

CURRENT THEOLOGY
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I

Canon Coppens has given us the best modern study of the *sensus plenior*, situating it in the larger context of the harmony existing between the Old and New Testaments.¹ In the second chapter he enumerates the four reasons which are commonly given to establish the existence of this sense: (1) the use of Scripture by Christ, the early Church, and the Fathers;² (2) the dogmatic application of the Old Testament to the Christian faith; (3) the principle of unity, both in revelation and inspiration, which underlies the Old and New Testaments; (4) the divine intention of inserting in the sacred writings, from the beginning, a hidden meaning which only the future can disclose.³ P. Gaston Courtade, author of the article "Inspiration" in the new edition of the *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, has recently reopened the question of the *sensus plenior*.⁴ Joining forces with the minority group,⁵ P. Courtade asserts, with his customary vigor, that the very definition of the *sensus plenior* implies a contradiction, since it comprises two irreconcilable elements. The first of these elements is the attaching of this sense to the literal sense, as its prolongation and completion; the second element is the absence of this extended meaning from the consciousness of the hagiographer. Arguing from the notion of inspiration as a unified action whose term is the twofold authorship, divine and human, of the whole work, substance and form, ideas and words, P. Courtade denies that any text can possess a sense which, eluding the intention of the instrumental author, would cease to be imputable to him and would owe its origin solely to the principal author. At the same time he protests against what he calls the "vivisection" of a

¹ J. Coppens, *Les harmonies des deux Testaments* (Tournai-Paris: Casterman, 1949). A new study of the "spiritual sense" in Scripture is now offered by the Louvain School: L. Cerfaux, J. Coppens, and J. Gribomont, *Problèmes et méthodes d'exégèse théologique* (Analecta Lovaniensia Biblica; Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1950).

² For a good survey of early Christian exegesis and contemporary positions on the senses of Scripture see W. J. Burghardt, S.J., "Early Christian Exegesis," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES*, XI (1950), 78-116.

³ Coppens, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-46.

⁴ G. C. Courtade, "Les écritures ont-elles un sens 'plenier'?", *Recherches de science religieuse*, XXXVII (1950), 481-99.

⁵ P. Patrizi, *Institutio de interpretatione Bibliorum* (3d ed.; 1876), pp. 213-14, and Rudolph Bierberg, "Does Sacred Scripture Have a *Sensus Plenior*?", *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, X (1948), 185 and 189, have questioned the validity of the *sensus plenior* as a genuine scriptural sense.

text by which an exegete would seek, now the sense which the hagiographer knew and intended, now the sense which God gave to the text and which remained entirely unknown to the secondary author. In brief, P. Courtade holds that texts, as inspired, cannot have received from God a sense which remained unknown to the hagiographer. From his analysis of the charism of inspiration the writer concludes: "The meaning which the Holy Spirit attached and that which the sacred writer attached to their common words coincide always and everywhere, exactly and in all points. Rather, instead of saying that they coincide, which would imply a distinction, the words of Scripture have only one unique meaning, which is both divine and human."⁶ Of course, P. Courtade excludes the typical sense from his discussion. He is interested only in the literal sense and possible extensions of it.

The difficulty is a serious one, as P. Coppens was quick to recognize. But P. Courtade's line of argument does not mean that he throws out of court the *sensus plenior* of a biblical text. In the second part of his essay he concedes that a text, in its value and import (*portée*) may go far beyond the proper literal sense which was known and willed by the author at the time of writing. The progress of revelation, the immense distance between the brilliant light of the New Testament and the dim foreshadowings of the Old, have necessarily given to the words of Scripture a meaning which far outstripped the horizon of the human author. It is this new light reflected by the New on the Old Testament which gives a profounder meaning to the ancient text. Accordingly, it seems that P. Courtade does not differ as radically from the common opinion as might seem at first sight. If we accept his definition of the literal sense, restricting it exclusively, as he does, to the consciously willed affirmations of the human author, no one can complain at his elimination of the *sensus plenior*. Other Catholic scholars take a less restricted view of the literal sense, and, without disrupting the unity of the act of inspiration, hold that God, at the moment of composition, can attach to these words an objective and proper significance which transcends the limited knowledge of the human author.

While on the senses of Scripture, we may note a recent article of Fr. Athanasius Miller, O.S.B., Secretary of the Biblical Commission, this time on the typical sense.⁷ He points out that one of the great exegetical ideals of the present is to work a rapprochement between that rich spiritual exegesis which we associate with the best in the patristic era, and the literal-historical exegesis which flourishes today. Between the two there should exist a state of equilibrium; Mary and Martha must join hands in a common contribu-

⁶ Courtade, *art. cit.*, p. 489.

⁷ A. Miller, "Zur Typologie des A.T.," *Antonianum*, XXV (1950), 425-34.

tion to the better understanding of the word of God. The effort to derive as much spiritual nourishment out of Scripture as possible is certainly praiseworthy. But, as the history of exegesis in practically every century shows, there is a danger that the literal sense may be neglected or altogether overlooked. And once that is lost all is lost; for spiritual exegesis is valid only as long as it rests on the solid foundation of the literal sense. But all one need do to avoid this dangerous hermeneutic is to follow the directives of the Church, which has very clearly pointed out the way to a sane and profitable exegesis of the word of God. No better example could be cited than the Letter of the Biblical Commission (Aug. 20, 1941) to the Archbishops and Bishops of Italy, the occasion of which was the unfortunate Cohenel incident.⁸

The typical sense provides the chief source for the spiritual exegesis of the Old Testament. To prove its existence is unnecessary nor need one delay on the necessity of the divine intent that this person or thing serve as a forerunner of a greater reality. The author has done us a service in recalling briefly the inner similarity or analogy (*innere Ähnlichkeit*) which must exist between the type and antitype.⁹ It is this similarity which is the basis of all sound typology and constitutes the object of the divine intention to prefigure.

Coming down to particular applications, Fr. Miller considers it wrong to speak of a typical sense in Gen. 3:15. He prefers to call it a prophecy, whose fulfillment is worked out by a long and gradual development. Granted that we have in the passage a spiritual warfare of the woman and her seed against Satan and his seed, we still cannot apply this "enmity" as a type to Mary or to Christ. In Gen. 3:15, rather than a matter of type and antitype, we have the first scene in the continuing drama of salvation, a spiritual battle, to be sure, against the "old serpent," but one which begins with Eve, culminates with the death of the Savior on the Cross, and enjoys its perfect manifestation at the end of time with the Second Coming. It is a war in which all are involved, all "the good," but not all in the same way and to the same extent. Christ is there eminently as the *causa principalis* of the victory, next comes Mary, but she also is a victor only through Christ. Here is something more than typical prefigurement; the literal sense refers directly to this higher reality, the whole war and the ultimate total victory. What really lies at the basis of Gen. 3:15 is the great doctrine of the Mystical Body. We have a picture of a great organic unity and unfolding which begins with our first parents and reaches its term in Christ. Quite different

⁸ A.A.S., XXXIII (1941), 465-72.

