THE RECENT REVIVAL OF ORIGEN STUDIES

No comparable period in the history of the Church has seen such a renascence of Origen studies. The field has become so vast that we find over 535 items listed in the bibliography given by Marguerite Harl at the beginning of her *Origène et la fonction révélatrice du Verbe incarné* (Paris, 1958, pp. 33 ff.); and the bibliographies of two of the latest Origen studies, by G. Gruber[1] and Henri Crouzel, S.J.,[2] will now add a number of new titles to this rapidly changing and expanding discipline. Perhaps the lion's share for this great revival is due to the Germans, who led the way, in a sense, by reason of their critical editions of the text—so crucial, as it has later proven, in the case of Origen; C. Lommatzsch's edition in twenty-five volumes was succeeded by the Berlin Academy of Sciences' *editio maior*, which has reached twelve volumes since 1899 under scholars like Koetschau, Klostermann, Rauer, and many more. Our knowledge of the various scattered fragments of Origen's vast productivity, especially on the Scriptures, has increased with the years; particularly welcome was the discovery in 1941 of a cache of papyri of Origen and Didymus the Blind in some ruins near Tourah, some twelve or thirteen miles south of Cairo. Of these Jean Scherer has edited the important *Dialektos*, or *Origen's Debate with Bishop Heraclides*,[3] and also a fragment of the Commentary on Romans, with parts of the *Contra Celsum*.[4]

In the summer of 1941 (though some sources incline to 1942), Egyptian bedouins working near the quarries of Tourah found a batch of Christian Greek codices written about the fifth century or perhaps, as others would prefer, the late fifth or early sixth. These very probably belonged to the ancient monastery of Ayos Arsenios, which once existed in the Tourah hills. The estimated cache of eight complete codices, containing many different works, was broken up by dealers and other middlemen into some five hundred booklets. Of these the majority arrived at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, where the original volumes were reconstructed; but parts were still available at the usual exorbitant prices, and others may be irreparably lost. It is a pattern we have become familiar with in dealing with manuscript finds. Of works by Didymus the Blind, there were the commentaries on Zachary, now beautifully edited by Père L. Dutreleau (*Sources chrétiennes*

[1] Gerhard Gruber, *ZOE: Wesen, Stufen und Mitteilung des wahren Lebens bei Origenes* (Munich: Hueber, 1962).

[2] H. Crouzel, *Origène et la philosophie* (Paris: Aubier, 1962).

[3] *Entretien d'Origène avec Héraclide et les évêques ses collègues* (Cairo, 1949); re-edited in *Sources chrétiennes* 67 (Paris, 1960).

[4] *Le commentaire d'Origène sur Rom. III, 5—V, 7* (Cairo, 1957); and *Extrait des livres I et II du Contre Celse* (Cairo, 1956).

83–85; Paris, 1961), on Job, on Genesis, and, if the attribution is correct, on Ecclesiastes and on Psalms 20–44. But perhaps the most important parts of the find were the three fragments of Origen mentioned earlier, and these were brought to the attention of scholars at the earliest possible opportunity. In any case, scholars have been far more fortunate in their access to the Tourah papyri than in the more complicated affair of the thirteen Gnostic Coptic codices from the area of Nag-Hammadi in Upper Egypt.[5]

Other possible fragments have been recovered from time to time, to be considered always for the sake of completeness, even though they may have little of doctrinal importance to add to the total picture.[6] But since the controversy on Origen is so sharp and critical, interpretations will often turn on the use of a fragment, or the citation from a Latin version. Those who tend to be rather severe on Origen as a Christian theologian—those who follow, for example, E. de Faye, *Origène* (Paris, 1923–28); Hal Koch,

