

THE ORIGIN OF FAITH IN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS: TWO RECENT PERSPECTIVES

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IN A widely-noted lecture delivered at the University of Tübingen on June 27, 1972, the German exegete Rudolf Pesch proposed a new account of the origin of faith in the resurrection of Jesus. Questioning the historical reliability of New Testament references to the discovery of Jesus' empty tomb and to appearances of the risen Christ, Pesch argued that the foundation of Christian belief in Jesus' resurrection lay in the historical Jesus, not in events after the crucifixion. In Pesch's judgment, the disciples had already recognized Jesus during his lifetime as eschatological prophet and prophetic Messiah. Having been prepared by Jesus for the coming of his own violent death, they were able to draw on current conceptions of the fate of eschatological figures to express the permanent personal salvific significance of the crucified Jesus by confession and proclamation of his resurrection. Theological examination of the resurrection should correspondingly be oriented on Jesus' public life and death, where it will find the appropriate historical foundation for Christian faith in the risen Lord.¹

An earlier article in the pages of this journal presented in more detail Pesch's analysis of the origin of faith in the resurrection, summarized the extensive critical response to his proposal, and commented briefly on systematic aspects of the discussion.² In the decade which has elapsed since publication of that note, numerous exegetes and systematic theologians have studied the resurrection at length, often as part of the general contemporary reconsideration of central topics of Christology,³ and Pesch's reconstruction has been subjected to further critical appraisal.⁴ During the same period Pesch has substantially modified his

¹ Cf. Rudolf Pesch, "Zur Entstehung des Glaubens an die Auferstehung Jesu," *TQ* 153 (1973) 201-28.

² John P. Galvin, "Resurrection as *Theologia crucis Jesu*: The Foundational Christology of Rudolf Pesch," *TS* 38 (1977) 513-25.

³ Especially worthy of note are Francis S. Fiorenza, *Foundational Theology: Jesus and the Church* (New York: Crossroad, 1984) 1-55; Hans Kessler, *Sucht den Lebenden nicht bei den Toten: Die Auferstehung Jesu Christi in biblischer, fundamentaltheologischer und systematischer Sicht* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1985); *Auferstehung Jesu—Auferstehung der Christen: Deutungen des Osterglaubens*, ed. Lorenz Oberlinner (Freiburg: Herder, 1986); and Gerald O'Collins, *Jesus Risen* (New York: Paulist, 1987).

⁴ Cf. Fiorenza, *Foundational Theology* 18-28; Kessler, *Sucht den Lebenden* 191-208;

historical interpretation, while Hansjürgen Verweyen, a systematic theologian, has developed a line of theological argumentation akin to some aspects of Pesch's original position.

Despite the importance of the issues at stake in this debate, which has a direct bearing on the whole of Christology and the theology of revelation, these more recent studies have received little attention. This essay will therefore present the current conceptions of Pesch (I) and Verweyen (II), before concluding with some reflections (III) on the implications of their work.

I

At the time of his lecture at Tübingen, Rudolf Pesch was professor at the University of Frankfurt. In 1980 he accepted a call from the University of Freiburg im Breisgau, where he had obtained his doctorates in history and theology, to succeed Anton Vögtle as professor of New Testament. In early September 1977 Pesch had moved with his family from Frankfurt to Munich in order to further their relationship with the *Integrierte Gemeinde*, a highly-developed Catholic base community;⁵ for more than six years he commuted from Munich to his teaching positions in Frankfurt and Freiburg (train journeys of four and five to six hours, respectively). Anxious to commit himself completely to the *Integrierte Gemeinde*, Pesch submitted his resignation from his chair in Freiburg on January 11, 1983, to take effect at the conclusion of the first semester of the following academic year; since then he has been full-time in Munich.

