to confirm much of what we have said.^x Buber suggest that the obligation on Judaism is to strive after a renewal of its faith through the re-birth of the person; the obligation on Christianity is to strive for the renewal of its faith through the renewal of nations. This is probably true enough; but one thing is certain : if Judaism does apply itself to the conversion of the person as such, it will have to traverse theological paths already worn by the passage of Kierkegaard and his successors and heirs.

A THIRD PROBLEM RAISED BY SECTION (2) --- THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH AND COMMUNITY.

The alleged out-and-out subjectivity of theologians like Kierkegaard and Bultmann has been, in various quarters, criticized most severely as not doing justice to the social and communal expressions of Christianity, in short, to the Church. To mention only several, we may note that Oscar Cullmann has criticized Kierkegaard's thought because, it is alleged, Kierkegaard ignores the place of the Church in the so-called intermediate era;^{xx} Georges Florovsky has criticized Bultmann and his

^xSee Two Types of Faith, pps. 173-4.

^{xx}See Christ and Time, chapter 4, pps. 144 f. Cf. our discussion of Cullmann's book in chapter IV of the thesis.

existentialist colleagues for failing to recognize the Church's function in the Heilsgeschichte;* John Macquarrie has criticized Bultmann's theology^{***} as being weak on the question of the Church and Christian community; H.P. Owen has criticized Bultmann for failing to perceive the fulfilment of Christ's work in the Church.^{***}

It is surely time that this question of the attitude of existentialist theologians to the Church is raised and thoroughly examined. Now it seems to me that critics of Bultmann's estimate of the Church must be made to see that it ^{is} rooted firmly in his view of the awareness of God and of the self, in his view of revelation. It is true that Bultmann and his colleagues sometimes criticize the Church for secondary reasons (which may obscure the real issue) --- for instance, that the Church may believe that it possesses the truth in its creeds and dogmas. This is, of course, absolutely unacceptable to Kierkegaard and Bultmann (and to Buber also). It is undeniable that the Church may define (and has in fact defined at times) what God is, thus obscuring what God does. Thus Buber holds that a religious community may make God into an 'object' of worship; it may try to secure a continuum of God in space and time. Similarly, a community may try to possess God in an idea which is applied again and again to the riddles of life. Obviously this is inauthentic, according to the existentialists. But such criticisms, important as they are, do

*In an essay, 'The Predicament of the Christian Historian', included in Religion and Culture: Essays in Honor of Paul Tillich, edit. W. Leibrecht, (London 1958), pps. 140 f; for the criticisms of Bultmann, see pps. 164 f.

***An Existentialist Theology, IX, 'Existence in the Community', pps. 215 f.

***Revelation and Existence, chapter 7, 'The Historical Element', pps. 111 f. See especially pps. 133-4.

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not reach the heart of the matter. The heart of the matter is that thinkers like Bultmann and Buber seem to under-estimate the community because of the high value they place on the world as the sphere of God's redeeming activity and self-disclosure. Just because they focus their eyes so closely on the world, they seem to have turned their eyes away from the Church. Thus we have seen over and over again the existentialist stress on the becoming-of-the-self-in-the-world. The typically existentialist view of history outlined in these pages is of history as a great stream of events, people, things, happenings, into which the person is enjoined to immerse himself --- he assumes authentic being in so far as he has contact with this stream. This is ^{partly} what we mean by 'historicity'. In theological terms, it means that the world takes on a new aspect, as that sphere teeming with persons, things and opportunities in and through which the living God may manifest himself and mature man. It is basically a question of the amount of stress one is going to place on two spheres --- the Church and the world. Thus if one places enormous stress upon the Church, the world is depreciated, and vice-versa. Moreover, if the Church is regarded as supremely the sphere of revelation, the world tends to be regarded as evil; if the world is regarded as the sphere of revelation, the Church tends to be regarded as a refuge, a hiding-place, in which man flees from his own historicity. Obviously a thinker like Bultmann (or Buber) regards the world as pre-eminently the sphere where revelation takes place, and thus the Church receives relatively less stress in his thought. Why, we must ask, have the existentialists chosen to stress the world in this way? For, I believe, two broad reasons. First, a good case can be made out that the Bible teaches that the whole world and not just a community (say, Israel, the Church) is the sphere of God's revelation; we can point here to the Old Testament's emphasis on

the 'everyday', the special re-discovery of Hasidism, an emphasis accepted by Buber. Parallel with this in the New Testament is the Incarnation of Christ in the world, in the world of 'humilitas' and of the 'menial', not in an unworldly context of religious symbol, sacrament, and rite, a truth brilliantly elaborated in Auerbach's Mimesis, whose central theme is accepted and admired by Bultmann. It is possible to interpret from this point of view Christ's humble birth in a non-ecclesiastical household, his 'worldly' Ministry amongst men, his rejection of and by Pharisaism and Sadducism, his crucifixion outside the community symbolized by Jerusalem. No doubt the community has an important function in guarding and proclaiming this message, but this does not mean that it has the right to negate it in arrogating to itself God's gift to the world, a disclosure of itself as the sphere where revelation is to take place. Thus I am convinced that it is arguable that Bultmann's and Buber's stress on the world is the stress of biblical revelation itself! But then, second, there is a pragmatic reason for Bultmann's seeming 'preference' for the world over against the Church --- it is to be found in Bultmann's desire to make the Kerygma meaningful to unbelieving, secularized men actually living in a pluralistic society now. Because modern man lives (in the main) in the world and not in a religious community, if God were not encountered in man's actual context, it is hard to see why modern man should identify himself with the life of the Church. In so doing, Bultmann and his colleagues can point to the missionary obligation on the Christian to preach the Gospel throughout the whole world; he could also argue that it is a pre-requisite to understanding the New Testament to realize that these writings are themselves missionary documents. And just because Bultmann (like Kierkegaard before him) takes his stand between unbelief and belief, he must shed himself of much

that is unquestioned within the Church. There is a sense in which Bultmann's theological position is like that of a foreign missionary who leaves behind him the 'home Church' to live and work within a context in which little or nothing familiar within this Church can be taken for granted. To the similarity between Bultmann and a missionary we shall have to return shortly. For the present, we must note carefully why it is that there is a seeming lack of emphasis in his work on the Church --- it is because basically he takes a quite specific view of the world as the sphere of God's disclosure to man.

We must note that there is a certain close similarity between the views of Bultmann, Buber, and Kierkegaard on the nature of Church and community. For Bultmann, the Church is a community of 'eschatological folk', a 'gathered congregation' of those whose 'old lives' have been brought to an end through their decision for the self-understanding given in the Kerygma, and who have each accepted the 'new existence' offered to them by God as a personal gift. Buber compares authentic community to a cartwheel; its basic structure lies in its spokes pointing inward towards the hub, thus building up the circumference. So genuine community is constituted by persons attaching themselves to the divine centre; it is the common attachment to the centre that makes the community. There can be no question of people constituting the community by merely attaching themselves to the circumference. The strength and structure of the cartwheel lies in the link between spoke and hub. And for Kierkegaard community, genuine Christendom, was quite simply the aggregate of individual believers; for Kierkegaard the Church was no more, no less. If we grasp these views of community, we can grasp another important criticism which might be made against Bultmann and his colleagues.

On the face of it, it may seem to some that all three are deficient in failing to recognise that a religious community is actually something more than the mere aggregate of believers actually existing at any one time. This "something more than . . ." may carry several implications. It may be some normative, objective standard possessed by the community as such which regulates and controls the experience, decisions, and beliefs of individuals. It may be some element within the community which makes the community's Kerygma seem more probable; for example, a spirit of togetherness, solidarity, assurance, experienced in the community-life; it may be the splendid example of the Church's saints and martyrs, the pride in 2000 years of Christendom, or something like that. It may be some tradition within the community which supports and supplements the existential relevance of the Kerygma --- for instance, an historically 'objective' portrait of the actual Jesus, demonstrating for all to see the factual possibility and limits of authentic existence. In short, does not the religious community represent an extra-kerygmatic instrument for the fertilization of faith and belief, and is it not the grave weakness of existentialist theology generally that it ignores this characteristic of the community? Certainly, something very like this question would seem to lie behind the many criticisms of existentialist theology's alleged weakness on Church and community. We must now examine such criticisms more closely.