[5] With this cache of manuscripts, so important for the history of the early Church in Egypt, we are still unsure of the precise year they were discovered and the exact site. The town of Nag-Hammadi, along the dismal route to Luxor, is famous for the little Coptic convent of Abou Menas and is about five miles to the north of the ancient site of Chenoboskion, famous as the location of one of the early Pachomian foundations. Somewhere in this area, probably in a tomb, the thirteen papyri codices written about the fourth century were uncovered by natives perhaps in 1945, and were shortly afterwards acquired by Togo Mina, who was then director of the Coptic Museum in Cairo, where the bulk of the cache still remains. Of these, Codex 13 had been purchased for the Carl Jung Foundation, and from it the *Evangelium veritatis* ("Gospel of Truth"), attributed to the Gnostic Valentinus, was published (Zurich, 1956) by H.-C. Puech, G. Quispel, and M. Malinine. Four pages of the *Gospel* were, however, found to be missing, and turned up in the first volume of reproductions published by the present curator, P. Labib Ikladios, *Coptic Gnostic Papyri in the Coptic Museum of Old Cairo* 1 (Cairo, 1956). Dr. Ikladios, I have been reliably informed, is now in charge of the publication of the remaining papyri, and they should prove enormously helpful in solving some of the problems of Gnostic influence in Alexandrian theology of the second and third centuries. See the new translation of the complete text of the *Gospel of Truth* by W. W. Isenberg in Robert M. Grant (ed.), *Gnosticism: A Sourcebook of Heretical Writings from the Early Christian Period* (New York, 1961) pp. 146–61. For a survey of the discovery and an outline of the content of all the codices, see Jean Doresse, *The Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics* (New York, 1960). For the importance of these books in evaluating the theology of Ignatius of Antioch, see Virginia Corwin, *St. Ignatius and Christianity in Antioch* (New Haven, 1960), especially pp. 150–53, and see the index *s.v.* "Gnosticism." Hans Jonas, in his *Gnosis und spätantiker Geist* 2/1: *Von der Mythologie zur mystischen Philosophie* (Göttingen, 1954) 171–223, tends to place Origen in a general Hellenistic-Gnostic stream of thought which extended from Valentinus to Plotinus. For a discussion of Origen's critique of Valentinus' system of emanations, see G. Gruber, *op. cit.*, pp. 295–305, and cf. also the remarks of Crouzel, *op. cit.*, pp. 181–82.

[6] See the listing in Gruber, *op. cit.*, pp. xiii-xiv.

Pronoia und Paideusis (Berlin, 1932)—usually reject all use of Latin translations and many of the fragment collections; others, who follow Walther Völker, *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes* (Tübingen, 1931), as, for example, Daniélou, de Lubac, Crouzel, and others, including Fr. Gerhard Gruber, will use the Latin versions where they can be shown to support known Greek texts, together with extensive citation from the fragments when these seem to be apposite. There is no excuse, of course, for neglecting the Greek fragments, even though it may often be convenient to do so; both Crouzel and Gruber utilize them admirably so far as possible. On the question of the Latin versions, however, the most recent and perhaps the soundest warning has come from R. P. C. Hanson, in *Origen's Doctrine of Tradition*,[7] although he narrows his conclusion to fit the scope of his own work:

> This does not mean of course that we can entirely ignore the Latin translations of Origen as sources for our inquiry. It does mean that we must take his words extant in Greek as our primary authorities, and realize that any reference to tradition, in particular in a translation by Rufinus or by Jerome, may very well have been touched up or even interpolated by the translator.[8]

Now though Hanson seems rather harsh on the earlier work by L. Bouyer and F. Prat, at the same time in such a controverted area his methodology with regard to the Latin versions seems above reproach and surely agrees with what Gruber calls "a complementary (supportative) use of these sources."[9] Of course, a biassed point of view has been known to influence the choice and use of sources, but this is not here matter for dispute.

But what constantly provokes wonder, and sometimes a good deal of scholarly annoyance, is the wide divergence that exists between the two camps of Origen studies today: that of Völker, Daniélou, Crouzel, Harl, and Gruber on the one side, and that of Hal Koch, E. de Faye, von Campenhausen, and others on the other. Von Campenhausen, for example, who largely reflects the views of Koch, sees in Origen the first clear example of rivalry between the unofficial teacher and the ecclesiastical authority.[10] But his theological system, which so often runs the danger of falling into the very Neoplatonism which he decries, can, in von Campenhausen's view, only with difficulty be called truly Christian. Though a systematic thinker, Origen

> was in no sense a problematical character nor in the final analysis an original one. He combined the unphilosophical tradition of the Church with the Gnostic-Neo-

[7] London, 1954, pp. 40–47 ("Origen's Translators"). [8] *Ibid.*, pp. 46–47.

[9] Gruber, *op. cit.*, p. 4, where there is a good discussion of his methodology, with references to the earlier literature.