Francis J. Moloney, "Resurrection and Accepted Exegetical Opinion," *Australasian Catholic Record* 58 (1981) 191-202; Fergus Kerr, "Recent Catholic Writing on the Resurrection," *New Blackfriars* 58 (1977) 453-61, 506-15; and especially Hans-Willi Winden, *Wie kam und wie kommt es zum Osterglauben?: Darstellung, Beurteilung und Weiterführung der durch Rudolf Pesch ausgelösten Diskussion* (Disputationes theologicae 12; Frankfurt: Lang, 1982).

⁵ For an example of the ecclesiological orientation of the *Integrierte Gemeinde*, written by an author favorable to this perspective, cf. Norbert Lohfink, *Jesus and Community* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984). The ecclesiological issues, especially the understanding of the Church as a "contrast society," are well illustrated by the exchange between David Seeber ("Kontrastgesellschaft," *Herder Korrespondenz* 38 [1984] 49-51) and Gerhard and Norbert Lohfink ("'Kontrastgesellschaft': Eine Antwort an David Seeber," *Herder Korrespondenz* 38 [1984] 189-92). While recognizing the appeal and value of common commitment to lived discipleship, Seeber fears an elitist sectarian consciousness; the Lohfinks reply that their perspectives on ecclesiology are demanded by faithful interpretation of the New Testament. The movement's overall theological outlook is best reflected in the major work of its chief systematic theologian: Ludwig Weimar, *Die Lust an Gott und seiner Sache* (Munich: Wewel, 1981). The community has published an account of its own history: *Die Integrierte Gemeinde: Christliche Existenz in einer säkularen Welt* (Beiträge zur Reform der Kirche, Heft 15/16/17; Munich: Integrierte Gemeinde). For clarifying the nature of the *Integrierte Gemeinde* I am indebted to Rev. Michael Anrain, Bruck (Zillertal), Austria.

Religious development related to these significant personal steps has been a major factor in the course of his recent exegetical work.

The cogency of Pesch's interpretation of the origin of faith in the resurrection in his Tübingen lecture depended on several presuppositions, especially his high assessment of the impact of the historical Jesus and his analysis of the Jewish traditions used by Christians in proclaiming Jesus' resurrection. In the years immediately following the publication of his lecture, he devoted a substantial portion of his exegetical research to further examination of these matters. An essay on Peter's confession of Jesus as Messiah concluded that Mk 8:27–30 is historically reliable in depicting the disciples' recognition of Jesus as prophetic Messiah during his lifetime.⁶ Several studies of the early passion traditions argued that Jesus interpreted his approaching death in various soteriological terms and communicated these to his disciples, thus providing a firmer foundation for their faith and preparing them to withstand the shock of his crucifixion.⁷ Similar perspectives are reflected in Pesch's major commentary on the Gospel of Mark, in which he envisions Mark as a conservative redactor whose work affords access to much historical material, and in his reconstruction and analysis of a pre-Markan passion narrative.⁸ Such research on the historical Jesus served, among other ends, to support one pole of Pesch's argumentation concerning faith in the resurrection.

Even at this stage, however, at least one element of the original proposal was being modified. Pesch's Tübingen lecture had appealed to Jewish conceptions of the resurrection of the eschatological prophet as an important resource for early Christian proclamation of the resurrection.⁹ As early as 1975, Pesch's studies of Mark's Gospel had led him to

⁶ "Das Messiasbekenntnis des Petrus (Mk 8, 27–30): Neuverhandlung einer alten Frage," *BZ* 17 (1973) 178–95; 18 (1974) 20–31.

⁷ "Die Überlieferung der Passion Jesu," in *Rückfrage nach Jesus*, ed. K. Kertelge (QD 63; Freiburg: Herder, 1974) 148–73; "Die Passion des Menschensohnes: Eine Studie zu den Menschensohnworten der vormarkinischen Passionsgeschichte," in *Jesus und der Menschensohn*, eds. R. Pesch and R. Schnackenburg (Freiburg: Herder, 1975) 166–95; "Das Abendmahl und Jesu Todesverständnis," in *Der Tod Jesu: Deutungen im Neuen Testament*, ed. K. Kertelge (QD 74; Freiburg: Herder, 1976) 137–87. I have summarized Pesch's position on these issues in "Jesus' Approach to Death: An Examination of Some Recent Studies," *TS* 41 (1980) 713–44.

