

FORM-CRITICISM OF THE SYNOPTIC HEALING NARRATIVES

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III. NOVELLE AND MIRACLE-STORY

IN classifying, for form-critical purposes, the stories of miraculous healings recorded in the synoptic Gospels, Dibelius and Bultmann have employed more or less parallel categories. Just as the paradigm of Dibelius corresponds in general to the apothegm of Bultmann,¹ so all the healing narratives which Dibelius names "novellen" are classified by Bultmann under the heading "miracle-stories." We conclude our study of these authors' theoretical analysis of healing narratives by an evaluation of these two categories.

A. THE NOVELLE OF DIBELIUS

As the Christian preacher shaped the first growth of the synoptic tradition, exemplified by the paradigms, so, Dibelius believes, the Christian narrator was of special importance in guiding its subsequent development. The sources are indeed silent regarding this group of narrators; but that there were men capable of telling stories from the life of Jesus with breadth, color, and a certain art, may be concluded with certainty, Dibelius feels, from the very existence of such stories. That these narratives were not destined for use in preaching is evident from their form: their broadness rendered a paradigmatic use impossible; their technique betrays a certain delight in telling tales; their "topic" closely approaches the literary species cultivated beyond the pale of Christianity, especially in description of the illness and its cure, verification of the healing's success, and, in common with the paradigm, a choral-acclamation of the wonderworker at the end. Dibelius names this group "Novellen"—short-stories or tales—because they

¹These two form-categories were examined in a previous article, "Paradigm and Apothegm," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES*, III (1942), 47-68.

approach the literary forms of the world.²

Examples. Dibelius selects nine narratives from Mark as clearly belonging to this category. All are miracle stories and six are accounts of healings:

The leper, Mr 1:40 ff.

The Gerasene demoniac, Mr 5:1 ff.

The daughter of Jairus and the woman with the issue of blood,
Mr 5:21 ff.

The deaf and dumb man, Mr 7:32 ff.

The blind man of Bethsaida, Mr 8:22 ff.

The possessed boy, Mr 9:14 ff.

One story from Luke is included because of its novellistic traits, though it has been reworked by the evangelist:

The widow's son at Nain, L 7:11 ff.³

Form. These stories are, in general complete, independent narratives. Transitions, if present, may well be due to the evangelist, and their removal will render the story more intelligible. However, the link between the story of Jairus' daughter and that of the woman with the issue of blood seems to have existed prior to the redaction.

Occasionally it is easy to see that the evangelist has inserted the novellen into his work by comments of a pragmatic nature. This is particularly true of the stereotyped command not to divulge what has taken place. The injunction may easily be separated from the story itself, e.g., at the end of the account of the blind man and that of the deaf and dumb man, which have reached their real and typical conclusion earlier. Practically speaking it was impossible to keep the cure secret—was the man hitherto blind to go on living in retirement? Hence it is a question of the evangelist's well known theory of the Messianic secret. Thus Mr 5:43a: "And he strictly charged

²M. Dibelius, *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (2nd ed.; Tübingen, 1933), pp. 66 f. This book is hereafter cited simply as "Dibelius."

³Dibelius, p. 68. The other novellen from Mark are: Mr 4:35 ff., 6:35 ff., 6:45 ff. Five miracle stories from John may be added here, the author believes, as they show characteristics of the novelle, though they have been retouched. Of these, four are healing narratives: J 4:46 ff., 5:1 ff., 9:1 ff., 11:1 ff.

them to let no one know of this," is to be removed from the story of the daughter of Jairus. On the other hand, in Mr 1:43-44 the leper was really forbidden to mingle with men until legally declared clean. Mark, understanding the prohibition according to his theory, added verse 45: "But the man when departed began to speak freely and to spread abroad the whole story . . . ; and they came to him from all sides." Similarly he has added 7:36-37 to the story of the deaf and dumb man, and 5:18-20 to that of the Gerasene demoniac, though both accounts had reached their genuine, novellistic conclusion previously, in order to give a picture of the numerous following of Jesus.⁴

In the story of the young man of Nain, a true novelle may be discovered by removing L 7:13: "And the Lord, seeing her, felt compassion towards her and said to her, 'Weep not,'" which is characteristically Lucan; and 7:15b; "And he gave him to his mother," which re-echoes 3K 17:23 and L 9:42 (where it was also introduced by Luke). We then have a better sequence. Two genuinely novellistic traits are the verification of the miracle—the youth begins to speak—and the acclamation of the crowd. Both in paradigm and novelle such choral-endings indicate that the story is intended for propaganda. The present narrative was not suited for use in preaching: its theme was too unique and drew too much attention to itself. Rather it was to a certain extent a substitute for preaching in a circle of hearers who were already accustomed to the marvels done by gods and prophets. The acclamation forms the genuine conclusion of this novelle; the following verse, L 7:17: "And this word concerning him spread throughout Judea and into all the country round about it," is to be attributed to the evangelist.⁵

The lengthiness of the novellen is evident from a comparison with the paradigms. It is due chiefly to the broadness of the description which indicates composers who knew how to

⁴Dibelius, pp. 69 ff., 72 f. ⁵Dibelius, pp. 71 f.

tell a story and loved to do so. In contrast with the edifying style of the paradigm, the *novelle* delights in profane motifs. The coloring is not dulled, the living realism of the tale is not constrained by an effort to instruct or edify. This is clearly shown in the "worldly" behavior of the disciples. Because of this relatively profane character, all sayings of Jesus of general import are overshadowed. Jesus' words on faith to Jairus and the father of the possessed boy refer not to belief in His mission but to trust in His power. The *novelle* presents not Jesus the herald of the Kingdom of God but Jesus the wonder-worker. What was incidental in the paradigm is now the central point, the miracle.⁶

This is evident from the conclusion of these stories, which verifies the reality of the miracle. If this does not appear clearly, the pragmatic endings inserted by the evangelists are at fault. Thus the story of the leper really ends with Mr 1:44: "Offer for thy purification what Moses commanded"; that of the deaf and dumb man ends with Mr 7:35: "And he spoke aright." Similarly the proper ending of the story of the blind man is in Mr 8:25 and that of the Gerasene demoniac in Mr 5:15. The account of the possessed boy terminates with a counsel of Jesus for the disciples, Mr 9:29: "This kind can be cast out by naught save prayer": which is a miracle-recipe for the performing of such cures in the future. On this occasion the people marvel and run to Jesus, an expression of popular veneration for the great man which can easily pass into cult-worship of a hero. A mysterious spell surrounds the figure of the wonderworker; while some grow fearful in his presence, others are drawn to him; as soon as he touches the bier of the youth, the pall-bearers halt.⁷