[10] Hans von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Greek Church* (tr. S. Godman; New York, 1959) p. 52.

platonic tendencies of the century on a higher intellectual plane and thus created a theological structure of admirable grandeur and completeness. *But he had no feeling for the deeper, objective problems of a truly Christian theology.* For that very reason his solutions were apparently a great success. They were the solutions of a theorist of genius who constructed reality from the idea, *without being moved at a deeper level by doubt and suffering.*[11]

And it is interesting to note that it is to Hal Koch's article on Origen in Pauly-Wissowa's *Realencyklopädie* that von Campenhausen refers[12] as the best objective introduction to the problem. And yet the adversaries of Koch and de Faye, as d'Alès and Crouzel, accuse them of dechristianizing[13] Origen in the interests of a preconceived system, of turning Christianity (as Origen saw it) into an eclectic Neoplatonism. Even Hanson cannot accept de Faye's view[14] that Origen's interpretation of the Bible is merely a façade to hide the fact that Origen derived his system from contemporary philosophy without any genuine appreciation of Christian thought. In short, the accusation against Origen, formulated by this school, would seem to imply that he simply restated—admittedly in the fashion of genius—what he knew of traditional Christianity in the borrowed terminology of the eclectic-Stoic and Neoplatonic schools. Hence his original grasp of the authentic message is questioned, and his mystical intuitions denied. It seems intolerable to suggest, as de Faye does, that Origen's philosophy owed nothing to the Jesus of history; that the material of the Gospels was *not* one of the sources of his thought.[15] A similar line is taken by E. von Ivanka, when he calls Origen the greatest Greek thinker of the period next to Plotinus, but hardly, like Augustine, a Christian theologian.[16] These are strong words, and in most of the scholars who use them they would seem to reflect a certain personal disappointment with Origen's theology and general message. It betrays a wrong approach; it is as though they had looked to find the answers to modern problems and could not, but discovered instead a rather archaic and obsolete structure (as they thought) composed of borrowed brick and mortar.

Quite different is the attitude and approach of the scholars like Daniélou, Harl, and Crouzel, who have underscored and deepened the basic intuitions of Walther Völker's study on Origen's ideal of perfection. Völker sees Origen's austere personal asceticism and authentic mysticism as the focal point of his entire system; so that his entire life was a constant striving to bring the facts of philosophy, encyclopedic erudition, and even the Scriptures in line

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 56 (our italics).

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 166. Von Campenhausen speaks of Origen's "alleged mysticism" and the danger of laying too much stress on the "Catholic aspects" of his thought.

[13] Crouzel, *Origène et la philosophie*, p. 10, n. 7. [14] Hanson, *op. cit.*, pp. 185–86.

[15] Cf. Hanson, *ibid.*, p. 186; Crouzel, *op. cit.*, pp. 206 ff.

[16] Cf. the discussion of von Ivanka's views in Crouzel, *op. cit.*, pp. 183 f.

with his fundamental, intuitive grasp of the Christian message. His doctrine has thus been called a *Logosmystik*, a personal Christianity based on a mystical union with the Logos; this is the pinnacle of all ascetical as well as theological effort, the culmination of God's creative and redemptive gesture, and the goal to which all prayer and study lead. Towards this are ordered the various levels of knowledge (shadow–image–reality), the three levels of scriptural interpretation, indeed all the studies of the secular schools.

Of the two views of Origen, it is clear that Völker's has produced the greater volume of writing and perhaps the greater enthusiasm, particularly among French patristic scholars. Of the extensive literature to appear within the last few years, special mention should be made of the work of three of the younger scholars, Marguerite Harl, Henri Crouzel, and Gerhard Gruber. The work of Mme. Harl of the Sorbonne[17] is a brilliant monograph built on the terminology which Origen employs to construct a Christocentric theology. She attempts to show the evolution of Origen's thought from a rationalistic to a more mystical point of view;[18] and throughout she is at pains to show that despite the vast areas from which his vocabulary is drawn, his fundamental inspiration is always Christian. She comes to a conclusion quite different from that of de Faye:

> Origen has the ability to borrow very precise terms from a vocabulary other than that of the Christians, *without modifying in any way his profound inspiration, which is Christian.* He borrows words, formulas, images, but the totality of his thought forms, in most instances, *a radically different whole* from the source from which he takes part of his language.[19]