⁸ *Das Markusevangelium* (HTKNT 2/1–2; Freiburg: Herder, 1976–77); *Das Evangelium der Urgemeinde* (Freiburg: Herder, 1979).

⁹ This aspect of Pesch's proposal was heavily dependent on the work of Klaus Berger (cf. especially *Die Auferstehung des Propheten und die Erhöhung des Menschensohnes: Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur Deutung des Geschickes Jesu in frühchristlichen Texten* [SUNT 13; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976]); it was criticized in Martin Hengel's initial response to Pesch's lecture and later opposed especially by Johannes M. Nutz, "Zum Schicksal des eschatologischen Propheten," *BZ* 20 (1976) 59–94. For a summary and further references, cf. Fiorenza, *Foundational Theology* 26, and

view the foundations of Christian understanding of Jesus' death and resurrection with reference to a different theme, the fate of the Son of man. According to his analysis, while the pre-Markan passion narrative is chiefly oriented on the theology of the righteous sufferer, it also includes several important references to the tribulations and glorification of the Son of man (Mk 8:31; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33-34; 14:21, 41, 62). Two of these passages, 9:31a and 14:62, can in his judgment be retraced to the historical Jesus, who identified himself with the Son of man and understood his approaching death in this light (as well as in other perspectives). For both Jesus and the early Church, the category "Son of man" served to distinguish Jesus from John the Baptist: John the Baptist is the last prophet; "Jesus is more than a prophet; he is the Son of man."¹⁰

This shift in reference from eschatological prophet to Son of man, though a matter of considerable exegetical importance, initially left unaffected the structure of Pesch's argumentation concerning the resurrection. Since 1978, however, the understanding of Jesus as Son of man has figured prominently in several works in which Pesch presents a quite different conception of the emergence of faith in Jesus' resurrection: an address to a meeting of exegetes in St. Georgen/Frankfurt on June 3, 1978, on "Jesu Menschensohnworte und seine Auferstehung";¹¹ his inaugural lecture on assuming his chair in Freiburg on October 30, 1980 (repeated in Fribourg, Switzerland, on May 25, 1981);¹² a renewed study of the empty-grave narratives;¹³ and a reflection on the conversion of the disciples after Jesus' death.¹⁴ These works acknowledge the validity of certain criticisms of his earlier proposal and reflect the theological influence of his engagement with the *Integrierte Gemeinde*.¹⁵

Heinz Giesen, "Zu Entstehung und Inhalt des Osterglaubens," *Theologie der Gegenwart* 27 (1984) 41-46.

¹⁰ "Die Passion des Menschensohnes" 190; cf. 189-92. Pesch (190 n. 96) explicitly notes this modification of his prior position.

¹¹ This text, which circulated only in mimeographed form, is cited by Hansjürgen Verweyen ("Die Ostererscheinungen in fundamentaltheologischer Sicht," *ZKT* 103 [1981] 428 n. 7) and H. Kessler (*Sucht den Lebenden* 203-4).

¹² Cf. "Zur Entstehung des Glaubens an die Auferstehung Jesu: Ein neuer Versuch," *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 30 (1983) 73-98; a French version has also been published: "La genèse de la foi en la résurrection de Jésus: Une nouvelle tentative," in *La pâque du Christ mystère de salut*, eds. M. Bonzerath, A. Schmid, and J. Guillet (Paris: Cerf, 1982) 51-74.

¹³ "Das 'leere Grab' und der Glaube an Jesu Auferstehung," *Internationale katholische Zeitschrift Communio* 11 (1982) 6-20.