First, if the community stands above, is normative for the individual's deciding and believing, does the community possess a standard of judgement, a norm, a special 'paradosis', which is non-existentially (i.e. objectively) apprehended? It would seem that such a criticism of Bultmann commits the critic to something like this. Now we saw in chapter I, in our examination of Tillich, Owen, and Macquarrie, that it is

well-nigh impossible to produce an objectively (i.e. non-existentially) apprehended norm for Christian belief and decision. The Kerygma can only be apprehended by means of man's total, concrete, historical life. That is an obvious conclusion that I draw from the argument of chapter I. Similarly, if it be argued that I ought to decide for the Kerygma because thousands of the saints in the mystical Church of Christ have already done so, what does this mean? Does it mean that direct faith in the Kerygma is insufficient? If not, why point to the examples of the saints? Many others in past history did not decide for the Kerygma --- why were they wrong and the saints right? The message of history, as Bultmann has rightly reminded us, is always ambiguous. In other words, if I decide for the Kerygma, partly at least because the saints have done so, it must be clear to me that this is because I have decided for the saints' decision for the Kerygma.^{*} I have decided that they were right and the unbelievers wrong. But it cannot be made too clear that my decision for this, and my decision for the Kerygma of the saints are ultimately identical and indistinguishable. It is not a little difficult to see why the example of the saints in the mystical Church ~~was~~ introduced at all. But perhaps the example of the saints is introduced to illustrate the 'embodiment' of the Kerygma, clothe it with flesh, so to speak; if so, as we shall see, this is both valid and necessary for a doctrine of the Church. But if the example were introduced in order to demonstrate

^{*}"Faith to-day, unless it is faith in the faith of the Apostles, is not other than **their faith** in the man who makes the most absurd of claims", H.J. Blackham on Kierkegaard, Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 4.

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that 'surely all the saints and martyrs cannot be wrong', then the argument is ineffective. After all, the Bible contains a firm strand of conviction that at times all depends on the 'remnant'; it warns against persecution of the authentic few by the inauthentic many; it warns that there be only few that find the way to authentic existence; it believes in the Cross, a symbol of 'aloneness' and rejection. Thus we conclude that there is no non-existential element in the Church's life which could either displace or supplement personal decision for the Kerygma itself. We fare little better if we investigate the possibility of there being in the Church's keeping an 'objective' picture, say, of the historical Jesus, which supplements the relevance of the Kerygma to my existence. As we saw, in discussing John Macquarrie's criticisms of Bultmann³⁸ in chapter I of the thesis, because there can be no direct observation of the past, and thus because it is impossible to construct a factual portrait of Jesus, objective in the way mathematical statements are objective, (but at the most a probable sketch derived from the existentially appropriated Kerygma), it is again impossible to circumvent decision. If, therefore, we offer to a person along with the Kerygma an allegedly factual portrait of Jesus, it must be made clear to him that his decision for its validity depends, in the last analysis, on his decision for the Kerygma itself. The Kerygma (like the whole corpus of the New Testament) is primarily a missionary instrument; its acceptance may entail identifying oneself with the life of a community, the Church. If

³⁸In The Scope of Demythologising.

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it be suggested that grounds for a decision for the Kerygma reside within the Church, it must at the same time be stressed that these grounds are themselves 'kerygmatic' (i.e. derived from the Kerygma), or that one decides for them only because one has decided for the Kerygma. A not unimportant consequence follows --- we saw how the biblical notion of historic revelation implies a doctrine of particularity, and we argued that such particularity must be transferred to man's existence-in-the-world. If it be argued against this that the particularity implied by the Kerygma is transferred to the existence of the Church, even this argument, if accepted, cannot possibly cancel out the necessity for historic decision. In so far as the Kerygma is directed to men living in the world, their decision for this Christian 'particularity' located within the Church, like their decision for the Kerygma, must be made in one historic 'moment' or another, in the world of space, time, and history. When we see this clearly, we must conclude that a great many unquestioned assumptions and not a little unclear thinking lie behind many of the traditional arguments for the Church in fostering faith.

It may also be asked whether there is not an ecclesiology in which Bultmann (because of his excessive European Protestantism) is weak which is recognized by, say, Eastern Orthodox Christians.^{*E} The Orthodox viewpoint sees the Church as a vast sanctifying and purifying stream flowing through history and transforming human societies through

^{*E}Cf. Georges Florovsky, 'The Predicament of the Christian Historian', in Religion and Culture, pps. 165-6.

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the centuries. Undoubtedly the Church has had great repercussions in certain spheres, in philanthropy, in compassion, in reform, in respect for humanity generally and for the significance of the individual; no doubt that the Church has played a great part as a catalyst in social and ethical reform.³² Now we should not like to denigrate the Orthodox idea of the Church, which has a great deal to say for itself, but we should like to distinguish it from the viewpoints of, say, Bultmann and Kierkegaard. First, we must note that the Orthodox idea of history is just not Bultmann's; the Orthodox idea implies that man is able to transcend the centuries and look down upon the unfolding of the centuries; as we have seen, in our Introduction, Bultmann and his colleagues reject this possibility. Second, we remember Bultmann's insistence that the message of history is ambiguous.³³ Third, this implies that in the midst of this ambiguity, man cannot ^{escape from} the obligation to decide for or against a certain significance in history. Thus, we must insist that if a man does perceive in history the significance given to it by Eastern Orthodoxy, he does so because he has already decided for the relevance of the Kerygma --- that is, because he has already participated

³²See Nicolas Zernov, The Church of the Eastern Christians, (London 1942), where the Orthodox viewpoint is thus described: "Eastern Christians look upon the world as one great organism; they approach the diverse manifestations of life as an expression of the same ultimate reality . . . the Church for them is therefore a living community, but not an institution; it includes the whole cosmos, and the relation of all who belong to it is substantially that of members of the same organism" (p. 53). "The East does not think about salvation in terms of the individual soul returning to its maker; it is visualised rather as a gradual process of transfiguration of the whole cosmos, culminating in THEOSIS, or the deification in Christ of the members of the church as representatives and spokesmen of the entire creation . . . Man is saved, not from the world but with the world, because he is its guardian and master . . ." (p. 54).

³³See especially Essays, pps. 105 f.

existentially in the Kerygma, and has experienced its transforming possibilities. It is also obvious that it is decision that gives a man this view of history, because in the last generation or so scientific humanists in particular have been assiduously demonstrating that in the case of great social and ethical reforms the Church was not the only factor operative in the situations concerned; moreover, the same group has been pointing out that there have been eras in history where the Church opposed reforms in whose achievement we all take pride today. It seems certain that the Eastern Orthodox view of the Church's place and achievement in history has not been produced apart from the Orthodox prior decision for the Christian Kerygma itself. Fourth, and perhaps most important of all, Bultmann (and Kierkegaard) must be distinguished from Eastern Orthodoxy because of the radical difference in viewpoints involved. We have already indicated that the key to understanding the theologies of Bultmann and Kierkegaard is to be found in their profound interest in the 'problem of becoming a Christian'. If there were no missionary obligation ~~on~~ the Christian, then the theological ventures of both Bultmann and Kierkegaard would be called radically in question! In a sense they both take their stand on the dominical commission delivered to the Apostles to preach the Gospel to all men, throughout all the world. Indeed, we may seriously ask if Bultmann and Kierkegaard are not more pioneering missionaries to the unchurched, rather than theologians in the classical sense, and whether their peculiar standpoints have not been chosen for them because of their situations in thoroughly unchurched and secularized societies? We have already noticed that one of the main reasons why Bultmann wrote his shattering Neues Testament und Mythologie was his conviction that modern man was no longer able to

understand Christianity as a live option for his existence.³² It follows that Bultmann is therefore more interested in conscious acceptance of the Kerygma, and the understanding it conveys. Kierkegaard's self-confessed aim was simply to investigate the 'problem of becoming a Christian' and his theology flows from this standpoint.³³ That is, both Bultmann and Kierkegaard take their stand upon the point of initiation, on the tense boundary-line between unbelief and belief, and the recognition of this is basic to understanding their theologies. Thus Bultmann is more interested in primary than in secondary revelation, in the cause rather than in the consequences. In contradistinction to this, we must recognize that the Eastern Orthodox view of the Church presupposes a standpoint within the Church, and above history, so that the centuries may be surveyed, and the Church's significance in various eras and situations (we must again insist), decided for.

³²Cf. Ian Henderson, Myth in the New Testament, (London 1952), where Professor Henderson points out that the experiences of German theologians who had served as army chaplains in the 1939-45 war " . . . had thrown them into contact with those outside the Church and convinced them both of the need and the difficulty of presenting Christianity in such a way that it would at anyrate not be meaningless to the latter", (p. 9). Also, " . . . the thesis of Bultmann is that something has to be done with what he calls the mythology of the New Testament. As long as this is taken at its face value as literally true, Christianity remains meaningless to modern man", (op. cit., p. 9).

³³Cf. Concluding Unscientific Postscript, pps. 340 f. - 'THE PROBLEM OF THE 'FRAGMENTS' VIEWED AS AN INTRODUCTION-PROBLEM, NOT TO CHRISTIANITY, BUT TO BECOMING A CHRISTIAN'.