⁹ Miller, *art. cit.*, p. 427.

is the case of Gen. 22, where the literal sense simply refers to the sacrifice of Isaac which, in turn, is a type of the Sacrifice of the Cross.

Nor again, from the point of view of the divine economy, is it correct to say that the Old Testament portrayal of a "marriage" between God and humanity is a type of the New Testament union between Christ and His Church. It is more accurate to see in this terminology a union of love already existing in the Old Testament, though quite imperfectly, which shall be sublimated through Christ to a love which is in no sense discontinuous with that of the old dispensation. Here again, God's bond of love with mankind, the great *mysterium Christi* (Eph. 3:18), must be grasped in its vertical and horizontal totality.

Up to this point Fr. Miller has spoken of the typical sense in its technical meaning, or, as he calls it, the "explicit" typical sense. He then goes on to an "implicit" typical sense which is the extension of typology according to the Pauline idea that the entire Old Testament is a *figura Novi*. This implicit typology has no great probative value. It rather presupposes the truth of faith as already known with certainty. But it serves for illustration and deepens our appreciation of the truth already accepted. Unfortunately, poor choices can be made, and Fr. Miller refers to several abuses of this implicit typology. As a final word he reminds us that these judicious applications of a sane typology do not lie on the surface; they must be dug out by the persevering work of the exegete who realizes that he is dealing, not merely with history, but *Heilsgeschichte*.

II

In his Presidential Address to the Society of Biblical Literature, Dec. 27, 1950, Robert H. Pfeiffer pleaded for what he calls "keeping facts and faith, history and revelation, research and theological speculation, separate and distinct for their mutual benefit."¹⁰ While the author tries to be fair to both history and theology, the above quotation gives some idea of his notion of theology. Throughout the article theological truth is contrasted with fact, to the great disadvantage of the former; while in one case the "faith" element of the biblical narrative is characterized as "imaginary stories and homiletic developments composed ad hoc."¹¹ What Pfeiffer really professes, I think, is the old standard of double truth, one factual and real, the other imaginary and subjective howsoever useful it may be in one's devotional life. Strauss wrote his *Life of Jesus* from the same viewpoint

¹⁰ R. H. Pfeiffer, "Facts and Faith in Biblical History," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXX (1951), 1-14.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

and, in our own times, Bultmann, under the influence of neo-orthodoxy, has consciously divided his study of Christ into two areas, those of historical criticism and pneumatic exegesis.¹² Though very generous in quoting Catholic sources (even Leo XIII) on the requirements of historical research, his own idea of what constitutes "faith" and "dogma" reflects a view rarely found in Christianity before the sixteenth century. One cannot help but feel that the dice are loaded in Pfeiffer's argument; if faith and dogma were only what he says they are, most of us would be glad to discard them in our study of the Bible. The basic disagreement between us, as is so often the case, concerns the nature and object of the act of faith.¹³

But Catholics are not the only ones who will object to Pfeiffer's thesis, especially since it is quite clear that Pfeiffer did not have Catholics principally in mind when reading his lesson to his colleagues. Within the last decade, as Pfeiffer notes with some alarm, there has been a great renewal of interest in biblical theology among serious students. In passing it may be noted that he would have no objection to the theological approach to the Bible for pulpit use. One of the most articulate exponents of this renewal of theological interest, on a scientific level, is Dr. Floyd V. Filson. In fact, it seems that Pfeiffer's paper is a rebuttal of the quite different approach to biblical history proposed just one year before by President Filson when he was retiring from the presidency of the same Society.¹⁴ The following paragraph is a good statement of Dr. Filson's view on the place of theology in the study of biblical history.

I once shared a viewpoint according to which in critical study I put aside my faith and examined the facts to see what they were and how they could best be stated in their relations, after which I was at liberty to resume my life as an active believer and use those facts as I considered proper. The radical error in that way of

¹² A study of neo-orthodoxy and its relation to biblical research is made by John H. Otwell in *Harvard Theological Review*, XLIII (1950), 145-57. One paragraph of his summation is worth quoting: "From this discussion, the basic issue which Neo-Orthodoxy poses for biblical scholarship should have emerged. It is the continuation or dissolution of the historical examination of the Bible. The neo-orthodox thinker may insist that he warmly welcomes historical research into the Bible as long as it does not exceed its limitations—as he would define them. Unfortunately, those limitations, in effect, are: if your work does not support my position it is false. Under such conditions the historian becomes either silent or a collector of small bits of information which can be used to make a dogmatic presentation appear to have an air of erudition" (p. 154). This should not be taken to mean that scientific investigation is subject to *no* limitations.

¹³ For an altogether different point of view in a presidential address before a biblical society see now J. P. O'Donnell, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, XIII (1951), 117-22.

¹⁴ Floyd V. Filson, "Method in Studying Biblical History," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXIX (1950), 1-18.

thinking was its placing of scholarship under the banner of temporary or practical atheism. The believer cannot consistently and rationally take such an attitude. To demand that a believer put aside his faith while he studies and take no account of God in the explanation of what goes on in history is to ask him to surrender his faith. He cannot have any portion of his life which is not related to his faith, and he cannot accept an account of history which leaves the will and working of God out of account. In the light of his faith he has to say that the spectator attitude would be not only impossible but sinful. As a committed believer his study is a service to God. He will insist that to be objective involves dealing with life as it really is, and that this involves taking into account not merely the existence, but far more, the reign and work of God.¹⁶

In that viewpoint, as against Pfeiffer, I heartily concur, even though we would very likely disagree in our theological presuppositions. But God's intervention in history, at a definite period of time and with a definite people, the Jews, is a fact; and any study of biblical history which fails to reckon with that fact is defective. Pfeiffer would reduce what is "objective" to the human, observable events in Israelite history, to all that she had in common with the other nations. But does this do justice to the facts of Old Testament history? Can an objective study of this history be confined within the framework of merely human personalities and natural phenomena? No instructed Catholic will yield to Dr. Pfeiffer in emphasizing the importance of an impartial philological and historico-critical study of the text. It is enough to point to the Encyclical of Pius XII on Scripture studies, an urgent appeal to utilize every technical skill, all the resources of modern scholarship, the better to understand the text.¹⁶

But you need more keys than that of archaeology and literary criticism to unlock the treasure-house of the Bible. And it is in view of the unique character of the Bible as the word of God, disclosing a divine plan in the world, that we must, on the score of objectivity, reckon with a dimension which is not found in profane history. To be adequate, our handling of the Old Testament must be both historical (in the narrower sense of the word) and theological. The two are distinct, as Dr. Pfeiffer points out; but they should not be separated. And even though it may be true that "each of these areas requires such specialization that competence in one or the other is a sufficient achievement for one individual," the majority of us do not feel dispensed, however inadequate may be our talents, from finding God in the pages of Israel's history.