¹⁴ *Zwischen Karfreitag und Ostern: Die Umkehr der Jünger Jesu* (Zurich: Benziger, 1983).

¹⁵ Pesch's foreword to *Zwischen Karfreitag und Ostern* (7) explicitly acknowledges his debt to the *Integrierte Gemeinde* for recognition of decisive accents and dimensions of Easter theology, particularly the connection between Easter faith and the Church. He also credits Ludwig Weimar with helping him to formulate these ideas.

Pesch's recent work formulates the issue to be addressed in a significantly new manner: How can one account for the disciples' new confession of Jesus, after his crucifixion, as "the Messiah, the Son of man, the Son of God, the one who completes God's revelation"¹⁶? This framing of the question, which differs from Pesch's earlier work in its concentration on the conversion of the disciples and on certain "high" Christological titles now distinguished from "lower" categories, is foundational for his further analysis.

Left unaided after the crucifixion, the disciples would, in Pesch's judgment, have been confronted objectively with three options. First, they could have returned to their earlier occupations and religious practices, abandoning Jesus' cause and associating themselves with his opponents. A second possibility would have been to consider Jesus' life and death meaningless, but to be moved by his fate to complete abandonment of faith in God. Finally, they could have continued Jesus' cause in a halfhearted, partial manner, considering him a prophet and martyr, but without recognizing or proclaiming his "absolutely singular and universal significance," in effect reducing him to an interlude without constitutive value for his own message.¹⁷

Yet in fact the disciples' actions after Good Friday differed from all these possibilities. They proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, the suffering Son of man whose death possessed redemptive value and who would one day return as judge. *De jure*, the evidence for this was already present before Easter, in Jesus' self-presentation during his public life and in his interpretation of his approaching death as salvific at the Last Supper;¹⁸ were this not so, any subsequent attribution of such status to him would inevitably remain arbitrary.¹⁹ God's action with regard to the Crucified is not fortuitous; it is necessary in view of God's relationship to Jesus.²⁰ Yet, without recognition of Jesus' enthronment as judge, even conviction that he was raised from the dead would not have provided a sufficient basis for all the beliefs the disciples actually professed, since resurrection by itself would not establish Jesus' Messianic status.²¹ The New Testa-

¹⁶ Ibid. 9.

¹⁷ Ibid. 26-41; the citation is from p. 39. Pesch sketches these possibilities solely for their heuristic value; he explicitly disavows any intention of uncovering possible courses of actions actually weighed by the disciples (26).

¹⁸ Ibid. 74-75; "Zur Entstehung" 86-87.

¹⁹ *Zwischen Karfreitag und Ostern* 66; Pesch insists explicitly: "That Jesus was raised did not confer meaning on his death after the fact; but the basic meaning of his death, of which Jesus had already spoken at the Last Supper but which had remained closed to unbelief, was revealed through the Risen One to those who had newly come to faith" (74-75).

²⁰ "Zur Entstehung" 86.

²¹ *Zwischen Karfreitag und Ostern* 39.

ment attests that events subsequent to the crucifixion were *de facto* necessary to ground the disciples' preaching, not because of any inadequacy on the part of the historical Jesus, but due to the crisis of the disciples' own faith.²²

On the basis of the biblical texts, there are two possible points of reference in this context: discovery of Jesus' empty tomb and appearances of the risen Christ. Pesch continues to regard the traditions concerning the empty tomb as historically unreliable. The narratives of the discovery of the empty grave serve to express eloquently the Church's faith in Jesus' resurrection, as their content and function in the Gospels suggest; they do not provide a historical account of the origin of that faith. Emptiness of the grave is rather a logical conclusion, at least for the early Christians, from the fact of the resurrection. Those desirous of confirmation of the resurrection are directed rather to the appearances of the risen Christ—and to the existence of the Church.²³