The interest of the *novellen* in the wonderworker is most clearly shown, however, when his actions are described. This is done in such detail that we are given some insight into the technique of the miracle. In this, the *novelle* approaches

⁶Dibelius, pp. 73-76. ⁷Dibelius, pp. 76 ff.

literary miracle stories much more closely than did the paradigm. Not only does its diction give a more profane impression, but the "topic" of the miracle narrative, as employed in the world, appears with considerable regularity. One of the favorite devices of such narration is a description of the serious nature of the sickness and the futility of all attempts to cure it, in order to extol the miraculous healing. Thus the history of the illness is given in the story of the possessed boy, the demoniac, the woman with the issue of blood. To stress the same point, we are told that Jesus was mocked in Jairus' home, that the disciples were unable to heal the possessed boy, that the youth from Nain was already on the way to burial.⁸

We must understand everything narrated concerning the technique of the cure in a similar light. It is characteristic that Jairus requests the wonderworker to "come, lay thy hands upon her," that the guides of the deaf and dumb man and the blind man do likewise, that the woman with the issue of blood is determined to touch his garment. Interest is focussed on these technical details of the art of miraculous cures. Jesus asks the devil his name, for knowing this gives power over the spirits. Frequently a miraculous formula is employed: "I will; be thou made clean," Mr 1:41; "Thou unclean spirit, go out of the man," Mr 5:8. Twice the formula is given in the original Aramaic: "Talitha, cum," Mr 5:41, and "Ephphatha," Mr 7:34. This use of strange words gives an air of mystery to the event and this in turn augments faith in the power of the wonderworker. There may, however, be another motive: by reporting the magic word, the narrator made possible its use. The story of the possessed boy ends with a miracle-recipe: the reenacting of such miracles in the community was therefore taken into account. Evidently the narrators desired to be of assistance to the Christians by a detailed description of the healing technique and particularly by recording the formulae, at times in their foreign tongue.⁹

⁸Dibelius, pp. 78 ff. ⁹Dibelius, pp. 80 f

Accompanying the formula, or taking its place, there are definite gestures. These were present in the paradigms, but only incidentally. The significance in the novelle appears most clearly in the story of the deaf and dumb man and that of the blind man. In the latter case we have the laying on of hands, in the former, "he thrust his fingers into the man's ears . . . and looking up to heaven, he sighed," Mr 7:33-34. This sigh was also part of the cure, as is certain from a comparison with those magic recipes in which staring and breathing heavily are means of absorbing power. "Taking by the hand" is another healing gesture: the possessed boy, the daughter of Jairus; so too, touching the bier of the widow's son. The transfer of strength from Jesus to the woman with the issue of blood is described quite clearly as effected by her contact with his garment. In two cases a remedy is used beside the gesture: spittle, which was a popular cure in primitive medicine and magic. Once more the desire to be of practical help for the Christians endowed with healing powers is evident, especially when the cure is described by stages, as in the case of the possessed boy and the blind man.¹⁰

This last motif, the gradual healing, can also be ascribed to the tendency to confirm the success of the miracle. In the paradigm the healing is sometimes verified, e.g., by the paralytic carrying his bed, Mr 2:12; but stress is laid on the faith aroused. In the novelle, the cure itself is emphasized: the leper must show himself to the priests; the resuscitated maiden is to be given food. In the story of the Gerasene demoniac (omitting the secondary conclusion appended by the evangelist: Mr 5:18-20) the miracle is so insisted on, that Jesus is presented not as a beneficent Savior who helps, but as a sinister doer of marvels who terrifies. Possibly the destruction of the whole herd of swine is intended to establish the grandeur of the exorcism.¹¹

Sitz im Leben. These are the "worldly" characteristics of the novelle as analyzed by Dibelius. His next step is to define

¹⁰Dibelius, pp. 82 ff. ¹¹Dibelius, pp. 84 f.

its religious significance in the framework of the Gospels. When Jesus takes only the three chosen disciples into Jairus' home, when He leads the deaf and dumb man aside from the crowd, the blind man outside the village, before healing them, this is not to hide His Messiasship—an idea of Mark, expressed in secondary conclusions which must be separated from the genuine account. The wonderworker here avoids the public because he is sent by God and God's act must not be seen by profane eyes. In these and similar instances it is a question of "epiphany-stories" in which the divine power of the divine wonderworker appears visibly. The miracle is told for its own sake; it is the manifestation of the divine on earth. In the novellen the epiphany is a goal in itself.¹²

From this, the significance of these narratives in the primitive mission activity can be perceived. The novelle shed no new light on the message of salvation, but it did demonstrate the superiority of the "Lord Jesus" and eliminate the competition of other cult-gods. Its importance in this respect is clear if one remembers two facts of Hellenistic religious history: the occasional substitution of miracle stories for myth, as in the case of Asklepios and Sarapis, and the effacing of the boundaries between god and god-sent man, as in that of Apollonios of Tyana and others. One could tell no real myths about Jesus, but there were His deeds to furnish propagandistic novellen. Their telling served to show that this human life was really divine.¹³

Origin. Regarding the origin of the novellen, Dibelius suggests three possibilities. The first is based on the existence of intermediate forms: paradigms restyled after the manner of the novellen. The best example of these is the story of the infirm woman, L 13:10-17. This story ultimately depends on more or less the same material as its paradigmatic parallels: Mr 3:1 ff., the man with the withered hand, and L 14:1 ff., the man with dropsy. As in Mark, the synagogue furnishes

¹²Dibelius, pp. 90 ff. ¹³Dibelius, pp. 93 f.

the scene. As in the paradigm from Luke, a discourse follows the healing. But the discourse is more literary than in the two paradigms and more lengthy, though it has the paradigmatic edifying conclusion and the healing itself has unmistakably been fashioned into a novelle.¹⁴ Here, then, is one possible source of the novellen: the development of short paradigms into longer narratives by the insertion of a richer miracle-topic and other elements of the narrative style, e.g., dialogue.¹⁵ This was not always a literary process. It could occur automatically as soon as the stories were separated from the preaching and were told as independent tales by men accustomed to narrate in the fashion of the familiar wonder-story or anecdote. Often, though not always, this process meant a further separation of tradition from historical reality, inasmuch as it presented the unique as the usual. But the details with which the paradigms were enriched have a certain degree of probability, for the schematic form of the healing account would never have arisen had not the relations of wonderworker and sick person followed a recurrent pattern.¹⁶

From this a second possible genesis of the novellen can be discerned. Once the need was felt to fill out the concise paradigmatic account, not only Christian but also extraneous motifs could be employed for its expansion. And in conjunction with this possibility, a third likely origin of this group must also be considered: the taking over, and remolding, of entire non-Christian stories.¹⁷

¹⁴Dibelius, p. 94 ff. As other intermediate forms, he cites the story of the woman taken in adultery, J 7:33 ff., and some fragments from the Gospel of the Nazarenes.