In spite of the misgivings of those who deprecate "the unhappy marriage of history and theology,"¹⁷ the past quarter-century has seen a widespread

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15. ¹⁶ AAS, XXXV (1943), 297-325. ¹⁷ Pfeiffer, *art. cit.*, p. 13.

renewal of interest in Old Testament theology as distinct from the history of Hebrew religion.¹⁸ Notwithstanding the vitality of this renaissance in biblical theology, there is still widespread disagreement on the purpose and scope of the science. By far the best introduction to the whole problem will be found in a monograph by Robert Dentan of the Berkeley Divinity School.¹⁹ This closely printed work, an abridgment of his doctoral dissertation, first surveys the history of the discipline. In the second part, the writer comes to the heart of the problem, the nature, function, scope, and method of Old Testament theology. His final, descriptive definition, on page 66, summarizes the conclusions of this study:

Its scope should be, not the sum-total of religious phenomena in Israel, but rather the ideas and concepts of the normative or distinctive religion taught or assumed by the canonical books of the Old Testament, all of which have their center in a distinctive doctrine of God (theo-logy); it should include broadly the subjects of ethics and cultus so far as these are expressions of distinctive religious ideas, but should specifically exclude mere antiquarian information about laws and religious customs; it should aim, not merely to give a description of the religious ideas of Israel, but to communicate in a vivid and moving way the piety which clothed those ideas with life and color. We should also add that its method is historical and critical, but like all other historical studies, demands sympathy, insight, and inner participation from the student, and that an invaluable precondition for such inner participation is that the student of the theology of the Old Testament should in some sense share the Old Testament faith—to the extent that that faith continues to form a part of the Christian religious consciousness. Finally we should observe that it is the function of Old Testament theology to act as the culminating discipline of the Old Testament sciences and to constitute a bridge over which the most significant conclusions of technical studies in Old Testament Introduction,

¹⁸ The great Swiss scholar, Walther Eichrodt, who has written the most comprehensive and original work on Old Testament theology, describes the history of Hebrew religion as a "lengthwise section" in which the story of Israel's religious development is related in chronological sequence with careful attention to the historical forces which influenced that development. A theology of the Old Testament, on the contrary, is a cross-section (*Querschnitt*) of that religion in its classic form or at its creative best, arranged in some kind of logical or "theological" order. Very good, but there will naturally be disagreement in determining just what the great creative period was in the long and varied history of Israel. And as for the classic form, we must reckon with the different levels of theology which are found in such diversified works as the Pentateuch, the prophets, and sapiential literature. It seems unnecessary to add that, in handling the materials of an Old Testament theology, the biblical student cannot confidently assume that the Israelite religion steadily ascends from the lower to the higher or that it evolved from a crude animism to the brilliant synthesis of the post-exilic age.

¹⁹ Robert C. Dentan, *Preface to Old Testament Theology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), pp. 1-74.

History, and Exegesis pass to become useful materials for the biblical theology of the New Testament and for Historical, Systematic, and Practical Theology.

Whoever wishes to work in the field of Old Testament theology will do well to ponder these words. This does not mean that there will be complete agreement; but Dentan has given us the elements of the problem and his own conscientious solution. Professor Ernest R. Lacheman, reviewing Dentan's book,²⁰ sees a danger in this revival of biblical theology, holding that it is illusory to think that we can mix theology with the historical and critical method. The similarity between his position and that of Pfeiffer is clear. In back of Lacheman's argument is, of course, the assumption that theology is incompatible with objective biblical scholarship. Mixing the two will only serve to expose theology for the fraud that it is. Differences go deep in this matter and perhaps it is best to admit that heated debate will get us no place as long as the contestants start from radically different presuppositions. There is one favor, however, we can fairly ask: those who hold principles different from our own should refrain from claiming a monopoly on the word "objectivity," which is supposed to mark the dividing line between scholarship and pious arbitrariness.

Meanwhile biblical theology continues to preoccupy Continental scholars, both Protestant and Catholic. Th. C. Vriezen, professor at Gröningen, has recently published a work in which he combines the historico-critical method with practical religious exigencies.²¹ His long introduction is another plea for a vital union between historical and theological criticism. Eissfeldt believes that, by and large, Vriezen has fulfilled his purpose of bridging the gap between the two approaches. Fr. Bertrand Hessler, O.F.M., has recently given us a good summary of the problems involved in a theology of the Old Testament.²² He believes that the first task of the biblical theologian is to uncover the central idea governing the thought of the Old Testament. Parting company with Procksch who sees the messianic or christological element as the underlying idea, and with Eichrodt, for whom the covenant is the basic concept, Hessler believes that the Kingdom of God is the key idea which best explains both the thought of the Old Testament and its harmony with the New.

²⁰ Ernest R. Lacheman, "The Renaissance of Biblical Theology," *Journal of Bible and Religion*, XIX (1951), 71-75.

²¹ Th. C. Vriezen, *Hoofddlijnen der Theologie van het Oude Testament* (Wageningen: Veenman en Zonen, 1949). I owe my information on this book to Eissfeldt's review in the *Zeitschrift f. alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1949-50, p. 312.

²² B. Hessler, "De theologiae biblicae V.T. problemate," *Antonianum*, XXV (1950), 407-24.

III

The best general treatment I have seen of the first eleven chapters in the Book of Genesis is found in three articles of Fr. Edward P. Arbez, S.S., professor at the Catholic University.²³ I recommend them especially to non-Catholics, many of whom uncritically lump Catholic biblical scholarship with some kind of fundamentalism, while they bemoan the shackled liberty of Catholic exegetes. Fr. Arbez amplifies the hints already given in the encyclicals and, more recently, in the Letter of the Biblical Commission to the late Cardinal Suhard. Again we are warned of the pitfalls of concordism, arising from a misunderstanding of the writer's purpose and his manner of writing, which is so different from that of the modern historian. These essays try—successfully, I believe—to set the problems of these chapters in a proper light, utilizing our latest acquisitions in science and our vastly improved knowledge of how the ancients expressed their thoughts. Needless to say, encouragement is given to approach these texts with every historico-critical skill at our disposal. Positive and final solutions are not sought, but enough is given, and clearly, to point the way for us. His summary, in the concluding essay, of the religious teaching of these chapters contains the following points. Man depends totally on God, a personal being, distinct from and superior to the world He created. But man can abuse his freedom and thus sin enters the world. Yet God's purposes are not frustrated nor is His will to redeem man. By a selective process we see God's choice narrowing down, especially through the device of genealogies, until it comes to Abraham, father of the Israelite people. All this marks out the history narrated as sacred history, in back of which is, in popular form, the conviction that God's control over the events in the world is absolute. While the narrative certainly reflects the mentality and traditions of the ancient East, the religious teaching gives it a depth and unity which surpass all contemporary literatures. For the orientation of seminarians in these extremely difficult chapters I can think of nothing better than these essays.