In summarizing the "notions-maîtresses de sa pensée," Harl finds the focal point of Origen's thought in the concept of *logos*, "order," which of course exists on three levels: in God, in Christ the Saviour, and in the redeemed. There is also a parallelism between the order of nature and the order of God's salvific plan. Thus the work of Jesus, the Logos, is ultimately a work of order which converges upon the final restoration of all creatures (even the damned) to the bosom of the Father in the apocatastasis; and the suffering of the flesh has meaning only in the new bodies which the just acquire at the resurrection, the continuum of time only in the final order when God will be all in all. For Mme. Harl, the word *logos* is crucial and decisive. Jesus, in Origen's system, replaces the logos of the Stoic and Neoplatonic philosophers; and for Harl, Origen's entire theology derives from his concept

[17] *Origène et la fonction révélatrice du Verbe incarné* (Paris, 1958).

[18] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 363.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 347 (our italics). Cf. also Crouzel, *op. cit.*, pp. 186–87.

of "l'ambiguité du Christ," that is, the existence of Jesus the Logos in two dimensions. Thus, in her synthesis of Origenist theology, Harl makes logos a kind of transcendental with many levels, and on this she attempts to structure Origen's thought. It is a brilliant and bold conception, solidly developed with vast erudition. It is bound to be controverted, especially by members of the opposite camp; but all must admit that many of Mme. Harl's interpretations unravel some difficult texts, and her total vision is one of openness and clarity.

Of Père Henri Crouzel it should be remarked that he has produced three full-length books on Origen within seven years.[20] His earliest study, *Théologie de l'image de Dieu*, attempted to disentangle some of Origen's contradictions and to establish against the suggestions of previous scholars the importance of the divine-image theme in Origen's total theological vision; it was a brilliant achievement along the lines that had been laid down by Daniélou, de Lubac, and Völker. In Crouzel's next work, *Origène et la connaissance mystique*, he surveyed the entire range of Origen's work with a view to establishing his authentic Christian mysticism against the attacks of Koch and others. Fully complementing Völker's work, Crouzel closely handles individual texts and sees the basis of Origen's mysticism in the triple dimension of shadow–image–reality, implicit in his allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures and in the typological responsion between the two Testaments as Origen understands them—embracing, therefore, all natural as well as revealed truth. For Origen, authentic mysticism is only Christian, accessible to all the baptized. Crouzel's work on mysticism is a synthesis of remarkable merit, to be read with the Greek texts of Origen close at hand. And in it the author laid the foundation for some of the far-reaching judgments he was to make in his third work, *Origène et la philosophie.*

Crouzel's last work is a fully-documented reply to those who would maintain that Origen's contribution was merely a brilliant Hellenization of Christianity, a mere transposition, as it were, implying a basic lack of comprehension either of the genius of Christianity or of the problems involved in its primitive message. Origen's system, on this view, is a clever structuring of certain aspects of Christianity according to the eclectic philosophy of the Alexandrian schools: Neo-Stoic, Gnostic, and Neoplatonic. Crouzel, in addition to summarizing much of the recent literature on the problem—his bibliographic range is truly prodigious—lays down in orderly fashion the development of Origen's position with regard to pagan philosophy. Thus we have (1) Origen's Critique of Pagan Philosophy; (2) Natural

[20] *Théologie de l'image de Dieu chez Origène* (Paris, 1956); *Origène et la connaissance mystique* (Paris, 1961); *Origène et la philosophie* (Paris, 1962).

Virtue Insufficient; (3) Christ's Invitation to Philosophers; (4) The "Sack of Jericho"; Christianity's Use of Pagan Philosophy. Crouzel has added a trenchant appendix (pp. 179–215) on the question whether we may truly speak of an Origenist system. In the first section, the author treads warily on very difficult ground, summing up Origen's opinions of pagan philosophers: there is, of course, his overwhelming admiration for Plato, despite some strictures; also, to an extent, of Chrysippus and the Stoic school; next comes Aristotle, whom Origen seems to have known (as many another Christian thinker after him) only through handbooks and manuals; the Neopythagoreans, like Numenius; next come the Epicureans, for whom Origen had the least regard of all; last of all, the various schools of medicine, on whom Origen pronounces maledictions. It should be noted that much of Origen's awareness of Hellenistic theory came through the distorted mirror of Philo; but Philo's influence does not play a large role in the framework of Crouzel's discussion. But his clear presentation of Origen's conscious and explicit attitude towards pagan philosophy should serve as a counterbalance to those theorists who interpret his theology as purely derivative, the clever combination (as von Campenhausen puts it) of traditional teaching with "the Gnostic-Neoplatonic tendencies of the century."[21]