"Philosophy offers an immediate introduction to Christianity, and so do the historical and rhetorical introductions. These introductions succeed, **because** they introduce to a doctrine, but not to becoming a Christian", (p. 343). Kierkegaard points out that his introduction to the problem of becoming a Christian " . . . is quite unlike any introduction which proceeds upon the assumption that Christianity is a doctrine. An introduction of this kind does not lead to becoming a Christian, but leads at most to the perception, historically motivated, that Christianity has certain advantages over paganism, Judaism, and so forth", (p. 341). "The introduction that I propose to offer will be . . . an existential communication", (pps. 341-2).

And in leaving this aspect of our problem, we must not fail to notice that the notion that the Church must be decided for in the same way as the Kerygma must be decided for has never been more insistently put forward than by Kierkegaard himself, whose thought here still exerts a tremendously strong influence on contemporary theology.*

We must now look at a possible objection to the existentialist view of the Church, which is, perhaps, the most important of all. It can be stated thus : if ~~my~~ experience of the 'moment' is so all-important as the existentialist theologians seem to suggest, does this not make the individual's decision more than a little arbitrary and arrogant ? Where is the humility in the assertion that the fulness of God and the richness

*See Concluding Unscientific Postscript, Book One, THE OBJECTIVE PROBLEM CONCERNING THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY, Chapter I, § 2, 'The Church', pps. 35 f. "Just as it was the Bible which was to decide objectively what is Christianity and what is not, so now it is the Church that is to serve as the certain objective recourse. More specifically, it is the living word in the Church, the confession of faith, and the word in connection with the sacraments", (p. 37). If we speak of the Church as Christian and Apostolic, the predicate Christian " . . . is thus more than a present predicate. When predicated of the present it implies a past, and thus involves a historicity in quite the same sense as the Bible" (p. 39). Thus the Christianity and Apostolicity of the Church must be decided for just as the word of the Bible requires decision. "The moment we make use of the living word to urge the continued existence of the Church through past centuries, the issue is brought back to precisely the same point where it was in the Bible theory", (p. 39). As regards the Church theory, the problem should be transferred " . . . to the realm of the subjective where it properly belongs . . .", (pps. 39-40). "The living word declares the existence of the Church . . . But the living word does not suffice to declare that the Church has been in existence for eighteen centuries, that it is essentially the same, that it has persisted in a wholly unaltered form, and so forth", (p. 40). Kierkegaard's conclusion is that " . . . the problem ought to be put subjectively, and that it is precisely a misunderstanding to seek an objective assurance, thereby avoiding the risk in which passion chooses and continues to live, re-affirming its choice, (p. 41). " . . . It . . . would have been a tremendous **injustice** if any later generation were enabled safely, that is objectively, to enter Christianity and thus secure a share in that which the first generation has bought in the extremity of subjectivity . . .", (p. 41).

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of the Gospel can be appropriated in a brief, even slender and puny 'moment' ? Is not my slender experience of the 'moment' far too frail a foundation for the Christian faith ? It is hard not to suspect that it is questions like these that lie behind the attacks on out-and-out subjectivity which we discussed in chapter I, the attacks of Tillich and Owen (q.v.). Certainly such questions seem to be implied by Tillich's use (which we have examined) of terms like 'participation', 'entering into . . .". And Owen also speaks of the believer coming to share in Christ's Risen Life within the Church, the Body of Christ.* On the face of it, these alternatives seem to represent a stronger and more satisfactory position than Bultmann's 'isolated individual'.

These criticisms of the existentialist position are so far-reaching that they deserve careful examination and evaluation. I think that it is possible to answer them; and for the sake of convenience, I should like to do so under four propositions which sum up and develop the existentialist notions of humility and the existence-with-others in the religious community.

(1) The virtue of humility is enriched and not diminished by the existentialist concept of historicity --- because 'historicity' implies that the totality of God transcends in every direction my experience of the 'moment'; 'historicity' means that God pre-exists the 'moment's'

*See Revelation and Existence, p. 133.

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occurrence and that God's self-disclosure is not exhausted by any one 'moment'.

The totality of God transcends in every direction my experience of the 'moment' because I am related to God in the past, in the future, and on both sides of me (as we shall see presently), in my neighbour. In no sense is a man's experience of a 'moment' final --- if it were, this assertion would be arrogant indeed. Rather the 'moment's' occurrence leaves man partially unfulfilled, so that he requires to have his knowledge of God and of himself constantly enriched and corrected. So Bultmann writes : "In faith man understands himself ever anew. This new self-understanding can be maintained only as a continual response to the word of God which proclaims his action in Jesus Christ. It is the same in ordinary human life. The new self-understanding which grows out of the encounter of man with man can be maintained only if the actual relation between man and man is maintained. 'The kindness of God is new every morning'; yes, provided I perceive it anew every morning. For this is not a timeless truth, like a mathematical statement. I can speak of the kindness of God which is new every morning only if I myself am renewed every morning".* Man remains humble just because, being tied to history, he realizes that the insight of a mere 'moment' may yet be revolutionized by his historical contacts; thus his 'knowledge' of God or of himself can never claim fulness or finality; he is forever on the way; in so far as he realizes this, he remains humble.

*Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 76.

The personal self-understanding gained in the 'moment' is " . . . put to the test, is called into question (ist in Frage gestellt) in every situation of encounter".³² "As my life goes on, my self-understanding may prove inadequate or it may become clearer or deeper as the result of further experiences and encounters".³³ "Entering into decisive encounters I may achieve a totally new self-understanding as a result of the love which is bestowed upon me when, for example, I marry or make a new friend".³⁴ If I so understand my existence, I am safeguarded from an arrogant lack of humility because " . . . I cannot possess this self-understanding as a timeless truth, a conviction accepted once and for all".³⁵

It is thus clear that the doctrine of the 'moment' implies that the totality of revelation infinitely transcends that of which I am given awareness in any one 'moment'.

(2) The virtue of humility is enriched and not diminished by the concept of 'historicity' in so far as this means (especially in the works of Bultmann and Buber) the understanding of man as always someone future, as someone whose genuine self lies before him as a possibility to be grasped and realized.

We have already, in chapter I, examined Bultmann's conviction

³²Op. cit., p. 74.

³³Op. cit., pps. 74-75.

³⁴Op. cit., p. 75.

that man's genuine existence lies before him in the future --- there is hardly a stronger emphasis in all of Bultmann's writings. We refer to it again very briefly here: " . . . it . . . is precisely demythologising which makes clear the true meaning of God as acting in the future. Faith includes free and complete openness to the future".^{*} "Faith as openness to the future FROM ourselves as the old selves, and FOR ourselves as the new selves".^{**} This emphasis on man as a future creature is of course to be found also in the work of Buber; thus, speaking of the 'moments' of existence, Buber has this to say: "Every relational event is a stage that affords him a glimpse into the consummating event".^{***} Thus the experience of the 'moment' has future reference. Man's " . . . sense of Thou . . . cannot be satiated till he finds the endless Thou . . . ".^{****} Thus the totality of what is disclosed to man is not exhausted by the experience of any one relational 'moment'. And we have already encountered Buber's translation of the Hebrew of Exodus 3:14 as "I shall be there as I there shall be".^{*****} It matters little whether Buber is right in his translation; what is important is that it does show how he understands man as a being who looks forward into the future for further self-disclosures of God. Thus it is again clear that experience of the 'moment' is not necessarily arrogant and arbitrary --- in so far as I understand myself as a future being, and the revelation of God as something which will be disclosed to me over and

^{*}Jesus Christ and Mythology, p. 77.

^{**}Op. cit., p. 78. For further references to Bultmann's stress on man as a future creature, see History and Eschatology, 99-100, 109, 121 f., 150 f.; cf. Essays, 158 f., 222, 253, 309.

^{***}I and Thou (1st edit.), p. 80.

^{****}See Herberg, op. cit., pps. 106 and 268.

over again in the future, in increasing fulness, correcting and enriching what was given in previous 'moments'.

There is an interesting consequence of all this. What can existentialists and demythologizers make, for instance, of a New Testament book like Hebrews, which certainly seems to hold that our Lord's 'objective', risen Life, is in some way available to believers.* In so far as existentialists can answer this, their answer would seem to be along these lines ; statements from Hebrews must be demythologized, that is, interpreted existentially. What they indicate in general is that our Lord's existence and work transcends individual 'moments' of experience; they mean that our Lord's being has future reference. They mean that Christ is ever before me, in the potentiality of his revelation, and that he pre-exists my decision and belief, just as a person with whom I come to have a relationship pre-exists the relationship.

(3) Existence-with-others in Church or religious community is given positive meaning by the existentialist insight that encounters with others both deepen and broaden the awareness of God and the self given in the 'moment'; such encounters may have increasing, enriching, and correcting effects. This insight also enriches and does not diminish humility.