¹⁵Cf. "The Structure and Literary Character of the Gospels," *Harv. Theol. Rev.*, XX (1927), 159; also "Zur Formgeschichte der Evangelien," *Theol. Rund.*, N.F. 1 (1929), 202 f., where Dibelius suggests that this may have occurred in Mr 1:40-45 (the leper). He adds: "Es können aber auch solche Novellen, die nur auf Jesus übertragene Wundergeschichten sind und darum profanen Charakter haben, durch Minderung profaner und Einfügung christlicher Züge den Paradigmen ähnlicher werden; eine Entwicklung dieser Art sehen wir in der verchristlichenden Bearbeitung mancher Markus-Novellen durch Matthäus vor Augen." (!)

¹⁶Dibelius, pp. 96 f. ¹⁷Dibelius, p. 97.

The probability of such transplanting can be seen by reflecting that two different tendencies thus concur: the desire of the Christians to narrate many great deeds of their Savior which would proclaim His epiphany, and the inclination of popular tradition to link any current unattached story with the hero of the day. At times such a process may have been unconscious: Jewish-Christian narrators made Jesus the hero of legends about the prophets or the rabbis; converted pagans told of the Christian Savior the reshaped tales of gods and wonder-workers. At least two Gospel narratives show that this actually occurred. The story of the Gerasene demoniac, *Mt* 5:1-17, is one. It not only lacks the Gospel ethos but its conclusion (omitting 18-20) is contrary to Jesus' mission. The tale's nonchalance regarding the damage done, and its indifferent account of the people's desire that Jesus depart from them, show that the narrator is concerned only with the grandeur of the miracle. We can suppose that the story was originally told of a Jewish exorcist. The owner of the swine might then be disregarded, for he would be a Gentile; and the destruction of the despised animals would form a satisfactory conclusion for the Jewish narrator. In similar fashion, the story of the miracle at Cana was transferred from Dionysos or a kindred divinity and applied to Jesus.¹⁸

The historical value of any *novelle* depends on the question: In which of these three ways did it originate? In general this cannot be decided. All that can be said is that, even under the most favorable circumstances, the *novelle* is further from the historical occurrence than was the paradigm. However, if a *novelle* is developed from a paradigm, we may conjecture an historical basis or starting point, and even the foreign material adopted by the narrators has been Christianized.¹⁹

¹⁸Dibelius, pp. 97 ff.

¹⁹Dibelius, pp. 99 f.; cf. "The Structure and Literary Character of the Gospels," p. 166: "The novellen stand on a rather lower level in respect of credibility, for the marks of the world are all too clearly stamped upon them."

Dibelius follows this treatment of the *novelle* by discussing one more category of independent stories, the legend. These are pious tales of some holy man in whose deeds and fate people are interested. He distinguishes the etiological cult-legend, which serves to justify some religious practice or belief, and the personal-legend. The story of the Passion exemplifies the former. Of the purely personal legend there are but few examples in the synoptic Gospels. Most of them concern secondary characters; only one records a healing: the ten lepers, L 17:12 ff. This incident is not presented as a paradigm: it does not end with a general saying of import to the community. Nor is it a *novelle*: there is no inclination to describe the miracle. It is a personal-legend in which Jesus is the central figure, but it is not possible to establish its origin or historical value²⁰. Accordingly, we may pass over this group of narratives as not pertinent to our subject and evaluate Dibelius' description of the *novellen*.

Criticism. Ostensibly, Dibelius again employs the constructive approach by beginning with the *Sitz im Leben*. In establishing this, his first step is to postulate the formative influence of a group of narrators, corresponding to the preachers who molded the paradigm. Here, however, the constructive method breaks down: the sources are silent on the very existence of such a group. Dibelius is certain, none the less, that these men existed and he constantly speaks of them as a definite factor in developing the *novellistic* form. Insofar as this is not mere assumption of the point at issue, his reasoning may be outlined thus: the paradigms were formed for use by preachers: *atqui*, the *novelle* so differs from the paradigm that it could not be used by preachers; therefore, it was created by narrators. His major premise has been discussed in a previous article²¹: there is no proof that the paradigms were actually employed in preaching and thus received their form. His minor premise,

²⁰Dibelius, pp. 101 f., 117 f.

²¹THEOLOGICAL STUDIES, III (1942), 54 ff.

apart from its assumption of the major, will be considered shortly. His conclusion is illogical and remains gratuitous. The group of narrators, as Fascher noted, is never more than an hypothesis.²²

Dibelius' further specification of the *Sitz im Leben* of these narratives is equally unsatisfactory. It is true that they clearly manifest Jesus' divine power and are therefore, in a certain sense, "epiphany-stories." But this by no means proves that they were substitutes for preaching, created to outshine the wonders accredited to rival cult-divinities. Their aim is not to dazzle, but by sober recital of events to awaken faith in Jesus' person. To see in them an attempt to preserve miracle-recipes for the guidance of Christian wonder-workers is even more fantastic. The only words of Jesus recorded in this regard are contained in Mr 9:29: "This kind can be cast out by naught save prayer (and fasting²³)", clearly a spiritual counsel, remote from any of the current magic-formulae. Indeed the impossibility of establishing any *Sitz im Leben* for these narratives, distinct from that of the paradigms, is evident from the number of verses Dibelius removes as paradigmatic, and from the existence of admittedly intermediate forms.

Turning now to Dibelius' analysis of the novellistic form, we note two tendencies. The first is an insistence that the characteristics of the novelle differ sharply from these of the paradigm and render it unfit for use in preaching. The second is a rejection of all verses that do not fit the "typical" novelle. Transitions must be removed, comments of a pragmatic nature eliminated, paradigmatic conclusions excised, Lucan details deleted. Now it is undeniable that many verses in these narratives are due directly to the evangelist. This merely proves that Mark and Luke were really authors, not simply collectors of stories already formed. It is legitimate, therefore, in study-

²²E. Fascher, *Die formgeschichtliche Methode* (Giessen, 1924), p. 70.