Crouzel deals most firmly with his adversaries in the appendix, "Origène est-il un systématique?" In the case of Origen, Crouzel insists, it is utterly wrong to speak of a system; here the imprudence of Origen's followers (even when they were accurately echoing the master), and indeed the selectivity of ecclesiastical condemnations, have tempted scholars to unify and structure his thought. And yet Origen's theology, dynamically alive and flexible, soundly Christian in inspiration, authentically mystical, was never developed to the point of systematic coherence. Contradictions were inherent; and it is against this background that we must always bear in mind that "L'Origène mystique et l'Origène spéculatif ne sont pas juxtaposés, mais intimement unis: l'un commande l'autre. C'est ainsi qu'on peut comprendre *le caractère antithétique* de la pensèe de l'Alexandrin."[22] The ultimate unity of his thought—if one is desired—must come from the final restoration of the divine image-likeness in man: the intuitive, mystical vision of God on this earth, to be completed in the hereafter with the final restoration of all men to God. From this mystical union with God comes the profound unity, amid contradictions, of Origen's theology and philosophy.[23]

But Crouzel goes further to probe the sore spot of modern Origen scholarship. The objections of scholars like Koch, de Faye, and Jonas, he suggests,

[21] Crouzel, *Origène et la philosophie*, p. 56.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 210 (our italics).
[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 209–10.

come fundamentally from their metaphysical point of view, revealing a defect in method, a self-blinding to the obvious substance of Origen's thought.[24] Scholars of the Lutheran school, he adds, have been deceived in their interpretation of Origen because they have come to see Christianity as a kind of combination of Luther and St. Paul, with a certain prejudice against any influence of Greek philosophy or of mysticism.[25] In laying about him so vigorously, Crouzel does not omit to attack those scholars who, though they seem to follow along the lines laid down by Völker, yet limit their study of Origen to his language and terminology, his borrowings from Hellenistic thought, without entering into the deep Christian substructure of his thought. These too fall into the danger of misreading him.[26] For Origen's thought has its own peculiar antitheses, balanced in peculiar equilibrium; to destroy any of these in order to achieve a neat system is to destroy the vitality of Origen's thought.[27] But a brief summary can scarcely pretend to do justice to Crouzel's densely packed monograph, which indeed should be read as a unity together with his work on the image of God in Origen and Origen's doctrine of mystical knowledge; they present a synthesis of great merit which should be read with all the critical attention they deserve. In the present ferment which exists in the area of Origen studies, not all will agree with all of Crouzel's sharp and forthright conclusions, guardedly presented though they are. But there can be no doubt that these three monographs by one of the younger Origen scholars will create an undeniably powerful stimulus to renewed, original study of this very complex writer and theologian in one of the most difficult periods in all of the Church's history.

Gerhard Gruber's monograph on the concept of life (*zōē*) in Origen's theology was originally undertaken as a dissertation for the Gregorian University in Rome in 1956. After completing the dissertation, Gruber spent several years studying the vast modern bibliography that had been accumulating within the last decade, until finally in 1962 his revised text was published as the twenty-third monograph volume of the well-known *Münchener theologische Studien*.[28] It is the sort of textual and theological study that is most desirable in view of the wide divergence in the interpretation of Origen. After a preliminary chapter on his debt to the lines laid down by Völker, Gruber proceeds to organize the various texts of Origen which deal with death and life, and with the various levels of natural and supernatural

[24] Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 10, 14, 181, 210. [25] *Ibid.*, p. 187.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 187. Cf. also p. 186, citing Mme. Harl: "Cette communauté de langage reste le plus souvent superficielle." Cf. Harl, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

[27] Crouzel, *Origène et la philosophie*, p. 214. [28] Cf. supra n. 1.