Coming to more specific problems in the narrative of Genesis, Fr. Humphrey J. T. Johnson, already known for his small volume, *The Bible and Early Man*,²⁴ has written on the formation of Eve.²⁵ All will agree with his assumption that we have two different creation narratives in the opening chapters, the second account beginning with Gen. 2:5. As for the narrative

²³ Edward P. Arbez, "Genesis I–XI and Prehistory," *American Ecclesiastical Review*, CXXIII (1950), 81–92, 202–13, 284–94.

²⁴ Reviewed by J. E. Coleran in *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES*, IX (1948), 309.

²⁵ Humphrey J. T. Johnson, "The Bible, the Church, and the Formation of Eve," *Downside Review*, LXIX (1951), 16–24.

of Eve's creation, the patristic tradition, with the exception of Origen, adopted a rigidly literal interpretation. The Scholastic period followed the same line of exegesis; but in the sixteenth century the Dominican Cajetan broke with the long-standing tradition and took the passage as a parable. What is significant here is not that Cajetan failed to carry the day, but that he was not condemned.

The nineteenth century, with the newly-acquired knowledge of the natural sciences and the diffusion of evolutionary ideas, marks a new period of interpretation. Several prominent scholars, chief among them Père Lagrange,²⁶ supported the view that the narrative is a parable, teaching the unity and equality of nature as found in both sexes, and particularly the sacredness of conjugal love and its divinely established finality. In 1909 the question was submitted to the Biblical Commission and the answer came back that the *formatio primae mulieris ex primo homine* was one of those propositions whose "sensus litteralis historicus" could not be called into question. Fr. Johnson argues that the parabolic or figurative interpretation of the Eve narrative is compatible with this decision, though he admits that, from 1909 to the present, the exegetes have quite generally abandoned certain symbolic or vision theories, such as that of Fr. Hummelauer. Aware that the question entered a new phase with the Letter to Cardinal Suhard, Fr. Johnson clearly seems to be on the side of those favoring a less rigid interpretation of the narrative and one more in keeping with the known modes of Oriental writing. To be sure, a form of unity based on the corporal formation of Eve from Adam is in no way required by the doctrine of original sin; descent from a single pair is sufficient to safeguard the hereditary transmission of the sin. The sympathies of most Catholic exegetes will lie in the direction of Fr. Johnson's views, presented with due reserve along with a reminder that an authoritative decision on this matter rests with the magisterium of the Church.

Alberto Colunga, O.P., professor at Salamanca and consultant of the Biblical Commission, has written recently on Gen. 2:18-22.²⁷ He surveys the exegetical tradition from Philo to the present, with special attention paid to the decree of 1909, noting that there is a good deal of exaggeration in the claim that this decree settled all the problems. Distinguishing carefully between the fundamental dogmas taught in the section and the literary form in which they are presented, P. Colunga first isolates what he considers the three essential points in the passage.

²⁶ M. J. Lagrange, *Revue biblique*, IV (1897), 341-80.

²⁷ A. Colunga, "Contenido dogmático de Génesis II: 18-22," *Ciencia tomista*, July-Sept., 1950, pp. 289-309.

In Gen. 2:18–22 several things stand out. First, that the woman, as well as the man, is a special creation of God. This special creation means that man, male and female, could not, because of his rational nature, come into existence by simple evolution from material things. His rational and spiritual soul demands a special creative action on the part of God. But the idea of “special” refers to the nature of man created, not to God’s creative action. . . . Second, that man and woman have the same nature, an identity placed clearly in evidence in Gen. 1:27. Third, conjugal union is to be wrought through marriage whose purpose is the procreation of the species. This thought is also found clearly expressed in Gen. 1:28.²⁸

After enumerating these points, which are above discussion insofar as they pertain to Catholic faith, P. Colunga continues:

To them [the three points above] we add three more, which we propose as questions. First: was the body of woman formed from man’s body, and therefore after it? Second: was it formed from a rib of the man or from some other physical part of him? Third: how far does the divine operation agree with the letter of Gen. 2:18? I do not think that great theological acumen is needed to see the difference between these three questions and the preceding ones. Likewise, all will agree that they belong to those things which, in the language of St. Thomas, are of faith *secundario et per accidens*, inasmuch as they aid in expressing the former.²⁹

On the historical value of the images or figurative language in which the doctrines of Genesis are taught P. Colunga does not wish to give any definitive solution. He prefers to place them among the many obscure questions which the Church allows each one to answer according to his prudent judgment. After calling attention once again to the highly anthropomorphic quality of the passages with which we are dealing, Father Colunga concludes with some sound advice:

My conclusion then is this. In Gen. 2:18 ff., as in other analogous passages, we should strive to define exactly the doctrinal sense of Sacred Scripture, and should be lenient in the interpretation of the historical or literary elements, frequently obscure in books so old. This has two advantages. The first, to learn and teach the faithful the true scriptural doctrine and to avoid the grief of renouncing today what yesterday we gave out or was given to us as a doctrine of the faith. The second, to leave it to the specialists to clarify the obscurities of the Bible with the liberty which scientific investigation demands. In this we do no more than follow

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 302 ff.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 304–5. For a good treatment of the distinction between the scriptural affirmation and the modalities of its expression, cf. D. E. Galbiati, “Arte e ‘storia’ nei racconti della creazione,” *Scuola cattolica*, LXXXVI (1948), 1–23.

the norms, inspired by prudence and charity, which His Holiness inculcates in *Divino afflante Spiritu*.³⁰

Spanish scholars are emphasizing this distinction between doctrine and literary form in their latest publications. P. Ruiz examines the problem of Gen. 2:7 in a manner very similar to that of P. Colunga.³¹ Does the verse force us to hold that the human body was produced, not by any form of evolution, but directly from pre-existent matter? P. Ruiz first sets the passage in its larger context by a glance at creation narratives among other Semitic peoples. A study of extra-biblical cosmogonies demonstrates the literary dependence of our creation narrative on these forerunners; in fact, we may now speak of the "Cosmogonic Narrative" as a distinct literary genre. Undoubtedly the contemporaries of the author of Genesis understood this literary form better than we, and were thus preserved from those aberrations in interpretation which have plagued the exegesis of these passages throughout their long history. All this may be applied to the formation of man, even though much that is crude and revolting in the extra-biblical narratives has been omitted in the Hebrew account.

P. Ruiz claims that these narratives relate something substantially historical, though great allowance must be made for the freedom with which the author recounted his history. The ancient historian, in handling his facts, demanded a larger measure of liberty than his modern counterpart. Of course, the similarities must not blind us to the profound differences which exist between biblical narratives and ancient myths. With these distinctions in mind P. Ruiz claims that in Gen. 2:7 "no one will say that the author intends to describe a concrete fact which took place in a definite place (Eden), on a definite day, but simply to describe in popular fashion the abstract idea of the divine intervention in the formation of man."³²

P. Ruiz wants to make it clear that the author is not giving us a lesson in genetic biology, and consequently Gen. 2:7 does not tell us whether man's body came into being through a directed evolution involving an organic structure, or from some pre-existing inorganic matter. He quotes Th. Schwegler, a German scholar, who has put it concisely by saying that Genesis instructs us on the *Wesen* but not on the *Werden* of man.³³

Accepting the Thomistic distinction between the *res fidei per se* and the

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

³¹ José M. G. Ruiz, "Contenido dogmático de la narración de Génesis 2:7 sobre la formación del hombre," *Estudios bíblicos*, IX (1950), 399-439.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 415.