²³So Mt 17:21, according to the more probable reading: cf. A. Merk, *N. T. Graece et Latine* (3rd ed.; Rome, 1938), *in h. l.*

ing an individual narrative, to prescind from certain verses, e.g., those which serve simply to bind the incident to the general apologetic scheme. But this is all. We may not simply discard such verses, nor prescind from all portions of the narratives which do not correspond to a preestablished type. Dibelius' procedure, therefore, is most arbitrary. He gives no proof that Jesus did not actually impose silence on those He healed, lest their unrestrained enthusiasm further harden the hearts of His adversaries, or revive in His followers that worldly concept of the Messiah He was striving to correct. Likewise, that many cures resulted in an increase of fame and followers is a natural detail of the story which it is most unreasonable to reject. Finally, to remove certain conclusions because they resemble the paradigm, is simply to fit facts to theory in a *petitio principii*.

The first characteristic distinguishing the novelle from the paradigm is said to be the breadth of its description. It is true that some of the novellen are longer and more detailed than any paradigm, e.g., the story of the Gerasene demoniac, Mr 5:1 ff. However, comparing the healing narratives in each category, we note that four of the five paradigms and four of the seven novellen are of the same average length, six verses. Moreover, the paradigmatic story of the paralytic, Mr 2:1-12, is longer than the average healing novelle, and the novellistic account of the blind man of Bethsaida, Mr 8:22-26, is as short as any paradigm. Finally, as regards detail, the healing of the blind man near Jericho, Mr. 10:46 ff., is told at least as vividly as the cure of the leper, Mr. 1:40 ff.

The second distinguishing characteristic is said to be a profane, that is, non-edifying style, despite the fact that in the stories of the leper, the daughter of Jairus, the woman with the issue of blood, and the possessed boy, faith in Jesus, goal of all preaching, is stressed as clearly as in any paradigm. It is true, of course, that the evangelists were not as preoccupied with the question of edification as is Dibelius. The idea of judging the Master's deeds did not occur to them: they were His deeds

and therefore worth recording, even though, as in the case of the swine at Gerasa, the full import of His act might not be clear.²⁴ However, the fact that in these stories Jesus is presented as a wonder-worker is by no means to be considered a "worldly" trait. The miracle-motif itself is essentially religious and could well find a place in the early missionary preaching.

Here we may note a significant fact that will explain all the rest of the characteristics by which Dibelius seeks to distinguish paradigm from novelle: the novellen, without exception, are stories of miracles. The stylistic traits of this category, therefore, are conditioned by the content of the narratives rather than by their external form. Since there is no essential difference between the categories in breadth of style or religious tone, and since miracle stories are also included among the paradigms—with gestures, proof of the cure, and choral-ending—we may reasonably conclude that the sharp distinction Dibelius has drawn between these categories is an exaggeration.

The "topic" of the miracle narrative, so much insisted on by Dibelius, will be studied in detail in subsequent articles. In passing, however, we may note a few inaccuracies. The history of the illness is not necessarily a device to extol the miracle: it is a natural part of the story of any cure; even in the most modern clinic it includes details as to the seriousness of the disease and previous unsuccessful treatments. Nor does Jesus ask the devil's name in order to win power over him: that power is already His, as is evident from the supplication: "I adjure thee by God, not to torment me," Mr 5:7. Again, the words, "I will; be thou made clean," Mr 1:41, are certainly not a miracle-formula: Jesus merely grants the leper his request. Nor do any of Jesus' phrases in these cures resemble at all contemporary Greek and Jewish magic-recipes.²⁵ As for words

²⁴Cf. Grandmaison, *Jesus Christ*, III, 151 f.

²⁵Examples of Hellenic and rabbinic magic formulae will be given in subsequent articles. It would seem that the desire to guide Christian wonder-workers by revealing Jesus' technique should conflict with the desire to portray the Master as thaumaturge par excellence, outshining all rival cult-divinities. Dibelius, however, does not discuss the point.

that have been preserved in Aramaic, the "air of mystery" vanishes if we recall that Jesus' original hearers spoke Aramaic, and the evangelist is careful to translate the words for those of his readers who did not. Finally, the fact that Jesus heals indifferently with gestures or without, indicates clearly enough that these gestures are symbolic as well as instrumental, and are efficacious not of themselves but by the will of the Savior.

Regarding the historical value of the novellen, Dibelius maintains that some of these stories were developed by expansion of the paradigms. But this presupposes that the novellen are of later date, and for this no proof is given. Nor was it possible in the first two decades of Christianity, as it actually existed, for extraneous motifs and foreign material to penetrate the tradition in the manner Dibelius suggests. Even at a later date, the apocrypha were rejected. We may therefore pass over his comments on the historical trustworthiness of these narratives, merely noting that once again form-criticism has produced quite negative results in this regard.

B. THE MIRACLE-STORY OF BULTMANN

Having discussed the transmission of the sayings of Jesus under the two general headings "Apothegms" and "Sayings of the Lord," Bultmann devotes the second section of his work on the synoptic tradition to the narrative material.²⁶ This he divides into two sections: "Miracle-Stories" and "Historical Narratives and Legends." The first of these sections corresponds to the novellen of Dibelius. It includes all ten of the novellen and ten other miracle accounts beside. Of these twenty stories, twelve are healing narratives, seven healing stories being included in both the parallel categories, novelle and miracle-story. The miraculous healings previously discussed as apothegms are not reconsidered here, except incidentally, because Bultmann believes that they are not told in the style of the miracle-story, the cure being subservient to the point of the apothegm.

²⁶R. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (2nd ed.; Göttingen, 1931), pp. 223-346. This work is hereafter referred to simply as "Bultmann."

An exception is made, however, in regard to Mr 2:1-12, the paralytic, since the author believes that this was originally a miracle-story, which was later transformed into an apothegm.²⁷

Examples. The following accounts of healings are listed as miracle-stories:

The possessed man in the synagogue, Mr 1:21 ff. and par.

The Gerasene demoniac, Mr 5:1 ff. and par.

The possessed boy, Mr 9:14 ff. and par.

The dumb possessed man, Mt 9:32 ff.

The mother-in-law of Peter, Mr 1:29 ff. and par.

The leper, Mr 1:40 ff. and par.

The paralytic, Mr 2:1 ff. and par.

The deaf and dumb man, Mr 7:32 ff.

The blind man of Bethsaida, Mr 8:22 ff.

The blind man near Jericho, Mr 10:46 ff. and par.

The two blind men, Mt 9:27 ff.

The daughter of Jairus and the woman with the issue of blood, Mr 5:21 ff. and par.

The widow's son at Nain, L 7:11 ff.²⁸

Form. After a detailed analysis of each of these healing narratives and a similar analysis of the nature-miracles, Bultmann discusses the form and history of the miracle-stories as a group. He begins with some general remarks.