In departure from his earlier view, Pesch now judges appearances of the risen Christ to be adequately established by biblical research.²⁴ Drawing on the exegetical work of Gerhard Lohfink,²⁵ he holds that "the Easter appearances, in which the Risen One was seen in his heavenly glory, were exclusive experiences of vocation"; perceptible only in faith, they were at once fully the work of God and fully the work of their human recipients.²⁶ The distinctive feature—and the primary object of Pesch's recent interest—is neither the existence of the visions nor their nature as such, but their content: in Pesch's judgment, they "were visions in which Jesus appeared to the witnesses as the Son of man and in which . . . the promise of Jesus' resurrection, given with his words about the Son of man, was revealed to his disciples as fulfilled."²⁷

²² Ibid. 67–68.

²³ Cf. especially "Das 'leere Grab,'" *Das Markusevangelium* 2.519–43, and *Zwischen Karfreitag und Ostern* 88. Pesch's study of the empty-grave tradition refers specifically to foundation of the Easter message in the appearances ("Das 'leere Grab'" 12, 17) and in the Church (ibid. 18, 19). Pesch (15 n. 17) praises in this connection the structural study of Franz-Josef Niemann, "Die Erzählung vom leeren Grab bei Markus," *ZKT* 101 (1979) 188–99. The critical responses of Meinolf Habitzky ("Noch einmal: Das 'leere' Grab" [*Internationale katholische Zeitschrift Communio* 11 (1982) 403–6]) and Nikolaus Lobkowicz ("Naive Reflexion" [ibid. 407–8]) to Pesch's essay seem motivated by legitimate concern for historical foundation of Christian faith in Jesus' resurrection, but misconceive Pesch's overall position.

²⁴ Cf. esp. "Zur Entstehung" 87, where this "correction" is explicitly noted.

²⁵ "Der Ablauf der Osterereignisse und die Anfänge der Urgemeinde," *TQ* 160 (1980) 162–76. Lohfink's proximity to the *Integrierte Gemeinde* has already been mentioned (n. 5 above).

²⁶ "Zur Entstehung" 87; cf. also *Zwischen Karfreitag und Ostern* 61.

²⁷ "Zur Entstehung" 87.

In identifying visions of the risen Christ as the chief source of the Church's Easter faith, Pesch has joined a widespread consensus among contemporary exegetes and systematic theologians. His specification of the content of these visions as a seeing of the Son of man is, however, somewhat novel. He advances his argumentation in support of this hypothesis—an element of particular importance in his overall reconstruction of events—in four steps.

First, Pesch stresses the need to note the *terminus ad quem* of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. In distinction from other ancient conceptions of exaltation, Jesus is raised to God's right hand as the Son, to whom all authority is given and who will judge the living and the dead. The same content is present in the Messianic conception of the Son of man which developed in the wake of Daniel 7: the Similitudes of *1 Enoch*, the Gospel of Matthew, and Mark 14:62 all speak of the Son of man sitting at God's right hand or on the throne of glory. Dan 7:14 itself ascribes universal authority to the Son of man; and according to Jewish and Christian sources and to Jesus himself, the Son of man is the figure who will conduct the Last Judgment in God's stead. Thus the content of expectations concerning the Son of man corresponds to the content attributed to the risen Jesus.²⁸

Second, Pesch argues that the earliest resurrection texts formulated their Christology within the horizon of thought about the Son of man. In support of this position, he appeals to the frequent references to the resurrection of the Son of man in the pre-Markan passion narrative, finds a reflection of Jesus' enthronement as Son of man in the reference to the "son" to whom all things are given by the Father in Lk 10:21-22 par. (a text from Q), and argues that conceptions of the Son of man underlie various pre-Pauline and Pauline texts (1 Thess 1:9-10; 4:13-18; Rom 1:3-4; 1 Cor 15:45 ff.). Pesch acknowledges that this part of his argument is harder to establish than its first point.²⁹