³³ *Schweizer Rundschau*, XLIV (1944), 634.

res fidei per accidens (in this case the manner of creation), P. Ruiz holds that abandonment of the traditional and strict interpretation of the Fathers should cause neither scandal nor surprise. Their authority in these secondary matters, involving the literary forms of biblical writing, is quite a different thing from their authority in doctrinal matters. Nor has he forgotten that the Holy Father, in *Divino afflante Spiritu*, said that in the many questions arising from the Old Testament there are very few for which we have a unanimous teaching of the Fathers. And this is especially true of the opening chapters of Genesis!

To offer some explanation of how this narrative came to form a part of the Mosaic tradition, P. Ruiz conjectures—and this is his weakest point—that it is a vision of the past granted to some unknown seer.³⁴ We can accordingly classify the narrative as “prophetic history,” since its foundation is factual, even though the truth is communicated by prophetic symbolism. He claims that this type of prophetic literature is found only in Israel. His concluding sentence, drawing together the strands of his argument, will undoubtedly evoke discussion: “Evolutionary theory and the Bible follow two parallel courses; they will never meet nor interfere with one another.”

It is noteworthy that these laudable attempts at understanding the early chapters of Genesis have all been made after *Humani generis*. All will recall that the Encyclical dealt briefly with the evolution of the human body.³⁵ In view of the present state of our knowledge, the scientist and theologian are not simply allowed, but encouraged, to pursue their research. It is not, however, a question to be settled in the public square or in writings intended for popular consumption. Since it is a doctrinal as well as a scientific question, the theological sources must not be overlooked, and the Catholic scholar should maintain a readiness to abide by any final decision which the Church may make.³⁶

We conclude our summary of Pentateuchal questions with a contribution from quite a different quarter. Though his work is not yet well known in this country, Ezekiel Kaufmann, a Palestinian scholar, has been publishing a comprehensive history of the religion of Israel, three large volumes of which have already appeared in Hebrew.³⁷ Kaufmann's work may turn

³⁴ Ruiz, *art. cit.*, p. 434.

³⁵ AAS, XLII (1950), 576.

³⁶ A. Bea, “Die Enzyklika ‘Humani Generis’: Ihre Grundgedanken und ihre Bedeutung,” *Scholastik*, XXVI (1951), 36–56. This is an excellent commentary on the whole Encyclical.

³⁷ *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, LXX (1950), 41–47. Moshe Greenberg offers, in this communication, a summary of Kaufmann's work, which is being subsidized by the Bialik Foundation. I have not seen the original volumes.

out to be the most drastic attack yet made on the theory of Wellhausen. What is of special importance is the emphasis he places on the priesthood in the formation of Israel's religion. Heretofore it has been almost axiomatic to accept the prophetic period as the Golden Age of Israelite thought. Kaufmann insists on the importance of sacerdotal and popular elements in Israel's formation, beginning with the cornerstone of Israelite religion, the Law, formulated anterior to and independent of literary prophecy. Another striking feature of Kaufmann's historical reconstruction is his thesis that our main source for the Israelite priesthood, the Priestly Code, antedates in its entirety the exilic period. This runs directly counter to the keystone of the Wellhausen hypothesis. If Kaufmann's position is ultimately shown to be true, a drastic revision of certain critical presuppositions will be in order. Strangely enough, both he and Wellhausen adopt the same method in coming to opposite conclusions. That method is a comparison of the laws in the P strata with the rest of the Pentateuchal legislation, and with the history of Israel as we have it in the biblical record. Wellhausen held that the ideals and institutions of the priesthood, as contained in P, reflected a late (probably Persian) period. Kaufmann is just as insistent that only the pre-exilic period can explain the conditions reflected in that document. Though we cannot enter into his original and stimulating arguments, his conclusions amount to a rehabilitation of the Israelite priesthood as loyal and zealous proponents of the religion of Yahweh, an honor frequently conceded only to the prophets.

The well-known Jewish scholar, H. L. Ginsberg, has recently called the attention of a larger audience to Kaufmann's work, and endorses the case he has presented.³⁸ Ginsberg gives us a very interesting sample of Kaufmann's argumentation in support of his claim that the books from Genesis to Judges are exceedingly ancient.

All these books share certain notions about the geography of the Promised Land which cannot be anything other than an *archaic prophecy*. According to this 'geography,' the Promised Land of Canaan extends on the West to the Mediterranean Sea and on the North either (according to one group of passages) to the Euphrates (Gen. 15:18; Exod. 23:31; Deut. 1:7; etc.) or (according to another group of passages) at least to the border of Hamath (Num. 34:8; Josh. 13:5; etc.). But on the east it stops dead at the river Jordan (Num. 34:10-22); so that 'the other side of the Jordan' is actually an antithesis to the land of Canaan (Num. 35:14; Josh. 13:32-14:1). Consequently, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half-Manasseh required a special dispensation in order to settle in Transjordan (Num.

³⁸ H. L. Ginsberg, "New Trends in Biblical Criticism," *Commentary*, Sept., 1950, pp. 276-84.

32), which even then remained 'unclean' and unfit for the cult of the Lord (Josh. 22:19).

Now, according to Kaufmann, such a view of Transjordan could never have arisen out of the situation that *resulted* from the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, but only as a tradition—a prophecy or oracle—from the days *before* and *during* the conquest; actually the realities of the conquest rendered it obsolete, for the Jewish conquest included part of Transjordan, and this area, in any contemporary common-sense view, would have been regarded as part of the Promised Land. On the other hand, Philistia, Phoenicia, and Damascus are regions which, during the monarchy, the Israelites rarely dreamed of dominating and never of colonizing. Their inclusion in the 'Promised Land' therefore likewise represents an ambition so ancient that it had become obsolete by the time of the judges.³⁹

Frankly, I am skeptical of his argument but at least enough has been given to allow scholars to form their own opinion. *Periti judicent!*

IV

Professor John Bright of Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., has tackled the dating of the prose sermons of Jeremiah.⁴⁰ This important segment of the prophecy is found interspersed among the poetic oracles of chapters 1–25, 30–31, as well as in the biographical portions, chapters 26–29, 32–45. At the hands of critics, notably Duham and, recently, H. G. May,⁴¹ this material has not fared well and has been relegated to the post-exilic period. What is more damaging is the claim that through the influence of Deutero-Isaiah, a post-exilic redaction of Deuteronomy (D₂), and a late editor of Ezekiel, the character and thought of Jeremiah in these prose sermons are seriously distorted. This is a grave charge, especially since our view of Jeremiah's life and work largely depends on our interpretation of this prose material, which contains some of the favorite Jeremiah passages such as the Temple Sermon of chapter 7, and the New Covenant passage of chapter 31:31–34.