Miracles are an essential part of the synoptic tradition. They are told not as notable occurrences but as deeds of Jesus. However, their aim is not biographical: they portray Jesus' might rather than His character. Hence Jesus' motive is not generally mentioned, merely His pity, or a desire to arouse faith. The miracles are, as it were, something independent of His personal will, functioning automatically, as may be clearly seen in the cure of the woman with the issue of blood. In accord with this, the inner disposition of the person healed is practically never considered. Of course, in healing miracles, the faith of those who request the cure is a necessary condition. But this faith is not belief in Jesus' message or His person, in the modern sense;

²⁷Bultmann, p. 223. ²⁸Bultmann, pp. 223-230.

it is merely the trust due the wonder-worker. Nor is it mentioned out of psychological interest or as a necessary psychic circumstance for the success of the cure, as is shown by the fact that it need not be the faith of the sick person himself; that of his intermediaries suffices. Since this faith signifies acknowledgment of Jesus' position, all light falls on Him, not on the sick person. When the miracle has taken place, interest in the person cured ceases; the paralytic's gratitude is not recorded nor that of the father of the possessed boy. Mr 5:19, where the Gerasene asks to accompany Jesus, is an editorial addition; and L 17:11 ff., the ten lepers, is a special case where a miracle-story has been made to serve as an apothegm teaching gratitude. As in the apothegms, there is a lack of detailed portraiture, and everything subserves the point of the story: in the apothegms Jesus' saying, here the miracle. Finally, the synoptic tradition is not concerned with the effects of the miracle on the general outline of Jesus' history.²⁹

Bultmann next presents, in fine schematic outline, a detailed study of the style or "phenomenology" of the miracle-story—what Dibelius called its "topic."³⁰ As this study is based entirely on analogies, however, it will be better to evaluate it in the last of the present articles, when considering the typical healing narrative. Meanwhile we may examine briefly his general survey of the synoptic narrative technique, which is appended to his discussion of the transmission of all the narrative material.

Bultmann's first observation concerns the conciseness of the narrative style. Except for the history of the Passion, no passage treats of events covering more than two days: generally they are but brief scenes lasting a few minutes or hours. All the narratives are also constructed to present merely a single chain of events. Two simultaneous series of actions are never recorded, e.g., the thoughts of Jairus while the woman with the issue of blood delays their journey. The law of "scenic duality" likewise

²⁹Bultmann, pp. 233-236. ³⁰Bultmann, pp. 236-241.

reigns throughout these stories. Jesus and His interlocutor (or group of such) alone take part in the action; the other characters are merely supernumeraries. Thus in Mr 2:1-10 the paralytic remains out of consideration during the debate. If more than one character is necessary for the story, they appear in succession, not simultaneously. The story of the woman with the issue of blood, Mr 5:21-43, is inserted quite primitively into that of Jairus' daughter. In L 7:11 ff. the Jewish elders and the friends of the centurion converse with Jesus, one group after the other, and the former are forgotten as soon as the latter appear. It is a subsequent development when in the Matthean redaction of the conversation between Jesus and the Syro-phenician woman, Mt 15:23, the disciples also speak.³¹

If a group enters the scene, it is presented, in the primitive style, as a unit. Such groups speak either as a chorus or through their representatives. Differentiation of those within the group is hardly ever to be observed—or else it is a sign of a more developed style, as in John. There is, however, a noticeable tendency toward individualizing in popular tradition, and this is manifest in the synoptic narratives by an inclination to name the characters.³²

Little is said of the motives and feelings of Jesus and the other characters; if they are portrayed, it is done only indirectly. From time to time, however, small striking touches are to be found which show the need for plastic presentation: e.g., Mr 10:50 (the blind man): "Casting off his cloak he leaped up and came to Jesus"; L 7:14, (the widow's son at Nain): "The bearers stood still." Such features are rare. The novellistic interest stirring in them becomes more active in the further development of the tradition, but it is manifest even in the synoptic Gospels to a degree. Thus the youth at Nain is the only son of his mother and she is a widow, L 7:12. This is a typical legendary trait, as is clear from L 9:38, where the possessed boy

³¹Bultmann, pp. 335 f. Cf. his *Die Erforschung der synoptischen Evangelien* (2nd ed.; Giessen, 1930), p. 16.

³²Bultmann, pp. 336 ff.

is made the only son of his father, a fact not known in Mr 9:17. Similarly in L 8:42, the daughter of Jairus has become his only daughter, in contrast to Mr 5:23. More innocuous, but methodically of interest, is the fact that the ear struck off in Gethsemane is the right ear in L 22:50, which was not yet remarked in Mr 14:47, and the withered hand of Mr 3:1 has become the right hand in L 6:6.³³

In this connection, another trait of popular style may be mentioned: the use of direct discourse, which serves to report motives and feelings indirectly. There is also a tendency to create new sayings for the characters involved, partly by filling out their conversation, partly by recasting the earlier account in direct discourse. Sometimes, naturally, the opposite process is discernible, but not as frequently. The request of the Syro-phenician woman is in direct discourse in Mt 15:22, 25 in contrast to Mr 7:26; the touch of the woman with the issue of blood is merely described in Mr 5:30 while it is spoken of by Jesus in L 8:46. On the other hand, in the interests of a smoother narrative style, Luke sometimes merely reports what is direct discourse in Mark, e.g. L 8:29, 32. In general, however, of two related passages the one with the direct discourse is to be judged secondary.³⁴

In popular narration, numbers also play a special role, especially the number two. This is not due to a mythical motif but to a desire for symmetry. The tendency is manifest in the synoptic tradition where two supernumeraries are presented, though originally there was only one or an indefinite number. Thus in Mt 8:28 ff. the one Gerasene demoniac of Mr 5:1 ff. has become two; the single blind man of Mr 10:46 ff. has become two in Mt 20:29 ff.; under the same influence the healing of two blind men is recorded in Mt 9:27 ff.³⁵

³³Bultmann, pp. 338 ff.; cf. "The New Approach to the Synoptic Problem," *Journ. of Rel.*, VI (1926), 345 f.

³⁴Bultmann, pp. 340 ff.; cf. *Die Erforschung*, p. 17.

³⁵Bultmann, pp. 343-346. In this regard cf. Fascher, *Die formgeschichtliche Methode*, p. 224.

Criticism. Looking back over these comments on miracle-stories and the general synoptic narrative technique, we notice that much of what Bultmann says regards merely the simplicity of the synoptic style. These books are not modern psychological biographies; they imply, rather than depict, motives and inner dispositions. They are apologetic in aim and so interest centers on Jesus. They are concisely written and follow no complicated pattern in their narrative portions. However, they are not accounts composed along rigidly formalistic lines, comparable, for example, to the classical sonnet. Hence Bultmann errs in identifying as a "subsequent development" any deviation from a theoretically pure type. It is not possible to establish the type with such detailed accuracy.