As a third step, Pesch marshals evidence in support of the thesis that the Easter appearances themselves were visions of the Son of man. Stephen's vision (Acts 7:55-56)—prescinding from Rev 1:12-20 and 14:14, the sole vision of the risen Jesus that is described directly in the New Testament—shows that such visions were at least imagined in an early period as visions of the Son of man; to Pesch, the most likely explanation of this fact is that the visions of the first witnesses were known to have been appearances with this content. The appearances to Paul (Gal 1:14-15; 1 Cor 15:8), Peter (1 Cor 15:5; Lk 24:34), Mary Magdalene (Mk 16:9; Jn 20:11-18), and to the Twelve (1 Cor 15:5; Mt

²⁸ Ibid. 88-89.

²⁹ Ibid. 90.

28:16–20 [Eleven]) all contain traces which may reflect earlier Son-of-man tradition. The apocryphal *Gospel of the Hebrews* narrates the appearance to James (1 Cor 15:7) as a vision of the Son of man, and Hegesippus portrays James as professing a Son-of-man Christology at the time of his martyrdom.³⁰ Pesch's chief appeal, however, is to the story of the Transfiguration (Mk 9:2–13), which culminates in a reference to the Son of man rising from the dead; this passage, in Pesch's judgment a part of the ancient pre-Markan passion narrative, proleptically depicts an apocalyptic scene of the appearance of the Risen One (mentioned by the angel in Mk 16:7) as a vision of the resurrection glory of the Son of man. Pesch considers this text the most impressive support for his thesis that the early Church knew of the Easter appearances as visions of the Son of man.³¹

The last element of Pesch's argument concerns background to the Easter visions in words of Jesus concerning the Son of man. Such texts as Mk 2:23–27, 10:35–37, 12:35–37, and 14:25 would seem to presuppose or imply indirectly that Jesus located his mission in the context of expectation of the Son of man; and Mk 9:31a and 14:62 are, in Pesch's judgment, probably authentic words of Jesus. But Pesch's chief appeal here is to a saying underlying Lk 12:8–9 ("And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God"). Even if Jesus did not explicitly identify himself as the Son of man, the functional relationship of the Son of man to Jesus in this logion precludes reflective listeners from distinguishing in fact between the two, despite the formal distinction in Jesus' own words. Such acknowledgment of Jesus as Son of man provided essential background to subsequent recognition of his resurrection.³²

For Pesch, full acceptance of Jesus' message implies faith in his resurrection *de jure* as a necessary consequence of God's fidelity to the one he has sent; *de facto*, however, it was only in the Easter visions of Jesus as the Son of man exalted to God's right hand that God made known his judgment to the disciples: the crucified Messiah is the exalted Son of man. Sufficient condition for recognition of God's action is the new creation of the Church; "the Easter visions are not to be separated

³⁰ In *Gos Heb* the risen Lord's last words to James are "My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of man is risen from among them that sleep" (E Hennecke and W Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha* 1 [London Lutterworth, 1963] 165) Hegesippus portrays James as saying to the scribes and Pharisees "Why do you ask me concerning the Son of Man? He is sitting in heaven on the right hand of the great power, and he will come on the clouds of heaven" (Eusebius, *Hist eccl* 2 23 13 [ET Kirsopp Lake, *Eusebius* 1 (LCL, 1926) 173])

³¹ "Zur Entstehung" 90–94

³² *Ibid* 94–96, Pesch here refers to his essay "Über die Autorität Jesu," in *Die Kirche des Anfangs*, eds R Schnackenburg and J Wanke (Leipzig St Benno, 1977) 25–55

from their context of founding the community and initiating the apostolic mission."³³ Indeed, Pesch once even speaks of the Church, the "contrast society" "to which is entrusted the key to the solution of all problems of men and of nations," as "the miracle which corresponds to the resurrection of Jesus and its real 'proof.'"³⁴