The material used as the basis of Bright's argument is assembled in Appendix A, a careful and valuable listing of the characteristic expressions of the prose sermons. The argument proceeds from the premise that in style and form the prose sermons are a unity, and the question to be answered is: what date for them seems to be required by the evidence? His first conclusion is that an analysis of these characteristic expressions shows

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

⁴⁰ John Bright, "The Date of the Prose Sermons of Jeremiah," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXX (1951), 15–35.

⁴¹ Herbert G. May, "Towards an Objective Approach to the Book of Jeremiah: The Biographer," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXI (1942), 139–55.

no evidence of dependence on any late exilic or post-exilic style. In fact, close stylistic similarity with Deuteronomy points to a date not far from the completion of that work. An examination of the historical allusions within the material confirms this conclusion. There seems to be no evidence that these sections knew of the Restoration. Bright correctly takes exception to the critical principle that because a given section might plausibly fit into a later context, it therefore belongs there. Thanks to this principle Duhm was able to fit Habakkuk in the Greek period, while certain psalms have, with equal plausibility, been assigned to both the age of David and the Maccabean period!

Admitting the kinship of the prose sermons with Deuteronomy, are we compelled to admit that they are the work of post-exilic Deuteronomists (D_2), and therefore give us a Jeremiah forced into the mould of these late reformers? Bright doubts that such dependence can be proved. Besides, an analysis of the typical expressions of both Jeremiah and Deuteronomy reveals that there are differences almost as marked as the similarities. The evidence leads us to the conclusion that the prose of Jeremiah has a style of its own, resembling Deuteronomy but not slavishly imitating it. The author's personal view is that the prose tradition of Jeremiah is based on his words, some of which are preserved exactly, others according to their gist and with some additions, still others with a modicum of misinterpretation on the part of his disciples. This tradition, Bright claims, developed during the lifetime of Jeremiah and took its definitive form, allowing for some subsequent expansion, not many years after his death. Contrary, then, to those who hold that the prose sections represent a Jeremiah who has been turned into a mouthpiece of later Deuteronomic theologians, whose theology allegedly differs entirely from that of the prophets, Professor Bright—justifiably, in my opinion—concludes that the prose sections present a picture of the great prophet of Judah, consistent with the poetry, and reliable.

Jeremiah begins his ministry in 627 B.C.; the Reform of Josiah takes place in 622 B.C. What was the reaction of the young prophet to this important milestone in the history of Israel? P. Henri Cazelles, already well known for his work on the legal material of the Old Testament, attempts to answer this question.⁴² Appeal must first be made to the texts, and P. Cazelles undertakes a comparison of the vocabulary and style of both Jeremiah and Deuteronomy. An important precision is made at the outset. Just as one may distinguish between the writings of Jeremiah himself (or

⁴² H. Cazelles, "Jérémie et le Deutéronome," *Recherches de science religieuse*, XXXVIII (1951), 5-36.

secretaries) and later additions, so we can probably distinguish a first and a second edition of Deuteronomy, the dividing line being the Exile. Allowing for certain differences which should not be exaggerated, P. Cazelles concludes in the first part of his study that the oracles of Jeremiah show an unmistakable dependence in style and thought on the first edition of Deuteronomy.

But did Jeremiah promote or oppose the teachings of Deuteronomy? A careful study of selected passages leads P. Cazelles to the conclusion, advanced as more probable against Rudolph, that Jeremiah worked in favor of Deuteronomic aims. Along with Rowley, Welsh, von Rad, and the majority of Catholic exegetes, P. Cazelles believes that the purpose of Deuteronomy was not chiefly the centralization of cult and salvation through cultic reform. Von Rad has come closest to the truth when he centers the preoccupation of Deuteronomy, not on the problem of cult, but on the concept of salvation for a chosen people, which is to be worked out by obedience to the revealed Law, preserved in the Temple of Jerusalem.

Even if Jeremiah foresees the disappearance of the Ark and the destruction of the Temple, all is not lost with the passing of the old Covenant. Jeremiah has not rejected the great Deuteronomic themes of the divine choice and the fidelity of God to His promises. Still faithful to the teaching of Deuteronomy, but now in a much profounder sense, he sees the need of a new Covenant inscribed on their hearts rather than on tablets of stone. Nor can it be said that Jeremiah opposed the Reform of Josiah. Rather, in his later years he saw the insufficiency of that movement; something more than legislation was needed to change men's hearts. All is completed and illumined by the New Testament, but—and this is Cazelles' last word—we cannot deny that the perspectives of Jeremiah and Deuteronomy are the same. It is understandable, then, that a later editor of Jeremiah would make liberal use of Deuteronomy, just as a second edition of Deuteronomy would frequently recur to the images and thoughts of the prophet. Both works compenetrates, and in each is found a unity of thought and direction.

M. B. Rowton of London raises an interesting chronological question in the writings of Jeremiah, this time with the historical circumstances of the prophet's career in the foreground.⁴⁸ The general picture of the disastrous Battle of Megiddo is clear. Josiah, in a last desperate effort to strike a blow at Assyria, the inveterate enemy of his people, rode to Megiddo. There he hoped to cut off, or at least stall, the Egyptian army of Necho II, advancing to the aid of the hard-pressed Assyrians. We may presume that Jeremiah supported this move, though we have no conclusive evidence one

⁴⁸ M. B. Rowton, "Jeremiah and the Death of Josiah," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, X (1951), 128-30.

way or the other. The tragic outcome lay not only in the death of the pious Josiah but in the disillusioning substitution of one master, Babylon, for another, Assyria.

Rowton claims that, from this time on, Jeremiah's outlook underwent a great change and his optimism gave way to anxious searchings of Yahweh's plans. Rowton believes that this about-face is so clear-cut and drastic that he may concur in the opinion that no reference to the teaching of Jeremiah prior to 608 (death of Josiah) is found in the Book of Jeremiah.⁴⁴ It is obvious that such an hypothesis presupposes a severe and radical change in the mentality and outlook of the prophet after the death of Josiah. The contrast, in my opinion, is overdrawn; for we seem to have passages (chapter 11, for example) which clearly portray the mind of Jeremiah before Megiddo. Of course, these passages may have been written down later, but that is another question. The presumed optimism of Jeremiah during the Deuteronomic Reform (621-608) runs into several difficulties, the most obvious of which is the prophet's trouble at Anathoth. Such resistance on the part of his own townsmen might well induce that sombre, inquiring state of mind reflected so often in the book, a state of mind which Professor Rowton takes as characteristically post-Josiah. The defeat at Megiddo must indeed have been a great blow to Jeremiah but we must be careful not to exaggerate its consequences on his whole outlook.