It is possible, of course, that Luke includes certain specific details not found in Mark in order to satisfy questions occasioned by the earlier Gospel, even as John definitely sought to supply lacunae in the synoptic account. It is wrong, however, to employ such examples as proof of a gradual legendary evolution of the tradition, from Mark through Matthew and Luke. To begin with, whatever the influence of Mark on the Greek version of Matthew, tradition is unanimous on the priority of the Aramaic original, that is, the substance, of the first Gospel. Again, a more detailed style is not necessarily later or legendary; it is simply the expression of a different personality. Finally, some of the most vivid details are admittedly to be found in Mark. It is false, therefore, to see in all such details a growing novellistic interest, and to reject them as subsequent legendary traits. The maiden whom Jesus resuscitated did not "become" Jairus' only daughter in the account of Luke: such a conclusion would be warranted only if, for example, Mark had portrayed her brothers and sisters as among the mourners.⁸⁶ On the other hand, it is in the Gospel of Mark that we learn in concrete detail, for example, that the blind beggar near Jericho

⁸⁶It may be noted in passing, that these latter are described by Mark simply as "people wailing and lamenting loudly," and they are cast out by Jesus before He enters with "the father and mother of the child." This fits well the picture of an only child. *Mt* 5:18, 40.

was "the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus," and that "casting off his cloak, he leaped up" when Jesus called, Mr 10:46, 50.

What is true of plastic presentation and the mentioning of names, obtains also regarding the use of direct discourse. It is a characteristic of personal style and not necessarily part of an evolutionary process. It is sometimes present in Mark when absent in Luke. It is not a proof of secondary development. Nor does the use of the number two prove anything regarding what concerns us here, *viz.*, Bultmann's theory that we can trace a gradual corruption of the primitive form in the evolution of the synoptic tradition. Thus, Mark mentions but one Gerasene demoniac and one blind beggar at Jericho, while in each case Matthew mentions two. But when we turn to Luke, admittedly the latest of the three accounts, we find that in both cases he speaks of only one. Whatever be the explanation of the two figures in Matthew, they are not merely the result of a tendency toward symmetry.

In two other respects this interesting analysis of Bultmann is also at fault. First of all, it is wrong to describe Jesus' miraculous healings as involuntary. The leper "besought him on his knees, saying, 'If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.' And moved with compassion . . . he saith to him 'I will; be thou made clean'" (Mr 1:40 f.). Jesus' power does not function automatically, it is deliberately employed. Nor is it merely a transference of *dunamis* through physical contact with Jesus that heals the woman with the issue of blood: Jesus says explicitly, "Daughter, *thy faith* hath healed thee. Go in peace, and *be thou free* from thine affliction," Mr 5:34. Secondly, though Bultmann rightly points out that the faith mentioned in these stories is not the psychic atmosphere proposed by the exponents of "faith healing," he wrongly interprets it as mere trust in the wonder-worker,³⁷ and not belief in Jesus' person and

p. 234: "Das Vertrauen zum Wundertater das man ihm schuldig ist." In
 not. A. Fridrichsen, *Le problème du miracle dans le Christianisme primitif*.
 (Paris, 1905) p. 1: "La foi, c'est le tribut dû au grand prophète."

mission. In the story of the blind man near Jericho it is clearly a question of faith in Jesus as Messiah: "*Son of David*, have pity on me . . . Go, thy faith hath healed thee," Mr 10:48, 52. So also in the account of the cure of the paralytic: "Jesus, seeing their faith, saith to the paralytic, 'My child, thy sins are forgiven . . . But *that ye may know* that the *Son of Man* hath power on earth to forgive sins'—then saith he to the paralytic, 'I say to thee, arise, take up thy pallet, and go to thy home'," Mr 2:5, 10 f. Moreover, it is hard to see how this "trust in the wonder-worker" can fail to be either fiducial faith in the power of the wonder-worker or else theological faith in his person.

Growth of the Miracle-Story. We may now take up Bultmann's general conclusions as to the development of the miracle-story, especially the healing narrative, within the synoptic tradition.³⁸ He begins with some comments on errant motifs, the rise of variants, and a tendency to accentuate the miraculous element.

The stories of exorcisms, he maintains, were especially important to the community as proofs of the Messiahship of Jesus. They are often particularly prominent in the summaries of Jesus' activities, e.g., Mr 1:32-34; 1:39; 3:11; 6:7; Mt 4:24; 10:8; L 7:21. Thus it is understandable that the motif of exorcism took shape in various single stories, which, however, from the literary viewpoint, are not all to be traced back to the same account. In the other healings, the stress is clearly laid less upon the sickness than on the miracle of its cure. Thus the healing of the deaf and dumb man, Mr 7:31 ff., and of the blind man of Bethsaida, Mr 8:22 ff., are obviously variants. Mr 7:27 ff., the two blind men, and 32 ff., the dumb possessed man, are only variants of motifs from Mark. Mr 3:1 ff., the man with the withered hand, L 13:10 ff., the infirm woman, and L 14:1 ff., the man with dropsy (all apothegms) are but variants of the

³⁸It is significant that Bultmann does not endeavor to define a *Sitz im Leben* for the miracle-story. The present section, however, roughly corresponds to that phase of Dibelius' treatment of the novelle.

theme of Sabbath healings. The story of the ten lepers, L 17:11 ff. (apothegm), is an enhanced variant of Mr 1:40 ff., the leper; and the two cures of people at a distance, Mr 7:24 ff., the daughter of the Syro-phoenician woman, and Mt 8:5 ff., the servant of the centurion of Capharnaum (both apothegms), are also variants. That a variant to this last is to be found in Mr 5:21 ff., the daughter of Jairus, may hardly be said; but the story of the widow's son at Nain, L 7:11 ff., could well have entered the synoptic tradition as a counterpart to that of the daughter of Jairus.³⁹

A certain accentuation of the miraculous is also to be noticed in many passages. Beside the fact that Matthew and Luke narrate some new miracles not to be found in Mark and Q, this is illustrated in the editorial passages which summarily report Jesus' miracles: Mr 1:32-34; 3:7-12; 6:53-56; also Mt 4:23-25; 9:35 f; 15:29-31. In Mt 14:14, 19:2, 21:14, Jesus' healing activity is inserted into the text of Mark. Matthews also expands the text of Mark with certain accentuating features: thus in Mr 1:32 (cf. 3:10), all the sick are brought and many healed; in Mt 8:16 (cf. 12:15) many are brought and all healed; while in L 4:40 f. all are brought and all healed.⁴⁰

In the course of time a novellistic interest in the characters of the miracle-story awoke, as is clear in the apocrypha and the writings of the Fathers. This tendency is already manifest in the synoptics when the president of the synagogue bears the name Jairus, L 8:41, a name which has also crept into Mr 5:22 in most of the manuscripts.⁴¹ Hence one will be sceptical of the name Bartimaeus in Mr 10:46.⁴²

The situation is only briefly described in the miracle-stories: frequently not at all, otherwise in general (the synagogue, a house), or indirectly. The details are all incidental, casual,

³⁹Bultmann, pp. 241 f. ⁴⁰Bultmann, p. 243.