This means that my personal decision in the 'moment' should be tentative in the sense that it ought not to exclude the possibility

*Cf. H.P. Owen's fondness for Hebrews, which we have discussed in chapter I when dealing with Owen's Revelation and Existence.

that I ~~may~~ in the future encounter richer and as yet unthought of understandings and implementations of the Kerygma through my encounter with other Thous. These encounters may of course be of two kinds. First, they may be interpersonal, face to face; thus the Church may take on enormous importance as the sphere where I-Thou relationships between Christians take place, enriching and deepening and correcting each others' grasp of the Kerygma. It is hard to underestimate the importance of the Church in so far as this function is fulfilled within her.* Second, such encounters may be by means of the recorded experiences (W. Dilthey: 'Erlebnisausdrücke') of believers who are not, who cannot, be actually physically present to us. Thus we may encounter the Kerygma in, for example, Dietrich Bonhoeffer^{***}, St Francis of Assisi, and Kagawa. Or in a biography, or an autobiography, say, of St Augustine or of St Theresa, I might encounter an as yet unperceived possibility of Christian existence which confronts my understanding with enrichment or correction. Thus I should like to understand the encounters of Christians with the 'saints', with David Livingstone, with Albert Schweitzer.^{***} Christian humility would thus mean my awareness that the understanding given in the 'moment' may yet be enriched, increased, adjusted, and corrected in my future encounters with Thous both inside and outside the Church, both

* So we may understand a text like Rom.1:12, "... that I may be encouraged by meeting you, I by your faith, and you by mine" (Moffat).

^{***} In, especially, his Letters and Papers from Prison, (London 1953).

^{***} This, needless to say, is quite different from, for example, the relationship between the Roman Catholic and a saint like St. Thomas Aquinas, whose ideas on Christianity are imposed on believers by authority; also, here there is no obligation to encounter the totality of St Thomas's personality. For the place of authority which St Thomas holds in the Roman Church, see H. Denzinger, Enchiridion Symbolorum, 2191 f.

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living and dead. If they are of the past, their recorded 'moments' have still the propensity within them to blaze up and assume presentness again and again when looked upon in the present 'moment' (Buber). Such a doctrine gives positive meaning and significance to our existence-with-others in the Church. And we ought not to overlook the fact that we can find the seeds of such a doctrine in the writings of Bultmann himself, especially in the significance that he gives to autobiography.* But 'encounters' between Christians in the Church are not exhausted by encounters which are face-to-face, mediated through 'Erlebnisausdrücke', biographies, autobiographies, for surely (as we discovered when dealing with the problem of propositional theology) encounters may be mediated no less by dogma? If it is so, as we tried to show, that Church dogmas originated in existential situations, and if, as we insisted, the correct approach to Church dogma involves not their rejection but their 'degeneralization' or 'de-objectification', surely what we have

*See Bultmann's Gifford Lectures, History and Eschatology, especially pps. 146 f. " . . . it must be stressed that what we call PERSONALITY is also temporal-historical, and is constant only as a possibility which is ever to be realised", (p. 146). " . . . the I is an ever-growing, ever-becoming, ever increasing entity. Personality experiences its own history within the frame of universal history and interwoven with it, but nevertheless as a history which has its own meaning and is not merged into universal history", (p. 146). "This is the justification of autobiography" (p. 146), in which " . . . the author gives an account of the personal history of his life" (p. 147). " . . . autobiographies may gain an extraordinary importance for universal history, as, for instance, the 'Confessions' of Augustine . . . This clearly shows that history has a dimension not included in the concept of it as the history of problems" (p. 147). The significance and value of these autobiographies are to be found in " . . . permanent possibilities of human self-understanding which once they have found expression in history remain as ever-present possibilities coming to life at different times in different forms" (p. 148). Thus, says Bultmann, " . . . real autobiography arose for the first time within Christianity", (p. 149). Cf. Jesus Christ and Mythology, pps. 74-75.

in dogma is a wealth of understandings gained in contact with history, potentially powerful for our grasp of the Kerygma, understandings which it would indeed be arrogant to ignore, indeed, which we ignore at our peril. Thus dogma is another element which expresses the insight that the totality of revelation transcends what is actually given in any one 'moment' at a given time. Thus we can say of Church dogma that it represents my genuine self lying before me, to be realised in the future, through encounter with the understandings of those whose grasp of the Kerygma and its possibilities is enshrined in the dogmas themselves. Thus the existential approach to dogma gives more positive meaning to existence-with-others in the Church.

If this is so, then for the existentialist theologians the proposition 'extra ecclesia^{na}, nulla ^{Salvatio} salvatio' is not altogether invalid. The emphasis on the necessity of encounter and repeated re-encounter with others (in preached or personal modes) may validly be interpreted to mean that without such repeated contact with the Kerygma authentic existence is in constant danger of lapsing back into inauthentic existence. In this special sense, but only in this sense, the Church is generally necessary for salvation; man, if he is to be saved, thus requires Church-existence.

(4) Existence with others in a religious community is given positive meaning by Martin Buber's concept of 'Teaching', in which encounter may take place between persons or between generations, which may give rise to, not the impartation of ideas and propositions, but to an 'existence-communication'.

Buber's emphasis on the contact between one generation and another is of great importance for the Christian Church; it has much to impart to, for example, the Church's educational office, whether in formal teaching, or in its ministry to the parents of children. Buber stresses the obligation of one generation towards another. "In these recurring encounters between a generation which has reached its full development and one which is still developing, the ultimate aim is not to transmit a separable something".^{xx} Thus, as we have argued throughout, secondary revelation cannot be separated from primary --- therefore, teaching within the religious community does not have as its aim the impartation of a 'Weltanschauung' or of a set of ideas. "The teachings cannot be severed from the deed, but neither can the deed be severed from the teachings!"^{xxx} What matters is that time and again an older generation, staking its entire existence on that act, comes to a younger with the desire to teach, waken, and shape it; then the holy spark leaps across the gap".^{xxxx} Buber's use of the term 'holy spark' excludes the notion that codified, conceptual, teachings are imparted; what is imparted is humanity, imparted by a human being.^{xxxx} The human beings who thus impart existence to a new generation, are says Buber, Israel; "Israel is renewed, not by what they say, " but by what they are, "by the totality of their existence".^{xxxx} The significance of this for the Church is that religious education, the religious training of children, the spread of the Kerygma, and so-on,

^{xx} Israel and the World, 'Teaching and Deed', pps. 137-145 = Herberg, pps. 317-324, p. 319

^{xxx} Op. cit., p. 323.

^{xxxx} p. 319.

are brought about not so much by asking assent to propositions, but by interpersonal I-Thou encounter --- thus we have the importance of encounter between man and man, young and old, enlightened and unenlightened, parent and child, teacher and pupil, and so-on. If this is so, the religious community, Israel, the Church, assume incalculable importance as the spheres where this encounter is realized and encouraged. Thus, says Buber, " . . . it is impossible to teach or learn without living. The teachings must not be treated as a collection of knowable material; they resist such treatment. Either the teachings live in the life of a responsible human being, or they are not alive at all. The teachings do not center in themselves; they do not exist for their own sake. They refer to, they are directed toward, the deed. In this connection, the concept of 'deed' " . . . connotes . . . life that realizes the teachings in the changing potentialities of every hour".[¶] Buber quotes the Talmud, "He who studies with an intent other than to act, it would have been more fitting for him never to have been created".^{¶¶} What counts for Buber " . . . is not the extent of spiritual possessions, not the thoroughness of knowledge, nor the keenness of thought, but to know what one knows, and to believe what one believes, so directly that it can be translated into the life one lives".^{¶¶¶} In so far as we think of the Church as that continuity by means of which the 'Faith once delivered to the saints' is delivered intact from one generation to another, we can hardly do

[¶]Op. cit., p. 319.

^{¶¶}Op. cit., p. 320, quoting Pal. Talmud, 'Shabbat' 3b.

^{¶¶¶}Op. cit., p. 321.

better than ponder these words of Huber : " . . we are confronted with the concepts of continuity and spontaneity, the bond of transmission and begetting. The teachings themselves are the way. Their full content is not comprehended in any book, in any code, in any formulation. Nothing that has ever existed is broad enough to show what they are. In order that they may live and bring forth life generations must continue to meet, and the teachings assume the form of a human link, awakening and activating our common bond with our Father".^x Thus we conclude that if one grasps the full meaning of 'historicity', the understanding of man as someone future, the significance of encounter with others in their 'Erlebnisausdrücke', biographies, autobiographies, and the significance of present, face-to-face encounters in the flesh (between man and man or between generation and generation), one perceives the great wealth of insight that existentialist theology may offer to the Church, to help her to understand once more her own nature and function.

Finally this question must be faced : is there not another aspect of the Church overlooked by the existentialists when they speak of decision for the Kerygma, an aspect put forward and developed in, for instance, St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians ? The late E.F. Scott has this to say of Ephesians : " . . . in the Church we can see the mysterious

^xOp. cit., pps. 323-4.