existence. He has made use of the available Tourah papyri and much of the Gnostic literature (though not of the recent publication of the Jung codex).[29] Gruber analyzes Origen's concept of life as a transcendental notion parallel with *sophia* (wisdom), *logos* (order), and *phōs* (light), so that his thesis, in many respects, complements the monograph of Marguerite Harl on the *logos*.[30] Gruber analyzes the notion as part of a continuum in the order of redemption: death—the life of the redeemed—Christ, the Life—the Father, the source of life,[31] so that life in the strict sense, as used by Origen, is an activating, actuating force, especially in the supernatural sense, that is, the dimension whereby the redeemed are raised up to participate in some sense in the relationship which is enjoyed by the divine Persons.[32] Hence the degrees of life as found in the faithful and in Christ the Man are participations in the fulness of the life of the Father. Thus there is a parallelism between physical death and the death of the spirit, between the physical life communicated by the *psychē* to the body, and the spiritual life communicated by Jesus to man through the highest part of his soul.[33] In addition, Gruber points out that, despite the inconsistencies in Origen's terminology, he uses the term "life" in four senses: (1) to designate the life of the Godhead, (2) as a personal name of Jesus, (3) as a special aspect of Christ's nature ("besonderer Aspekt des Substanz Christi"), (4) as an actuating power, the life communicated to men.[34] Gruber makes ample use of the vast bibliography that has appeared with the renascence of Origen studies; yet at the same time he tries to keep his own ideas and analyses clear. And though Gruber tends to see Origen's system, in this respect at least, as somehow derivative from the Valentinian gnosis, he insists that "Origen in his distinction of the various levels of participation [of human nature in the divine life] has far surpassed the system of the Gnostics—even though Origen himself was not always aware of the consequences of his own thought."[35] Origen's adaptation of the Stoic-Aristotelian concept of nature to the doctrine of the soul's participation in the divine life prepared for the teaching of later Fathers on the nature of grace, which in Origen enters through the *pneuma* and so unites the whole man with the Logos. Gruber's is a careful and instructive analysis, and although not all will agree with his discussion of the Valentinian gnosis, he marks a new departure in the terminological approach to Origen's thought.

[29] Gruber's discussion of the *aiōnes* of Valentinus, *op. cit.*, pp. 295 ff., would have been confirmed by the doctrine reflected in the *Evangelium veritatis*, attributed to Valentinus; cf. R. M. Grant, *op. cit.*, pp. 146 ff., and supra n. 5.

[30] *Op. cit.* (supra n. 17). [31] Gruber, p. 328. [32] *Ibid.*, pp. 250–51.

[33] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 181. [34] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 267. [35] *Ibid.*, p. 330.

His masterly discussion of the transcendental notion of life will supplement Marguerite Harl's thesis on the focal concept of *logos* in Origen's system.[36]

One of the thorniest problems in discussing Origen is his position in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity, and interest has again been recently revived by the publication of an important theological word-study of Tertullian by Prof. René Braun.[37] It is unfortunate that the new Origen fragments do not throw light, directly at least, on the question; and the books of Harl, Gruber, and Crouzel do not apparently consider the problem relevant to their own discussions. Gruber, however, does quote from the new Tourah *Dialogue with Heraclides*, but only from the important section in which Origen discusses the immortality of the soul, distinguishing three kinds of death: corporeal, in which only the body shares; spiritual, which is the state of the sinful soul; and ascetical, by which a man dies to evil.[38] The more important part, on the Trinity, is unfortunately too brief to be of real value; it runs somewhat as follows:

Origen: Is the Son distinct (*heteros*, other) from the Father?
Heraclides: He is; for how could He be Son and Father at the same time?
Origen: And is not the Son, who is distinct from the Father, very God?
Heraclides: Yes, He is God Himself. . . .
Origen: Do we, therefore, hold that there are two Gods (*theoi*)?
Heraclides: Yes, but there is but one essence (*mia dynamis*).

Though this is a precious document and reflects Origen's general reputation for orthodoxy on this doctrine, at least at the time of the *Dialogue*, it hardly cuts deep enough to answer modern problems.

The result is that the current Origen scholarship is somewhat ambiguous on Origen's true role. Scholars like de Faye and Koch tend to diminish the importance of the Trinity and Incarnation in Origen's system, and de Faye

[36] It should also be noted that the work of Harl, Crouzel, and Gruber should add many new entries for the new *Patristic Greek Lexicon* edited by G. W. H. Lampe (fasc. 1, Oxford, 1961), especially under those headings which concern Origen. On the question of Origen's vocabulary, Harl (*op. cit.*, p. 44) is perhaps somewhat overcritical of the *Lexicon* in its present stage. Another study of importance for Origen's vocabulary is J. Ysebaert, *Greek Baptismal Terminology: Its Origins and Early Development* (Nijmegen, 1961).