Karl Elliger of Tübingen, one of Alt's most brilliant pupils, contributes a long and important study to the prophecy of Zachariah 9:1-8.⁴⁵ Since 1924 Kraeling's view that it belonged to the pre-exilic period has been generally accepted.⁴⁶ Another competing view on the origin of the pericope placed it in the Maccabean period, thus giving us the two extreme dates. Neither of these positions is acceptable to Elliger who dates the oracle in the year 332 B.C., when the Persian hegemony in Syria, Palestine, and Phoenicia was broken by Alexander the Great. His historical reconstruction, based on an exacting and conservative study of the text, yields the picture of an overwhelming force heading south, with all Syria from Aleppo to Damascus overrun, and the fall of Tyre and conquest of Palestine merely a matter of time. The army of Alexander, fresh from the victory of Issus, can alone, in Elliger's opinion, satisfactorily explain the given circumstances. The conclusion is not new, but it has never been argued so convincingly. Elliger's

⁴⁴ This is the view of Herbert G. May, "The Chronology of Jeremiah's Oracles," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, IV (1945), 227.

⁴⁵ K. Elliger, "Ein Zeugnis aus der jüdischen Gemeinde im Alexanderjahr 332 v. Chr.," *Zeitschrift f. alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1949-50, pp. 63-115.

⁴⁶ E. G. H. Kraeling, "The Historical Situation in Zach. 9:1-10," *American Journal of Semitic Languages*, XLI (1924-25), 24-33.

essay is not only noteworthy for its historical and topographical knowledge, long associated with the Leipzig school; he also demonstrates an amazing grasp of grammatical and literary problems, all in all an unusual combination of gifts. Prof. Elliger's work, in general, cannot be too highly recommended for soundness of method and breadth of learning.

V

The dispute over the dating of the Dead Sea Scrolls continues, with extreme dates being, roughly, the Maccabean period and the medieval period of Professor Zeitlin, who has persistently discredited them as a hoax. Typical of Zeitlin's view is a notice published by him on the occasion of the publication of the second volume of Scrolls, the *Manual of Discipline*.⁴⁷ He writes:

Now that the photostatic text (of the *Manual of Discipline*) is before us, I wish to reiterate most emphatically that my original contention that the high claims for the early dating of this document and its alleged importance are wholly unwarranted is substantiated beyond any doubt. As the number of the *Quarterly* was completed when this publication appeared, I shall have to leave for a subsequent issue my analysis of this document. At this time, however, I wish merely to state that it is a medieval concoction written by one of mediocre attainments who was not even well-versed in medieval Hebrew.

The excavation of the cave where the scrolls were said to be found has supplied, up to now, the most important archaeological proof for an early date.⁴⁸ The jars in which the scrolls are said to have been deposited have been dated by the excavators in the Hellenistic period. An interesting addendum has been contributed by Fr. J. T. Milik, a student at the Biblical Institute in Rome.⁴⁹ It is well known that de Vaux, though confident of his Hellenistic dating, was bothered by the lack of parallels to the jars which had turned up in the cave. Fr. Milik comes to the rescue by producing photographs of two jars morphologically similar to the Dead Sea jars, and certainly dating from the Ptolemaic or Hellenistic period in Egypt. Père de Vaux, in an article to be mentioned immediately, acknowledges the fact that Milik has supplied the parallels which settle his case for Hellenistic dating.⁵⁰

A disconcerting development in the interpretation of the new material

⁴⁷ Solomon Zeitlin, *Jewish Quarterly Review*, XLIV (1951), 449.

⁴⁸ A report on the official excavation, conducted by P. de Vaux and Lankaster Harding is given in R. de Vaux, O.P., "La grotte des manuscrits hebreux," *Revue biblique*, LVI (1949), 587-92.

⁴⁹ J. T. Milik, "Le giarre dei manoscritti," *Biblica*, XXXI (1950), 504-8.

⁵⁰ R. de Vaux, O.P., "Les manuscrits de la mer morte," *Vie intellectuelle*, April, 1951, p. 62. The two jars supplied by Milik come from the Egyptian Museum at Turin.

took place in France last year. Hardly had the text of Isaiah (the St. Mark's Scroll) and the Habakkuk Commentary been published when M. Dupont-Sommer, a professor at the Sorbonne, addressed the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres on the significance of the Habakkuk Commentary for Christian origins. This was followed by the publication of a small volume in July, 1950, which was to inform the public at large of his conclusions. They are revolutionary, or, as he puts it himself, "toute une cascade de révolutions."⁶¹ He claims to have detected startling resemblances between Our Lord as the Gospels portray Him and the Commentary's Teacher of Righteousness who preached penance, poverty, humility, chastity, the love of neighbor, who was put to death, ascended into heaven, and will come to judge at the end of time. As Our Lord, so this Teacher of Righteousness founded a church whose faithful should await his glorious return. What Dupont-Sommer is getting at is the old cliché of Renan that Christianity is just a branch of Essene doctrine which happened to succeed, a view which seriously diminishes the originality of the Christian fact. Apart from the refutation of Père de Vaux which we will consider in a moment, a reading of W. H. Brownlee's translation of the Commentary, especially II:15 (which is the key to Dupont-Sommer's argument), will set these "striking parallels" in a clearer light and moderate any premature enthusiasm.⁶² Concisely put, Dupont-Sommer holds that the sect to which the Commentary belonged flourished in the first century B.C.; the Teacher of Righteousness was put to death in 65-63 B.C. The Commentary itself was edited around 41 B.C., and the sect, having fled to Damascus for a short time, returned to Palestine, from which it was finally dispersed at the time of the Jewish War, 66-70 A.D., at which time its documents were deposited in the cave near the Dead Sea. The date sequence should be noted since it constitutes an important part of the author's reconstruction.

De Vaux has challenged the conclusions of Dupont-Sommer and claims that they rest on facts and texts badly interpreted.⁶³ The whole reconstruction cannot fit in the Roman period. On the basis of his excavation of the cave and the unanimous opinion of archaeologists who have examined the fragments of the jars containing the scrolls, de Vaux asserts once again that the manuscripts cannot be later than the Hellenistic period. Nor is it prob-

⁶¹ A. Dupont-Sommer, *Aperçus préliminaires sur les manuscrits de la mer morte* (Paris: chez Adrien Maisonneuve, 1950), p. 117.

⁶² *BASOR*, 112 (1948), pp. 8-18: preliminary translation of Brownlee. *BASOR*, 114 (1949), pp. 9-10: corrections of the translation. *BASOR*, 116 (1949), pp. 14-16: further corrections by Brownlee. In the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXIX (1950), 31-49, Isaac Rabinowitz restores as far as possible the defective second and third columns of the Habakkuk Commentary and suggests several corrections to Brownlee's translation.