⁴¹Critically, the reading is certain: cf. Merk. *N. T. Graece et Latine, in h. l.*

⁴²Bultmann, p. 256 f. On this "tendency to supply names," cf. also *Die Erforschung*, p. 17.

merely those required to understand the story, not definite geographical data. These details were expanded, however, by the evangelists, in order to effect transitions from one story to another; e.g., Mr 5:21; "When Jesus had again crossed over in the boat to the other side"; similarly Mr 1:29, Mt 9:27, 32. It is also clear that the more definite geographical details are due, at least in part, to the redaction.⁴³ Thus, regarding the mention of Tyre and Sidon in Mr 7:24, 31: the traditional story referred to a Syro-phoenician, and so the locality was introduced in 24; it was inserted again in 31 in order to bring Jesus back into familiar surroundings from this aimless excursion. Similarly, in Mr 8:22 Bethsaida is an editorial addition, because in 23 the story takes place near a village. It follows that 27a, "the village of Caesarea Philippi," is likewise due to the redaction.⁴⁴ In Mr 2:1 the mention of Capharnaum is to be reckoned as due to the editing, as is also the mention of Gennesaret in Mr 6:53. Indeed, in the stories from Mark, only Gerasa in 5:2 and Jericho in 10:46 clearly pertain to at least an earlier period of the redaction than Mark's. Whether the names belonged to the original stories cannot be decided even then, but the apocryphal or secondary character of the accounts—the Gerasene demoniac, the blind man near Jericho—is evident, and L 7:11 ff., the widow's son, is to be joined to them with its mention of Nain. Data regarding time are also rare. In Mr 1:32, healing of many *in the evening*, the detail is due to the redaction. In general, definite geographical or chronological details are as foreign to the miracle-story as to the apothegm.⁴⁵

Regarding the period in which the tradition was enriched by the accretion of miracle-stories, Bultmann believes that marvels were told of Jesus even in the Palestinian community. This is to be deduced from Mt 12:27 f., where Jesus compares His expulsions of devils with those of Jewish exorcists. It is proved also by the presence of miracles in the apothegms, which probably

⁴³Bultmann, p. 257. ⁴⁴Bultmann, p. 68. ⁴⁵Bultmann, p. 257 f.

were fashioned in Palestine. Of course the variants of the Sabbath-healing, L 13:10 ff., the infirm woman, 14:1 ff., the man with dropsy, and other passages,⁴⁶ may well have been formulated on Hellenistic soil, once the type was there. In regard to the miracle-stories which are not apothegms, it is more difficult to decide. The richness of Hellenistic analogies, however, favors an origin in the Hellenistic stage of the tradition. Semitic turns of style prove little: they may have penetrated into the Koine, and the Septuagint had much influence on the Hellenistic-Christian use of words, especially in the literary period. Foreign words, such as "talitha cum" and "ephphatha," prove nothing; but from its content, the account of the leper, Mr 1:40 ff., springs from the Palestinian community, since its "show thyself to the priest, etc.," could hardly have been formulated on Hellenistic terrain. On the other hand, this is not true in regard to L 17:14, the ten lepers, for the story has been worked out after the pattern of Mr 1:44. In general, the origin of the miracle-stories may be considered predominantly Hellenistic.⁴⁷

Even if historical occurrences are at the basis of some healing accounts, their formation was the work of tradition. The history of these stories, therefore, is not to be studied in the confines of the New Testament. The less they are historical reports, the more one must inquire how they penetrated into the Gospel tradition. The study of analogies in popular and even literary miracle narratives will shed much light on this question.⁴⁸

Criticism. One is left a bit breathless by the sweeping destructiveness of these comments on the historical development of the miracle-story. If, as Bultmann contends, Schmidt has destroyed the framework of the Gospel story, then his successor has mutilated the picture itself beyond recognition, and analysis

⁴⁶E.g., L 17:11 ff., the ten lepers; also the differentiation of Mt 8:5 ff., the centurion of Capharnaum, from Mt 15:21 ff., the Syro-phoenician woman. Cf. Bultmann, p. 254.

⁴⁷Bultmann, pp. 253-256.

⁴⁸Bultmann, pp. 243 f. For the analogies adduced, cf. pp. 244-249; they will be studied in detail in subsequent articles.

has become annihilation. However, the gratuitous nature of many of the statements is clear, and some general observations will suffice for our present purpose.

The Messianic task of Jesus included not only redemption from the bondage of sin but also a partial liberation from those miseries which sin had brought into the world, sickness of body and oppression by the spirits of evil. It is quite true, therefore, that for the early Christians, Jesus' victories over the powers of darkness were proof of His Messiasship. It does not follow, however, that for this reason they fashioned various stories about the motif of exorcism: if they had to invent proofs for Jesus' Messianic character, what motive led them to believe in Him at all? Moreover, if exorcisms were invented because they were particularly important to the community in this regard, they should be prominent in the summaries of Jesus' activities. And Bultmann contends that they are. What are the facts? In Mark there are five such summaries: twice Jesus is mentioned as healing and exorcising, twice as merely healing, once as merely exorcising.⁴⁹ In Matthew (the tendency should increase with time, according to the form-critical view) we find ten such summaries: twice Jesus is pictured as healing and exorcising, eight times as merely healing, *never* as merely exorcising.⁵⁰ In Luke there are seven such summaries: four times Jesus is portrayed as healing and exorcising, three times as merely healing, *never* as merely exorcising.⁵¹ Thus, out of twenty-three such summaries preserved in the synoptic tradition, Jesus is described fourteen times as merely healing and only once, *in Mark*, as merely exorcising.

In regard to the other healings, Bultmann insists that the cure, rather than the sickness, is emphasized. In a certain sense this is true; Jesus is the center of attention for the evangelist

⁴⁹Mr 1:32-34; 1:39; 3-7b-12; 6:1-6a; 6:53-56.