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plan of God fulfilling itself. Hostile races, natures that apparently have nothing in common --- all the discordant elements in human life are here brought together and subjected to the power of Christ. In virtue of their very differences they are able to fit together into an harmonious whole".^{*E} And commenting on Eph. 4:1-16, Scott points out that there St Paul enjoins to modesty, gentleness, mutual forbearance, love, which are social duties tending towards true community. St Paul speaks also of the unity of the Spirit, the bond of peace, One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, the unity of the faith and knowledge of God's Son, and so-on. The members of the Church are to be 'wedded together and compacted'.^{*E*} Is it so that the existentialists, say Bultmann, have ignored this? That the community may well be a visible social expression of God's reconciling Kerygma? It seems that reconciled races and natures may be every bit as much a part of of the Kerygma as a proclamatory sermon, and, it may be added, even more powerful in its influence. If so, does not Bultmann also ignore the social obligations placed on the Christian by God? Has he not been over-influenced by the typically existentialist indifference to community? Is it not so that sometimes the reconciling Kerygma requires the Christian to get into the community, stay in it, even conform to it, maintaining the 'unity of the Spirit', and the 'bond of peace', and thus proclaiming

^{*E}E.F. Scott, Moffatt Commentary to Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians, (London 1930), pps. 127-8.

^{*E*}Op. cit., pps. 201 f.

by communal, social, means, God's reconciling word in Christ ?

It may well be that there is an iota of truth in this criticism of existentialist theology. Community does not, it is true, occupy the forefront of their thought, a point to which we shall return presently. But nothing that can be adduced from Ephesians can nullify the Christian's obligation sometimes to break with the community, or to criticize it, if a gap appears between the community life and witness and the Kerygma itself. This is only to say that the community's unity cannot be achieved at any price, but only in accordance with the Kerygma itself. Unity, to use traditional language, is not the only attribute of the Church, but also holiness and apostolicity. And sometimes ecclesiastical history demonstrates that a certain unity is incompatible with either or both of these two. The ideal ~~blend~~ blend of all three must be an ideal for which the Church must ever strive, and for which we must all hope and pray. The word 'ideal' in this connection is not accidental; for we must point out, that if the 'Church' is brought forward as a mode of, as an embodiment of the Kerygma, confronting man-in-the-world, it cannot be insisted too strongly (as we have already done in chapter IV), that what influences the 'plain man', the so-called man in the street, is not some ideal Church described in Ephesians or in Revelation 21, but the actually existing Church at the street-corner or along the road!^{*} And it is when we realize this that we really grasp the pertinence of the existentialist stress on the unity between doctrine and concrete life.

^{*}This, we argued in chapter IV, is the whole point behind Kierkegaard's attack on the Danish Established Church.

We have pointed out that questions of community, in their positive aspects, do not occupy the forefront of existentialist theologies. I think that this is undeniable; when we wish to know what these positive aspects are, we only find them like isolated bricks buried in existentialist writings, for which we have to dig, and which we must then build up into a meaningful whole. That is more or less what we have had to do in this present discussion of community. I think that there are two broad reasons why this is so. First, the existentialist thinkers and theologians of the XXth. century have been strongly conditioned by false, inauthentic forms of community; a theologian like Bultmann has had to live through the horrors of the Nazi State, in which a strong section of the Church (the German National Church) rejected the Kerygma as absolutely normative for theology; a philosopher like Jaspers had to live and suffer in the same State; consequently, existentialists generally tend to be vividly aware of how community can degenerate not only into political dictatorship but into inauthentic forms dominated by all kinds of mass-opinions. Thus, XXth. century history has had its effect on the backwardness of existentialists with regard to community, an effect^{which} it ought to be noted, has had a stronger influence on the Continent than in these islands. Second, theistic and Christian forms of contemporary existentialist thought owe a heavy debt of gratitude to Kierkegaard; the thought of Kierkegaard never really produced much positive insight into the problem of existence-with-others. I think that to a certain extent contemporary existentialist thought has inherited this Kierkegaardian deficiency. It is hard nowadays to read a commentary on Kierkegaard and avoid reading about this deficiency. Thus the late Professor David E. Roberts has this to say of his thought : "Kierkegaard failed to attach as much weight to the problem of community as to the problem of the

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single individual. Yet if Christianity is true at all, its solution to the peril of 'the crowd' must at the same time be the solution to the peril of isolation . . . 'the neighbour', for all its concreteness as a noun, was an abstraction for Kierkegaard's feeling he could not enter into inter-personal relationships fully and naturally. He was cursed by shut-upness . . He could not allow himself to have a wife, a professorship, a pastorate; . . . (he was) a man who never knew much at first hand about the meaning of fellowship, either religious or secular".*

Thus it would seem that Kierkegaard's thought, as it stands, works as a corrective. This is more or less true of a great many theologies and philosophies which derive from him. But theology must expect something more than a mere corrective; it is therefore to be hoped that Christian theologians, although aware of the contribution existentialism can make to discussions of community, will, by encountering a thinker like Buber, have a great deal of positive import to say about Church and community in the future.

*David E. Roberts, Existentialism and Religious Belief, PPS. 140-1; cf. the rather similar criticisms of Kierkegaard by Buber in 'The Question to the Single One', from Between Man and Man.

(3) CAUSALITY, FREEDOM, AND THE 'MOMENT'.

For Bultmann, the 'moment' is one of decision in the present, by which the meaning of the future is chosen over against, (but not wholly over ^aagainst, since the choosing is selective), the past. Only because this 'moment' is possible, is man distinguishable from nature, and thus able to have a 'history' as well as a 'life-cycle'. Because the 'moment' ⁱdislocates the causal nexus between past and future man is a person and not a thing, an animal. For this very reason, the centre of the historian's study is man, man himself, his thoughts, motives, choices, and so-on. Thus Bultmann, Dilthey, Collingwood conceive of the historian's task.

For Martin Buber too, the world or sphere of 'It' is characterized by the unlimited sway of the causal process. For man, and here man is again distinguished from nature, this sway is not absolute. From 'time to time', in 'moment' after 'moment', in presentness, man can leave the It-sphere of causality for the world of 'Thou', of relation, of meeting, where genuine chosen becoming is a real possibility. It is clear that certain types of modern thought ignore these insights. For Bultmann, this type of thought is supremely 'historicism', which means for him the understanding of man and history in analogy with nature. For Buber, this type of thought is supremely that "quasi-biological and quasi-historical thought of today"; it is the thought, suggests Buber, which is dominated by "fate which does not know spirit". It is the type of thought manifest in, for example, certain universal morphologies of history, mechanistic psychologies and sociologies, and those philosophies of history aimed at elucidating the 'laws' inherent in historical happenings. For this reason, Buber warns against 'prediction'. Modern

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thought of this type, insists Buber, fastening upon necessity alone, forgets that the human situation, properly understood, swings between, is the antinomy between, both necessity and freedom. In demanding that this antinomy or paradox must be lived out, and in insisting that it cannot be thought out, Buber is of course close to Kierkegaard. For Kierkegaard too, without the Moment man is bound, exiled, and unfree. The Teacher who comes in the Moment is, says Kierkegaard, the Saviour, the Redeemer, who redeems the learner from his captivity. The Moment is absolutely crucial for Kierkegaard because it demarcates off captivity from freedom. A change, says Kierkegaard, in the immutability of the past is brought about in the Moment. Kierkegaard expresses his anxiety thus : "If the past had become necessary it would not be possible to infer the opposite about the future, but it would rather follow that the future was also necessary . . . ".^{*} This would lead, Kierkegaard points out, to the terrifying spectacle of a prophesying generation. For Kierkegaard, the study of history is valuable because it reveals that the past came into being through changes; from history we learn that change is not excluded from the temporal process, because " . . . change is excluded only by being excluded in every moment". But the moment, of whose reality Kierkegaard is convinced, is just that instant of time bringing with it the possibility of genuine becoming.

This section of our research is interesting not only because it is of interest to the historian, but also because it demonst-

^{*}Philosophical Fragments, p. 63.

demonstrates/ theological thought developing in relation and in opposition to contemporary 'secular' thought --- in this case, to the scientifically and technologically conditioned thought of the XXth century. But the thought of Kierkegaard shows that this movement had already got under way ~~weigh~~ in the mid-XIXth. century.

(4) THE ENEMIES OF THE 'MOMENT'.

All three, Bultmann, Buber, and Kierkegaard, agree that the sphere of human existence is a sort of battlefield in which authentic revelations and disclosures are in constant danger of being stifled by inauthentic elements which rise up and oppose them. Thus for all three the sphere of existence is dynamic rather than static.