⁶³ De Vaux, *art. cit.*, pp. 60-70.

able that the Kittim of the Commentary are the Romans; it is much more likely that they refer to the Seleucids, just as the Kittim of I Maccabees denote the Macedonians of Alexander, and in the Scroll of the *War of the Children of Light* the Kittim probably refer to the Greeks of Syria and Egypt. But the weakest part of Dupont-Sommer's hypothesis is not his faulty historical reconstruction but his inaccurate translations and interpretations based thereon. We cannot go into de Vaux's refutation, but again refer the reader to the reliable translation of Brownlee, along with constant reference to the published original. Dupont-Sommer has a well-deserved reputation as a scholar. It is unfortunate that his enthusiasm and haste should lead him into the old error made by so many comparative historians of reading much more into those texts than is really there.⁵⁴

Under the auspices of the British Council, which furthers cultural exchanges between Britain and friendly nations, Prof. G. R. Driver in 1950 addressed the professors and students of Louvain on the Masoretic Text and philological exegesis.⁵⁵ Despite the generally acknowledged reliability of the Masoretic Text, whose value is further enhanced by the latest discoveries, all recognize that there have been human errors committed in its transmission. Certain words, sometimes even a whole paragraph, may have been misplaced; phrases may have been lost, or annotations of a later hand attached to the text. But, as Driver points out, the radical textual criticism of a Duhm or a Cheyne is now but a nightmare of the past. He then proposes certain rules of sound grammatical exegesis, which must be the starting-point for the complete grasp of the text.

His first rule is to examine the structure of the root. Driver believes that the majority of Semitic roots comprised originally one or two radicals, to which a second or third was added to modify the primitive meaning. Driver then reaches into the various Semitic languages to illustrate what he calls a development from a simple stem to a later and expanded (biliteral or triliteral) root. I was surprised to see Driver advance the thesis of a one-consonant root. If I understand his position correctly, it runs counter to the common opinion that Semitic roots, even primitively, were bi- or tri-consonantal.

Once the concrete meaning of the word has been settled, the next step is a careful examination of the root in the light of parallels from other languages. Driver, as a comparative philologist, is at his best in this type

⁵⁴ For an earlier refutation of Dupont-Sommer's conjectures see J. Bonsirven, "Révolution dans l'histoire des origines chrétiennes?", *Études*, CCLXVIII (Janv.-Fév.-Mars, 1951), 213-18.

⁵⁵ G. R. Driver, "L'Interprétation du texte masorétique à la lumière de la lexicographie hébraïque," *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses*, XXVI (1950), 337-53.

of work. But he would be the first to admit that this examination must be carefully controlled; for there is many a pitfall in constructing semantic developments. Another requirement of philological exegesis is the examination of the root in the light of ancient versions, whether these versions are correct or inexact. Even inexact translations will often disclose the lost but original meaning of a root. Driver has in mind chiefly the Septuagint. Again, caution is in order; for each book of the Septuagint, as a translation and therefore as a usable tool in this kind of work, presents an individual problem. For example, how can we be sure that the translator was not paraphrasing instead of translating? How often has he inserted in his translation biblical ideas and turns of phrase borrowed from a different context from the one in which his passage lies? To what extent has his Hellenistic or Palestinian background influenced the translator's choice of words? It is easy to see that the versions, especially the Septuagint, must be used with the greatest care in determining the precise meaning of the Hebrew word.

Dr. Driver reminds us that, even after following these rules, we shall have only the general sense of the word. Its specific meaning will have to be determined by its context. In concluding, he observes that, up to now, little work has been done in these fields, especially in the establishment of the physiological and phonetic basis of Hebrew roots. Much of this kind of work remains to be done. He correctly emphasizes that the responsibility rests on those who aspire to a better knowledge of our Hebrew Bible.

A modest but excellent little *Festschrift* has been dedicated to William Foxwell Albright on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday, May 24, 1951.⁶⁶ The guest editor is Prof. E. A. Speiser, who has diligently assembled contributions from men who have, with few exceptions, served in the field as leading staff members of one of the American Schools. It was characteristic of the man being honored that, as the studies were being prepared, he should be on his second campaign in the distant Protectorate of Aden, actively assisting at the opening of a whole new field in Near Eastern studies.⁶⁷ We can only select for comment one or two of the essays. I consider Albrecht Goetze's the most important, dealing with the Hittite contribution to the vexing chronological problem of the end of the Hammurabi Dynasty at the hands of Mursilis, the Hittite. Opinions on this date fluctuate between *ca.* 1650 (Sidersky, Thureau-Dangin) and *ca.* 1500 (Boehl, Schubert). To set the problem in terms of Hittite history, how much time elapsed

⁶⁶ *BASOR*, 122 (1951).

⁶⁷ Cf. William F. Albright in *BASOR*, 119 (1950), pp. 5-15, for an account of the chronology of ancient South Arabia in the light of the first campaign of excavation in Qataban. The results of the second campaign, just completed, will soon be published.

between this raid of Mursilis, marking the end of Hammurabi's Dynasty, and the renaissance of Hittite power, which must be dated *ca.* 1450? From the data above it is clear, for example, that Boehl would allow only fifty years, while Thureau-Dangin would allow two hundred years. Goetze's careful study of this intervening period, involving nine reigns, leads him to accept the latter's calculation, placing the sack of Babylon around 1650 B.C. This opinion he confirms from another Hittite source. The importance of this article is the entrance of Hittite historical data, competently controlled by Goetze, as a factor in the chronology of Western Asia.

Of special interest to exegetes is the essay of Theophile Meek.⁵⁸ The expressions "mouth of the sword" and "the devouring sword" occur frequently in the Old Testament and have even passed into our own language. Meek is able to show the appositeness of the expression through the discovery of swords and battle-axes in which the blade is represented as the tongue sticking out of the open, ravenous mouth of a lion or dragon. In some cases the blade issues from the mouths of two lions; this fact clears up texts like Judges 3:16. This evidence has turned up in excavations from Ras Shamra to northwestern Iran. There are many other articles touching on those fields of study in which Prof. Albright has always shown such interest. With his many friends we join in extending congratulations to the distinguished scholar who has, more than any other, enhanced the reputation of American scholarship in Oriental studies.

We close this survey with an article by Prof. N. Shalem of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on the stability of the climate in Palestine.⁵⁹ To Ellsworth Huntington and his fanciful work *Palestine and its Transformation* (1911) is due the theory that the alternating periods of abundance and desolation in the history of the Holy Land were due to radical cyclic changes in climate and rainfall. By coordinating the data of archaeology and historical documents with that of physical geography in its widest sense, Shalem proves that it is the human factor which plays the decisive role in the prosperity or improverishment of Palestine. Shalem's survey, which also makes judicious use of biblical and early Jewish literature, is an excellent summary of the physical and demographic conditions of his country. The contrast between the healthier conditions which have prevailed in Palestine over the last forty years and the misery which marked the long Turkish domination gives added strength to his argument for the human element as the decisive factor.

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⁵⁸ Theophile Meek, "Archaeology and a Point in Hebrew Syntax," pp. 31-33.

⁵⁹ Shalem, "La stabilité du climat en Palestine," *Revue biblique*, LVII (1951), 54-74.