While reaction to Pesch's current hypothesis regarding the origin of faith in Jesus' resurrection has been less extensive than the response evoked by his initial proposal, several commentators have addressed his new position. Jacob Kremer simply registers Pesch's change of mind regarding the appearances and observes that Rev 1:12-20 could be adduced more legitimately than Acts 7:57 as a direct biblical description of the risen Christ.³⁵ Hans Kessler, while primarily concerned to criticize Pesch's earlier hypothesis, finds his current conception of pre-Easter presuppositions in the historical Jesus to be exaggerated; Kessler also detects ambivalence in Pesch's understanding of the causality of the appearances which sparked the disciples' conversion, and insists against Pesch that the praxis of the Church can at most be a sign of the Easter faith and a reference to it, but never its proof or foundation.³⁶ Gerald O'Collins welcomes Pesch's current recognition of the appearances as historical, but finds his specification of the Son of man as their content "thoroughly dubious."³⁷ Heinz Giesen approves Pesch's care in distinguishing historical and theological judgments, and accepts his current emphasis on the Easter appearances. But Giesen finds it uncertain that Jesus revealed himself in the appearances precisely as Son of man, despite some indications which point in this direction, and judges it even harder to establish that the pre-Easter Jesus thought of himself as Son of man; efforts to expose the historical presuppositions of the development of the Easter faith ought not focus on a single title, especially one whose use as self-designation by the historical Jesus is controverted.³⁸ In the same vein, Lorenz Oberlinner holds that a strong focus on the Son of man on

³³ "Zur Entstehung" 96-97; the citation is from p. 97. Cf. also *Zwischen Karfreitag und Ostern* 73-84 and "Das 'leere Grab'" 18-20.

³⁴ *Zwischen Karfreitag und Ostern* 87, 89, 88.

³⁵ "Die Auferstehung Jesu Christi," in *Handbuch der Fundamentaltheologie 2: Traktat Offenbarung*, eds. W. Kern, H. Pottmeyer, and M. Seckler (Freiburg: Herder, 1985) 184-85 n. 34, 186 n. 42.

³⁶ *Sucht den Lebenden* 191-208. Kessler holds that certain aspects of Pesch's current position derive from an illegitimate imposition of the experiences of the *Integrierte Gemeinde* on the NT (198, 207-8).

³⁷ *Jesus Today: Christology in an Australian Context* (New York: Paulist, 1986) 40-42; the citation is from p. 41. In *Jesus Risen* O'Collins notes that for various reasons "Pesch withdrew his earlier hypothesis and accepted the visions of the risen Jesus as real events in history through which the disciples knew of their Lord's resurrection and exaltation" (110), but offers no critique of Pesch's new position.

³⁸ "Zur Entstehung" 42-44.

the part of the historical Jesus—as asserted by Pesch—is indemonstrable, and charges that even Pesch's current formulations of the theological conflict undergone by the disciples as a result of Jesus' crucifixion are gravely understated. Oberlinner concludes that Pesch's new conception is an effort to integrate well-attested historical data (regarding the appearances) into a theological framework (a Son-of-man Christology with substantial continuity from the historical Jesus to the early Church) in which the appearances remain secondary, if not dispensable.³⁹