For Bultmann, the 'moment' and its demands may be stifled by many elements from ordinary everyday life, elements which are paradoxical in nature; we cannot live quite without them, but we are always liable to get them out of perspective. Bultmann, it will be recalled, lists cares, pleasures, wishes, plans, crazes, false forms of living together, action and work, moralistic security through duty-doing, a false (i.e. propositional and therefore possessable) form of belief in God, man's love for 'Weltanschauungen', self-will, extreme suffering, and mysticism. Thus Bultmann's insistence that the relationship of the authentic man to the world can only be dialectical, described, as Bultmann never tires of pointing out, in I Cor. 7:27 f. This means that he must keep an inner reserve, detachment, from worldly concerns while busying himself in them, so that he is able to turn from

them should the 'moment' occur, confronting him with the gain or loss of his genuine existence! For Buber, amongst the enemies of the 'moment' we find the world of 'It', the 'It'-sphere's dislike of the 'moment's' exclusiveness, man's dislike of enigma, his lust for worldly possessions; man's love of comfort, security, reliability, safety; the process of causality, immanentist theories of substantial soul, mysticism of the totally 'unworldly' variety, (Bultmann and Buber both dislike this type of mysticism for identical reasons); man's longing for 'continuity' and 'duration', for a systematized 'Weltanschauung'; the order to which man becomes accustomed by life in the It-sphere; the delight he comes to have in the utilizing of the technological It-world. It is therefore not surprising that in Buber we find also a 'dialectical' relationship of the authentic person to the world being insisted on.* Other enemies of the 'moment' are false forms of faith and worship, in which these come to replace rather than 'respond to' moments of disclosure and relation.**

*We have already discussed this fully in chapter III. Cf. W. Herberg, 'Introduction' to The Writings of Martin Buber, pps. 17-18 : "The call comes in the midst of life. 'God speaks to man in the things and beings he sends him in life. Man answers through his dealings with these things and beings' (Buber, Hasidism, New York 1948, p. 99). Religious man is dialogical man, the man 'who commits his whole being in God's dialogue with the world, and who stands firm throughout this dialogue' (Israel and the World, pps. 131-2). It is a dialogue in which 'God speaks to every man through the life which he gives him again and again . . . (and in which) man can only answer God with the whole of life, with the way in which he lives his given life' (Israel and the World, p. 33). In contrast to this, man can of course immerse himself in means and ends, in experiencing and using, so that the dialogue is stifled before it has had a chance to begin.

**Here there is an obvious link with the view we put forward when considering the problem of Church and community; there we suggested that it was vastly important how much stress there is put relatively upon Church or world; if one held that the Church and its worship was the sphere of revelation 'par excellence', then this meant that the world was more or less discounted. There is no doubt at all that Buber realises fully this threat to the 'worldliness' of revelation which can be wielded by the religious community, its doctrine and its worship.

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Buber, like Bultmann, is alive to the dangers inherent in organization and over-organization, as he is to those in the technological notion of knowledge as 'items of information'. It is hard not to conclude that there is constant, mutual opposition going on between the 'Thou-dimension' and the 'It-dimension'. Buber draws a picture of the brief, delicate 'moment' trying to gain an entrance into a tightly organized world of 'It', covered, to use Buber's own term, by a 'crust'.

In Kierkegaardian thought, the Moment (bringing the Paradox) offends, shocks, scandalizes, and is in turn opposed by what Kierkegaard calls 'Reason'. By Reason, Kierkegaard means of course man's self-asserting and self-assured faculty of organizing, conceptualizing, categorizing, and system-building. The Moment is also opposed by the Socratic notion of 'recollection' --- in which that which is taught by the Teacher always was within the learner from the beginning; all that is required by the Teacher is to extract this and bring it out into consciousness by a kind of 'Socratic midwifery'. Within this Socratic context there is neither room nor relevance for the Moment. With this Socratic procedure we may compare certain theories of immanence like St Bonaventure's 'continuation', already discussed in chapter II, and which we shall refer to again in our next section. In Kierkegaard too we find that man's love for security and safety (expressed in the anonymity man may achieve in society) militates against the incalculable risk and danger and anxiety of the Moment.

(5) THE 'MOMENT', THE SPIRITUAL LIFE, AND THE DOCTRINE OF IMMANENCE.

Immanence was of course fully discussed in chapter II. There we discovered Bultmann's view of God as 'immanent' in the totality of historical existence, in contrast to a view like that of St Bonaventure, (followed by Mr. H.P. Owen), which suggests that God is immanent in the substantial soul, and that God is perceivable by man in isolation from the world, from history, and from time. In contrast to this latter view, the theologies of Bultmann, Buber, and Kierkegaard, are all supremely "impartational".

In Bultmann we find that the spiritual life, and the practice of spiritual cultivation, depend upon man's awareness of his own radical historicity and temporality, that he is 'essentially' an historical and temporal creature. This, for Bultmann, is the only possible possessable 'Weltanschauung'. For Buber, the basis of the spiritual life consists in the 'I' swinging 'into relation'; before it swings back again, the 'I' matures spiritually. It is obvious how close this view is to Bultmann's. For them both, the 'I' matures, man becomes an authentic person, in so far as man orientates himself towards, and encounters the persons streaming towards him within, his time and history. This swinging into relation, this orientation, is the spiritual 'exercise' which is fundamentally opposed to the classical view that spiritual culture can be practised in isolation, apart from the other, apart from the world and history. Buber's view can be summed up thus in his own words: " . . . a man does not pass from the moment of supreme

meeting the same as he entered it".

Kierkegaard too abhors any doctrine which assumes that knowledge of God is given totally in creation, that it is wholly immanent in man (Socratic), so that nothing in time, in the world, in history, need 'happen to' man in order for such knowledge to be imparted to him.

We must not fail to note that the doctrine of the 'moment' would seem to require some kind of natural theology. We encountered Bultmann's view of this in chapter II. Man's experience of transience, decay, guilt, bondage, and determinism, help man to form some minimal notion of 'God' which serves only as an 'Anknüpfungspunkt' for the self-disclosure of the living God when he actually reveals himself and redeems man in the 'moment'. This minimal idea of 'God' is, so to speak, immanent in, suggested by man's total concrete historical and temporal situation. Similarly, Buber's view is that man has a 'sense of the Thou' present in him 'from the beginning', which can be fulfilled and satisfied only in the 'moment' of meeting, relation. When Buber insists that there is immanent within man no more than this longing, craving for relation, we see that this is not at all dissimilar to Bultmann's analysis of man as filled with existential dissatisfaction. In contrast to Buber and Bultmann, Kierkegaard is not so clear about these insights. ~~It~~ can find in Kierkegaard's work, as I indicated in chapter IV, no indication that the outside world of persons and events and encounters, in short, man's concrete historical situation, is integral to the occurrence of the 'moment'. Rather does

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Kierkegaard insist that the occurrence of the Moment is God's work, not at all dependent upon a merely human 'occasion'. This aspect of Kierkegaardian thought, as I have already suggested; is one of the least satisfactory of Kierkegaard's contributions.

This section of our study has important repercussions in one direction in particular. This emphasis of existentialist theology which we have been discussing seems to cut across one traditional strand of systematic theology which is of enormous importance; namely, the question of natural theology in general, and in particular the precise content that should be given to such a natural theology. This comes out very clearly if we compare strictly existentialist theology with the theology, say, of Paul Tillich, who, although heavily indebted to existentialist analysis, is by no means, as may be mistakenly supposed, an existentialist pure and simple. For Tillich's theology, as we shall now see, although availing itself liberally of existentialist insights, is actually rooted in the classical ontological approach. To the important problem of the differences between the two approaches, the existentialist and the ontological, we must now turn.

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A PROBLEM RAISED BY SECT.(5) --- THE PROBLEM OF THE ONTOLOGICAL AND
EXISTENTIALIST APPROACHES TO THEOLOGY.

Paul Tillich, like Bultmann, analyses man's existential situation. In doing so, he points out, for example, that man, although finite, has the power of infinite self-transcendence. That is, man, although within existence, can yet raise himself above and look down upon it, perceiving his own finitude from this exalted standpoint. This power of self-transcendence is the indication that man is the creature of God, it represents natural man's link with God, it is the 'deus in nobis'.^x So far the existential analysis of man is clear. But at this point a certain definite duality in the theology of Tillich appears which indicates the two strands of which his thought consists :-

(A) There is a strand in Tillich in which Tillich is aware of the important role of the concrete encounter. For example, Tillich speaks of the power of the New Being in Jesus as the Christ overcoming and setting right our existential estrangements.^{xx}

(B) But there is another strand in Tillich in which he implies that our existential analysis (e.g. of finitude) of man could, if pursued

^xSee Systematic Theology, I, pps. 212 f.