[37] *Deus christianorum: Recherches sur le vocabulaire doctrinal de Tertullien* (Paris, 1962), with the valuable discussion of Trinitarian terminology on pp. 141–242, especially the correlation with the words used by the Greek Fathers. His conclusion with respect to Tertullian might be applied with some degree of accuracy also to Origen: "In general, Tertullian's role in the development of a doctrinal vocabulary was not so much a question of invention as adaptation and fixation" (*op. cit.*, p. 550).

[38] See Gruber, *op. cit.*, pp. 146–47.

suggests that Origen did not really devote much thought to the mystery. The fact remains that these writers attempt to diminish anything in the work of the second- and third-century Fathers which might be labeled specifically Christian. Daniélou, in particular, who is not in principle averse to detecting Platonism in Origen, has sharply attacked de Faye's conclusions on this point.[39] But even Daniélou will admit that Origen's doctrine of the Logos—and here he seems to part company with Mme. Harl and others—definitely shows the distorting influence of Middle Platonism. It is to this source that he traces Origen's subordinationism, the dependence of the Son upon the Father; it is adaptation of the second-god doctrine of Numenius, and the world soul of the Middle Platonist Albinus. Hence, too, comes Origen's sharp distinction between the Persons (the *theoi*), almost to the sacrifice of their unity. Again, the relationship of the Logos to the spiritual universe (the *logikoi*) is understood by Daniélou as an adaptation of Stoic doctrine.[40] On this view, the Son is a kind of miniature image of the Father: He thus enjoys the divinity and shares in it, but does not possess it absolutely. Again, the process of generation in Origen is compared with a kind of creative contemplation: the Son proceeds from the Father in the act of gazing on the abyss of the divinity.[41] The Son would not always have dwelt with the Father unless He had always gazed upon the source of all divinity.

Scholars like Wolfson, however, consider Origen's discussion of the Trinity to mark a definite advance in the direction of Nicene orthodoxy in the East, paralleling the work of Tertullian in the West.[42] Origen is seen less as the imitator of Middle Platonism, and rather as the student of Aristotle and Philo. One of Wolfson's clearest pages is his explanation of Origen's use of the Aristotelian terminology to describe the Persons of the Trinity with the words *ousia*, *hypokeimenon*, and *hypostasis*. In the discussion of the distinc-

[39] Jean Daniélou, *Origen* (tr. W. Mitchell; New York, 1955) pp. 250 ff. Suffice it to say that the conclusions of H. Crouzel, *Origène et la philosophie*, pp. 167–77, differ somewhat from those of Daniélou on Origen's attitude towards the late Greek philosophers. See also infra nn. 40 and 41.

[40] Daniélou, *Origen*, p. 261. On the Fathers' use of Stoic doctrine up to the time of Clement of Alexandria, see Michael Spanneut, *Le stoïcisme des Pères de l'église de Clément de Rome à Clément d'Alexandrie* (Paris, 1957), especially pp. 301 ff. for the terminology adapted from Stoicism for the problem of the Trinity. Here particularly Spanneut speaks of "transposition" and transformation of the terminology rather than simple adoption (pp. 316, 323, and *passim*).

[41] See Daniélou, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

[42] H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers* 1: *Faith, Trinity, Incarnation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956) 317–32.

tion of Persons, Wolfson takes these three terms as fundamentally equivalent, each referring to the "first *ousia*," the concrete, specific individual, the *pragma*. Indeed, Origen's difficulty is not with the problem of distinction, but rather with the mystery of unity. In arguing against the heretics who would assert that the Persons are not really distinct, save modally, or in thought, he more than once asserts clearly that they are distinct "things (*pragmata*) by hypostasis."[43] How, then, are the Persons one? They are one by the unity of will and of thought, by the unity of their operation. But this is still inadequate. Wolfson, then, arguing from Origen's use of the word *homoousios* for each of the Persons, and from the word *ousia* applied to the divine nature, argues to a different sort of unity. If we may take the *hypostaseis* on analogy with individual species, then the term *ousia* used of the divine nature may be taken in Aristotle's sense of second *ousia*, that is, a common specific genus which all share. Wolfson concludes:

> Accordingly, the common unity of these *three individual species* must be after the analogy of something which is at once a species and a genus, *a specific genus*, as it were; and so also the term which is to describe that common unity would have to be a term which would mean both species and genus. Such a term was found by Origen in the term ousia, for the term ousia in the sense of "second ousia" . . . is said by Aristotle to apply to both species and genus.[44]

This is perhaps pressing an implication too far. But Wolfson admits that it is a mere analogy, an adaptation of the Aristotelian term. But it does much to explain the two uses of the word *ousia* by Origen, both for the common nature of the Godhead and for the individual Person. And thus, too, is explained Origen's use of the term *homoousios*, which was to make theological history at a later time. In any case, it becomes clear that despite his subordinationist tendencies, Origen's influence upon the Cappadocians was far more important than his alleged heritage to the followers of Arius.[45] Though Origen's discussion of the Trinity was hardly as extensive or even as profound as Tertullian's, it remains true that the terminology he evolved did

[43] *Contra Celsum* 8, 12; for the discussion, see Wolfson, *op. cit.*, pp. 318–20. Cf. also R. Braun, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

[44] Wolfson, *op. cit.*, p. 321 (our italics). Cf. also the discussion of Braun, *op. cit.*, on *substantia* in Tertullian, pp. 178 ff.

[45] Cf. H. Bettenson, *The Early Christian Fathers* (London, 1956) pp. 29–30; cf. Wolfson on Arius, *op. cit.*, pp. 585–87, especially Origen's distinction of *ho theos* (= God the Father) and *theos* (= the Son, the Logos), which tends to subordinationism, but not to a denial of the divinity of the Word (p. 587, n. 57). There is a subtlety here which is inherent in the Greek language as such and cannot be translated into Latin.

much to shape the emergent orthodox position at the Council of Nicaea. Again, the discussion on the Trinity in the *Dialogue with Heraclides* at least suggests Origen's official importance in the Middle East about the year 245 A.D., even though the terms there used (*mia dynamis* and *theoi*) can hardly be heralded as a profound solution to the problem. But it would be wrong either to underestimate or to exaggerate the importance of Trinitarian doctrine as we find it in the pages of Origen. Despite his undoubted penetration, he was still in a period of painful transition, from a qualified subordinationism to the more consistent structure of Cappadocian Trinitarian theology which was to emerge as an aftermath of the Semi-Arian conflicts. His was indeed an important part of the total struggle of primitive theology to emerge from the dark womb of the pre-Nicene period. If he is not to be taxed for his adherence to Platonic and Stoic terminology, neither should his inconsistencies in Trinitarian dogma be counted against him, struggling as he was, as none other of his times, to sharpen the mind's weapons in its search for truth.

In conclusion, we would do well to recall the salutary warning of Crouzel that all who seek to find a system in Origen do so at their peril. Indeed, terminological discussions, such as Harl's and Gruber's, might be thought to move further in the direction of Koch and de Faye than scholars like Daniélou and Crouzel would think permissible. And yet it is clear that such work must be done if Origen is to be understood. To those who remain outside the discussion in reviewing the literature of the past decades, Origen does seem to emerge as a truly ambiguous—or at least dialectical—thinker, full of antitheses and contradictions that can elude even the painstaking textual analyses of the modern scholar. But not to deny the valuable work of the school of Koch, it would seem that the more constructive view of Origen, the mystic of the Church, the Greek philosopher who has transcended the limited categories of eclectic Neoplatonism, has for us more appeal. It is towards this point of view that the majority of modern patristic scholars would seem to incline. For here is a vision of the theology of the early Church which goes farthest in explaining the flowering of mystical dogma and asceticism under the Cappadocians in the East and under Augustine and his successors in the West. In fact, it would seem that Crouzel has put his finger on the crucial point when he suggests that only a bias against the later dogmatic growth or a specific doctrinaire thesis about the message of primitive Christianity would modify this total picture of Origen in the direction taken by Koch, de Faye, and others In any case, no matter what final view we adopt on the enigmatic figure of Origen—and on

the enigma we must, despite von Campenhausen's brilliant interpretation, insist—we cannot read the literature of the last few decades without realizing that this momentous renascence of Origen studies has created deeper and deeper problems, dividing scholars into widely different and firmly entrenched camps, and raised questions which will require many more centuries to answer.

Bellarmine College
Plattsburgh, N.Y.

HERBERT MUSURILLO, S.J.