⁵⁰Mt 4:23-25; 8:16-17; 9:35-38; 11:2-6; 12:15b-21; 14:13-14; 14:34-36; 15:29-31; 19:1-2; 21:14-17.

⁵¹L 4:40-41; 5:15-16; 6:17-19; 7:21; 7:18-23; 8:2-3; 9:11.

and his readers. It is false, however, in the way Bultmann interprets it: the community was interested only in creating a setting for the miraculous action of the Savior. Such an interpretation evades the point at issue, namely, the historical value of the incident. It also leaves completely unanswered the natural question, why, for example, the community created the story of the Syro-phoenician woman, Mr 7:24 ff., and that of the centurion of Capharnaum, Mt 8:5 ff., with all their details, to illustrate the same point. Indeed, Bultmann's whole treatment of the subject of variants is most arbitrary. In the study of any literature, the discernment of variants is a delicate task, and the burden of proof always rests on the investigator who claims that two stories, with differing details, were originally one. Unless the incident can only have occurred once, e.g., the healing of the servant's ear during the arrest in the garden of Gethsemane, the balance of probability favors the tradition as it stands. Statements that two or even three stories are "obviously" variants prove nothing.

An increasing accentuation of the miraculous is said to be proved by the fact that Matthew and Luke narrate some miracles not found in Mark and Q. We may prescind from Q. It is not a concrete quantity which can be examined as can Mark; Dibelius refers to it as a stratum rather than a text,⁵² and it has been conjectured as a source of Jesus' sayings rather than of His deeds. In regard to Mark, we may note that since it is the shortest Gospel it will naturally contain less of the miraculous element, quantitatively, than the other two. But qualitatively, that is, as regards the importance of miraculous cures in the public life of Jesus, it stresses the miraculous as strongly as do the Gospels of Matthew or of Luke. Moreover in the cures narrated by all three, the account of Mark is almost always longer and more detailed than that of Matthew or Luke, as, for

⁵²Dibelius, p. 236: "Was wir bei dem heutigen Stande der Forschung von de Quelle Q wissen, berechtigt uns eher von einer *Schicht* als von einer *Schrift* zu reden."

example, in the story of the Gerasene demoniac, Mr 5:1-20, Mt 8:28-34, L 8:26-39. Finally, it must not be forgotten that of the twelve cures listed by Bultmann among the miracle-stories, two are found only in Mark: the deaf and dumb man, Mr 7:32 ff., and the blind man of Bethsaida, Mr 8:22 ff.

It will not do, then, to say that Matthew, following a tendency to increase the miraculous element in the Gospels, has "expanded" the text of Mark by certain "insertions." Such solutions of the synoptic problem are too simple. If Jesus' healing activity has been "inserted" into the text of Mark in Mt 14:14 and other summaries, then, conversely, we might say that it has been "inserted" into the text of Matthew and Luke in Mr 6:5 (at Nazareth; cf. Mt 13:54 ff., L 4:16 ff.), or that Jesus' exorcising has been used to "expand" the text of Matthew in Mr 3:11 (summary, cf. Mt 12:15b-21). As for the fact that in the text of Matthew "many" are brought and "all" are healed, while in Mark "all" are brought and "many" healed, if such comparisons proved any tendency to increase the marvelous, which they do not, a much more significant example might be found in the story of the deaf and dumb man, told so concretely in Mr 7:31-37, though the parallel passage in Matthew is only a summary, Mt 15:29-31.

Bultmann's proneness to exclude all definite geographical or chronological details has already been discussed when considering his treatment of the apothegm: it leaves a mangled text, of interest neither to the primitive Christian nor the modern exegete. The essential weakness of his effort to determine the terrain in which these stories were formed has also been observed: Semitic cast of thought and Aramaic phrases are eliminated from consideration, and, while allowance is made for the influence of Jewish culture in Greece, the Hellenistic influence in Palestine is quite neglected. Of course, the basic defect is that the Gospels are assumed to be merely collective creations, and the personal impress of the evangelist is forgotten.

The category of Gospel stories under consideration deals ex-

clusively with the miraculous. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Bultmann is extremely sceptical about its historical value. In common with other rationalist critics, he rejects a priori all that pertains to the supernatural. "No comment is necessary" regarding the miraculous cure of the ten lepers; and apropos of the centurion of Capharnaum, "hardly anyone will defend the reality of healing at a distance."⁵³ In this he merely follows the old, old trend,⁵⁴ and leaves unexplained, as have his predecessors, the faith in the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth which was kindled in the primitive Christians of the Mediterranean world and which still burns in hundreds of millions of hearts after nineteen centuries. This phase of his system, however, does not concern us here, except to note that whenever Bultmann denies the historic worth of a passage because of its supernatural content, he has ceased to be a form-critic or a literary critic or even an historian evaluating sources. He is in the realm of philosophy and his criteria have no value in the study of the Gospel text.⁵⁵

(To be continued)

⁵³Bultmann, pp. 60, 39.

⁵⁴Thus over a century ago, D. Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu* (4th ed.; Tübingen, 1840), I, 84: ". . . wo eine Erzählung gegen diese Gesetze verstösst, [unser Standpunkt] sie insoweit für unhistorisch erkennt," quoted by Pinard, *Etude comparée* (3rd ed.), II, 137, note 1.

⁵⁵From the foregoing study of the theories of Bultmann and Dibelius, form-criticism's general prejudice against the historical trustworthiness of the synoptic tradition is clear. It does not lie within the scope of this work to present the arguments of conservative critics in behalf of the historical validity of these Gospels. This has been ably done in commentaries on the Gospels, e.g., those of Lagrange, and introductory manuals such as that of S. Rosadini, *Institutiones introductoriae in libros N.T.* (Rome, 1938), I, 245-269. We note only that such arguments do exist and that they cannot be simply disregarded. It is unscientific to analyze the synoptic tradition on the supposition that all apologetic creates its proofs from within. When form-critical norms are applied to the sacred text, it is the theory which is on trial, not the Gospel.

For Dibelius' conception of history and its relation to faith, cf. his book, *Evangelium und Welt*. (Göttingen, 1929), which is a second and expanded edition of his *Geschichtliche und übergeschichtliche Religion*. (Göttingen, 1925); also his article, "Jesus in Contemporary German Theology," *Journ. of Rel.*, XI (1931), 204 f., 211. Regarding Bultmann, a follower of Karl Barth, cf. the preface to his book, *Jesus*. (Berlin, 1926); also his collected essays in *Glauben und Verstehen*. (Tübingen, 1933), particularly, "Geschichtliche und übergeschichtliche Religion in Christentum?" "Die Bedeutung der 'dialektischen Theologie' für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft," and "Zur Frage des Wunders."