^{xx}See especially Systematic Theology, II, XXI-THE NEW BEING IN JESUS AS THE CHRIST AS THE POWER OF SALVATION, pps. 191-208.

far enough, itself give the answer implied in the existential question, QUITE APART FROM an event, a 'moment', an encounter in space and time. Thus Walter Leibrecht rightly writes of Tillich's theology^{*}: "Characteristically, he (Tillich) does not begin his thinking by speculating in the clouds; he digs his results out of the earth. He is never satisfied, however, with mere existential analysis; he drives beyond it to that point of identity where the infinite reveals itself in the finite, where the split of subject and object is overcome". And in a note to this sentence^{**} Leibrecht pertinently points out : "Tillich's statement that God is being itself is rejected by Heidegger, Bultmann, Barth and Niebuhr, all of whom reject classical metaphysics unreservedly". This brings us a little nearer the real crux of the matter; it seems that Bultmann must reject Tillich's position here because Bultmann's thought hinges on the concrete spacial-temporal 'moment' in which, as we have insisted, God IMPARTS HIMSELF through his action. In this second strand of Tillich's thought this seems not to be necessary since God appears to be immanent in, in some sense, man's ontological enquiry. This brings us very close, I think, to the real and irreducible point of divergence between, on the hand, Bultmann and his existentialist

^{*}In 'The Life and Mind of Paul Tillich', published in Religion and Culture ; Essays in Honour of Paul Tillich, (London 1958), p. 6.

^{**}Op. cit., p. 355.

colleagues, and on the other, an ontological theologian like Tillich. This is the reason why we dare not, without reservation, call Tillich an 'existentialist'.

We are now in a position, perhaps, to compare in greater detail these two main approaches to systematic theology, the ontological and the existentialist.

(i) THE ONTOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THEOLOGY.

It seems to me that the basic tenet of the ontological approach is that man, in analysing, for example, his own finitude, comes upon infinity within it. But this infinity is no mere 'Anknüpfungspunkt', not an empty notion without real content. Rather does it seem that a real knowledge of God is possible in this way; and this knowledge is such that in some sense the historical-dynamic revelation of God confirms it, and conforms to it. Metaphorically speaking, the ontological analysis is a vessel into which historical revelation is poured, to which it conforms itself, and without which the historical revelation could not be received. Thus, such an ontological knowledge comes to have something of a normative function over man's subsequent appropriation of God's historic self disclosure. There is here a sense in which historic 'revelation' is merely 'confirmation' of that of which ^{man} becomes aware in his existential self-analysis.

If we grasp this basic assumption of the ontological approach, we can proceed to interpret certain interesting comments Tillich has to make about it.*

Tillich states the priority of the ontological enquiry when he writes : "It is . . . wrong to derive the question implied in human existence from the revelatory answer. This is impossible because the revelatory answer is meaningless if there is no question to which it is the answer. Man cannot receive an answer to a question he has not asked".^{***} He does practically the same thing when he asserts : " . . . the form of the theological answer is NOT independent of the form of the existential question".^{***} He does so again : "The answer 'the Christ' cannot be created by man, but man can receive it and express it according to the way he has asked for it."^{***} Again Tillich presses home the priority of the ontological enquiry : " . . . man cannot receive answers to questions he has never asked".^{****} Tillich summarises the so-called method of correlation in this way, which highlights his divergence from an existentialist like Bultmann: "Theology formulates the answers implied in human divine self-manifestation under the guidance of the questions implied in human existence. This is a circle which drives man to a point where question and answer are not separated. This point, however, is not a moment in time. It belongs to man's essential being, to the unity of his finitude with

*The classical instance of ontologism is to be found of course within the Roman Catholic dogmatic system, where it is held to be heretical to deny the 'natural knowability of God' by reason. See Ludwig Ott, Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma, 4th. edit., (Cork 1960), pps. 13 f.

^{***}Syst. Theol., II, p. 15.

^{***}Syst. Theol., II, p. 17.

^{****}Syst. Theol., I, p. 73

~~the~~ the infinity in which he was created and from which he is separated. A symptom of both the essential unity and the existential separation of finite man from his infinity is his ability to ask about the infinite to which he belongs: the fact that he must ask about it indicates that he is separated from it".² Now the fact of supreme importance for our purposes here is that question and answer, finitude and infinity CONJOIN AT A POINT WHICH IS NOT A MOMENT IN TIME; that is, the answer manifests itself, infinity bestows itself, within man's being, and thus ARE NOT IMPARTED TO MAN FROM OUTWITH HIMSELF AT A POINT IN TIME, IN HISTORY, IN THE WORLD IN WHICH MAN EXPERIENCES RELATION. Thus we see that it is characteristic of this ontological approach of Tillich's that man's enquiry itself becomes normative for the perception of revelation, and that the revelation itself is not necessarily an historical and temporal 'occurrence'.

To be fair to Tillich, he admits that this method of theologizing does raise an enormous problem. He is aware that this controlling, normative function of man's enquiry may proceed so far that it prejudices the content of revelation. Of this problem, a great perennial problem of systematic theology, Tillich writes : "Since

²Syst. Theol., I, p. 69. The ontological nature of Tillich's theology can be easily seen in the following places: Syst. Theol., I, pps. 69, 72, 73, 173, 181, 207, 210-11, 212, 231, 263; Syst. Theol., II, pps. 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 144, 212.

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Schleiermacher, it has also been present whenever a philosophy of religion was used as an entering door into the theological system, and the problem arose of how far the door determines the structure of the house, or the house the door".^x As we shall see presently, it is just this problem which is at the basis of the divergence between ontological and existentialist theology. Tillich is too great a theologian not to admit the possibility that " . . . the question can prejudice the answer to such a degree that the revelatory character of the answer is lost. No method is a guaranty against such failure. Theology, like all enterprises of the human mind, is ambiguous".^{xx} We are now ready to turn to the second approach to systematic theology.

(ii) THE EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH TO THEOLOGY.

It seems to me that the basic tenet of the existentialist approach is that man, in analysing his own existence, can do no more than to become aware of his own 'incompleteness', which awareness serves as nothing more than an 'Anknüpfungspunkt' for God's dynamic and historical self-manifestation in a 'moment' of time and history. We have seen this view-point again and again, especially in Bultmann's argument in The Question of Natural Revelation.

^xSyst. Theol., II, p. 16.

^{xx}Op. cit., p. 18.

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Bultmann's essay Points of Contact and Conflict^{*} makes it quite clear that God's historic self-disclosure does not require to accommodate itself to man's awareness of the transcendent which he gains in his existential self-analysis. Thus the 'Anknüpfungspunkt' which man has in his self-analysis is no more than a geometrical point which is the beginning of a wider and deeper relationship which in content transcends the point of contact. Thus for the existentialist theologian it is unthinkable, not to say abhorrent, that man's 'natural' awareness of the transcendent could have a controlling and definitive function over God's self-impartation which takes place in the 'moment', in the spacial-temporal encounter. Thus the existentialist may insist that 'revelation reveals'; it reveals that which was

^{*}Essays, pps. 133 f.; this essay is important in that it indicates Bultmann's definition of 'Anknüpfungspunkt'. For this see especially pps. 135-138. We have already referred to passages from these pages, but this quotation is typical: "GOD'S ACTION WITH MAN through his Word naturally has NO POINT OF CONTACT ('Anknüpfungspunkt') IN MAN or in human intellectual life, to which God must accommodate himself" (p. 135). Such quotations could of course be multiplied from Bultmann's essays. It is important to note that what Bultmann fears is the accommodation of God's subsequent action to man's enquiry, which is the basic fear of ontological theology experienced by existentialists. The use of the word 'Anknüpfungspunkt' in modern German is interesting. As a theological term it was of course popularized in the Barth-Brunner controversy, Barth's famous Nein! being directed against the notion that God's Word required a human 'Anknüpfungspunkt' at all. Bultmann thus occupies a kind of half-way position between a theologian like Barth and one like Tillich. He is not prepared to deny it wholly as is Barth, but is unwilling to give it the content and controlling function that Tillich suggests. In modern German, the verb 'anknüpfen' is used almost exclusively of interpersonal relationships. It can therefore mean begin, enter into (a friendship, relationship), find a common ground, interest, from which a relationship might grow. A common usage is, for instance, 'Ich suche einen Anknüpfungspunkt für eine weitere Bekanntschaft mit X'. But such an 'Anknüpfungspunkt' only serves as a beginning; it does not necessarily control or prejudice the subsequent form of the friendship.

(anknüpfen)

hitherto not accessible to man. Existentialist theology insists upon this insight. It fears that an ontological theology in the last analysis does away with this notion of revelation; it fears that if man's ontological insight has a controlling function and a positive content, God's historic 'momentary' self-disclosure merely CONFIRMS that of which man already had an awareness. It fears, and we have seen that Tillich admits that the fear is not groundless, that ontological theology may substitute 'confirmation' for 'revelation'.

Thus we can explain Bultmann's fear of theological propositions (i.e. propositions which are not expressions of historicity). Thus also we can explain his zeal for the 'moment', for the concrete historical encounter. If a thoroughly ontological theology of the type existentialists fear were accepted, the 'moment' of impartation, of genuine encounter, would be vastly diminished in importance. If it had any function left at all, this would be merely to confirm what man had already discovered. And if this were to happen, the concepts revelation, historicity, temporality and so on would be dislodged from that central position accorded them, as we have insisted throughout this thesis, by the biblical notion of historic revelation, and by the radical historicity of the career of Jesus Christ. This, I should like to conclude, is the crux of the divergence between existentialist and ontologist. We saw how Tillich described the problem in these terms --- whether the door determines the structure of the house, or the house the door. In terms of existentialist theology, we may say that the existentialist fears that the door will indeed determine the structure of the house; it is for this reason that he

will allow a 'door' of the smallest possible area, not one which will determine the only possible framework or scaffolding to which the house itself must conform. We saw also how Tillich denied that the point at which question and answer, finitude and infinity co-incide was a moment in time --- but for Bultmann this point is precisely that, a 'moment' in time.*

We have said that these fears, experienced by Bultmann, are 'existentialist' ones. This is, I think, true. In order to show that such fears are not confined to Bultmann, let us glance briefly at several ~~other~~ thinkers in the 'existentialist tradition'. Thus David E. Roberts says of the thought of Pascal : "Through nature, in short, we can dimly discern enough of the presence of the hidden God to know that we have lost true knowledge of Him, but natural theology cannot provide any sort of resting place. Its main function, for Pascal, is the negative one of making man so aware of the inadequacy of philosophical knowledge of God that he sees the need for a mediator".** The similarities between Pascal's and Bultmann's positions are thus clear; it is the 'hidden God', not truly known, who is disclosed in nature; for Bultmann, man attains to no true knowledge of the living God by examining existence, but gets only the vaguest notion of 'God'. For them both it is clear that 'natural' knowledge

*Two other essays of Bultmann of great interest for our subject here are of course, The Question of Natural Revelation, (Essays, pps. 90 f.), and Prophecy and Fulfilment, (Essays, pps. 182 f.).

**Existentialism and Religious Belief, p. 49.

of God has no more than a negative function. This function for them both is to make man turn towards a mediator, that is, him who manifests God and his action concretely, in the flesh.

In terms of this present discussion, it is also quite clear that Martin Buber is an 'existentialist'. Buber states his position with reference to 'natural theology' in this unambiguous way : "The beginning of philosophizing means that this Something changes from an object of imagination, wishes, and feelings to one that is conceptually comprehensible, to an object of thought. It does not matter whether this object of thought is called 'Speech' (LOGOS), because in all and each one hears it speak, answer and directly address one; or 'the Unlimited' (APEIRON), because it has already leapt over every limit that one may try to set for it; or simply 'Being'[✱], or whatever. If the living quality of the conception of God refuses to enter into this conceptual image, it is tolerated alongside of it, usually in an unprecise form, as in the end identical with it or at least dependent on it. Or it is depreciated as an unsatisfactory surrogate, helpful to men incapable of thought".^{✱✱} We could hardly ask for a clearer statement of the 'existentialist'

[✱]Cf. the theological terminology of Tillich here.

^{✱✱}Buber, Eclipse of God: Studies in the Relation Between Religion and Philosophy, (New York 1952), chapter VIII, 'God and the Spirit of Man', printed in Herberg, op. cit., pps. 108-113, see pps. 108-9.

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(as contrasted with the 'ontological') position than this. Here Buber gives expression to his fears that a conceptual image will control a living historic disclosure, that a living historic revelation will have to adapt itself to an ontological enquiry and its results, that 'revelation' will do little more than 'confirm' the content of the conceptual image. There is little doubt that Buber's idea of the human 'Anknüpfungspunkt' for divine self-disclosure is almost identical with that of Bultmann. Buber describes his notion in this way : "The turning is the greatest form of 'beginning'. When God tells man, 'Open me the gate of the turning as narrow as the point of a needle, and I shall open it so wide that carriages can enter it', or when God tells Israel, 'Turn to me, and I shall create you anew', the meaning of human beginning becomes clear as never before. By turning, man arises anew as God's child".* Here again we have the human 'Anknüpfungspunkt' as narrow as a needle-point, opening the way to the fulness of God's revelation which transcends mightily the 'Anknüpfungspunkt' which prepared it. Buber sketches the frightful existential risks run by him who tries to preconceive God, prior to dealing with him in the contradictions of human existence : " 'Fear of God', accordingly, never means to the Jews that they ought to be afraid

*Israel and the World, 'The Faith of Judaism', pps. 13-27 = Herberg, pps 253-265, see p. 259.

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of God, but that, trembling, they ought to be aware of his incomprehensibility. The fear of God is the creaturely knowledge of the darkness to which none of our spiritual powers can reach, and out of which God reveals himself. Therefore, 'the fear of God' is rightly called 'the beginning of knowledge' (Ps. 111:10). It is the dark gate through which man must pass if he is to enter into the love of God. He who wishes to avoid passing through this gate, he who begins to provide himself with a comprehensible God, constructed thus and not otherwise, runs the risk of having to despair of God in view of the actualities of history and life, or of falling into inner falsehood. Only through the fear of God does man enter so deep into the love of God that he cannot again be cast out of it".^{*} Thus Buber is convinced that by defining only a narrow 'Anknüpfungspunkt' is man spared the shattering experience of being torn apart between, on the one hand, the conceptual image which he has constructed of God, ^{on the other,} and, the actual contradictions and ambiguities of historical existence in and through which he must eventually try to glimpse God, and decide, sometimes agonizingly, for His presence and righteousness. As does Bultmann, Buber insists that the 'Anknüpfungspunkt' is nothing more

^{*}Israel and the World, 'The Two Foci of the Jewish Soul', pps. 28-40, = Herberg, pps. 266-276, see p. 269.

than a mere 'beginning'; its purpose is to lead man towards and into an interpersonal relationship with the living God; unless it does so, the Anknüpfungspunkt is futile. Buber describes this in this way: "But fear of God is just a gate; it is not a house in which one can comfortably settle down --- he who should want to live in it in adoration would neglect the performance of the essential commandment. God is incomprehensible, but he can be known through a bond of mutual relationship".[⌘]

We have considered the views of Bultmann, of Pascal, and of Buber, all in the 'existentialist' tradition ---- what, we must finally ask, of Kierkegaard? From the point of view of the history of theology, Kierkegaard is of course important as the so-called 'founder' of the modern existentialist tradition. It is clear to me^{that} modern and contemporary existentialism in its attitude to a 'natural theology' of the Tillich-type derives to a great extent from the Kierkegaardian attack on and rejection of 'Reason'. After all, Kierkegaard was appalled at the prospect of God having to accommodate himself to the systematization and the systems of natural man. It is for this reason that Kierkegaard insisted that at the advent of the

[⌘]Op. cit., p. 269.

Paradox 'Reason' (in Kierkegaard's definition of it) must abdicate from its proud throne; thus he also insisted that God's self-disclosure needs no human 'occasion' to prepare for it. We have already argued that Kierkegaard went far too far so that he posited no human 'Anknüpfungspunkt' at all. Nevertheless, Kierkegaard has had a deep effect on the contemporary theological scene, most obviously of all on Barth, but certainly also on those existentialists who are willing to allow the narrowest possible 'Anknüpfungspunkt', a mere starting-point vastly transcended by subsequent revelation.

Finally, we must ask: which of the two approaches, the ontological or the existentialist, do we favour? It is clear that the whole doctrine of the 'moment' must favour the second, the existentialist, approach. It does so for these reasons. First, this approach does seem to safeguard revelation as revelation, and does not regard it as mere 'confirmation'; revelation discloses to man what he previously did not know. Second, the doctrine of the 'moment' suggests that the divine-human relationship is an interpersonal encounter; this notion seems to be safeguarded by the existentialist approach to theology. Third, another way of putting this is to point out that the existentialist approach enshrines the notion of "impartation"; it holds that disclosure is made in and through historic encounters, but that this disclosure is never final, requiring constant re-correction and re-adjustment by subsequent encounters and the understandings they bring. Fourth, yet another way of putting this same

insight is to point out that this question/answer terminology of Tillich (in his method of correlation) is not free from ambiguity, in that it might suggest that revelation is a propositional business. We might profitably compare Tillich's question/answer approach with Buber's conviction that theology is primarily concerned with a 'vision', man's 'glimpse' of God. Finally, we contend that the existentialist approach does much to prevent that frightful spiritual schizophrenia in which man is faced with a yawning contradiction between, on the one hand, his self-constructed picture of God, and, on the other, the shattering events of which he is required to make sense (often without much success) in the world of time and history, the undoubted cause of much bitter irreligion and cynicism. Is it not one of the great strengths of the existentialist approach that it insists that man can only form gradually (sometimes by 'trial' and 'error'), in 'moment' after 'moment', in encounter after encounter, an understanding of God and of himself, not in abstraction from suffering and contradiction and ambiguity, but in and through them ?

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