While these evaluations vary in some particulars, they share a common core in welcoming Pesch's new assertion of the historical character of the appearances, while expressing reservations about other aspects of his current conception. A quite different reaction is registered by Ingo Broer. In an essay reflecting on the origin of Easter faith, Broer expresses fear that Pesch's new position leads to no greater clarity on theologically decisive questions than do alternative explanations. Historical questioning must weigh the Septuagint's use of *ōphthē* (cf. 1 Cor 15:5–8; Lk 24:34) in reporting theophanies and angelophanies; in addition, it must also take into account ancient nonbiblical texts which describe appearances of the dead, just as modern treatments of New Testament miracle stories must consider references to miracles in other ancient texts. Even when the necessary allowances are made for the differences between the nonbiblical material and the New Testament references to appearances of the risen Christ, a historian will still, in Broer's judgment, incline toward classifying the appearances as subjective phenomena and toward interpreting the *ōphthē* terminology as a secondary (though early) form of expression, itself the result of considerable theological reflection. Without developing his own position in detail, Broer proposes connecting faith in Jesus' personal resurrection with the disciples' committed following of Jesus' person and message. The origin of Easter faith would lie in "experiences," analogous to contacts with the earthly Jesus, which enabled (but did not compel) the disciples to advance qualitatively beyond their pre-Easter premonitions to clarity that Jesus had been confirmed by God and lived in God's presence. Seen from Broer's perspective, Pesch's alteration of his position must be classified as a regression.⁴⁰

A more developed alternative has been presented by Hansjürgen Verweyen, who regrets Pesch's retreat from his original concentration on

³⁹ Lorenz Oberlinner, "Zwischen Kreuz und Parusie: Die eschatologische Qualität des Osterglaubens," in *Auferstehung Jesu* 87–90.

⁴⁰ Ingo Broer, "'Der Herr ist wahrhaft auferstanden' (Lk 24,34): Auferstehung Jesu und historisch-kritische Methode: Erwägungen zur Entstehung des Osterglaubens," in *Auferstehung Jesu* 39–62, esp. 54–62. Hansjürgen Verweyen's review of this Festschrift (*TRev* 82 [1986] 305–8) also notes Broer's proximity to Pesch's original thesis (306).

the historical Jesus.⁴¹ To pursue matters further, it is necessary to examine Verweyen's own conception in greater detail.

II

The systematic theologian Hansjürgen Verweyen is the author of a study of the ontological presuppositions of the act of faith, a dissertation written at the University of Tübingen under the direction of Joseph Ratzinger.⁴² Formerly at Essen, Verweyen is now professor of fundamental theology at the University of Freiburg. During the same period in which Pesch was revising his initial conception of the origin of faith in Jesus' resurrection, Verweyen was engaged in promoting the thesis that "the Easter faith was adequately established, not first at Easter, but rather during the life of the earthly Jesus."⁴³ While Verweyen hopes to present his conception in more detail in a projected three-volume work on fundamental theology,⁴⁴ the meaning of his thesis and his basic argumentation in its behalf are clear from current publications.

Verweyen has offered somewhat varying accounts of what he means by "Easter faith," depending on whether he expresses its content in Christological or soteriological terms. In one context he describes Easter faith as the definitive decision that the man Jesus surpasses human categories—what Chalcedon later expressed by speaking of Jesus as truly God and truly man—no matter what language was used to express this conviction.⁴⁵ Elsewhere he defines it as "the conviction that God in Jesus has overcome all human subjection to sin and death."⁴⁶ In either sense Easter faith as Verweyen understands it includes, but is not limited to, belief in Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

In proposing his thesis, Verweyen acknowledges that faith in the fact of Jesus' resurrection was possible only after his death and burial; confidence during Jesus' lifetime that God would not abandon him to death, even if well founded, is something other than what he envisions

⁴¹ Cf. esp. "Die Ostererscheinungen" 428–29 n. 7 and *Christologische Brennpunkte* (2nd ed.; Essen: Ludgerus, 1985) 140–41. The first edition appeared in 1977; the second edition, to which all references are made, is expanded, chiefly by an appendix (135–44) on the current state of discussion.

⁴² *Ontologische Voraussetzungen des Glaubensaktes: Zur transzendentalen Frage nach der Möglichkeit von Offenbarung* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1969).

⁴³ "Die Ostererscheinungen" 429.

⁴⁴ *Christologische Brennpunkte* 9. Important aspects of his conception are reflected in three essays: "Aufgaben der Fundamentaltheologie," *TTZ* 92 (1983) 204–15; "Fundamentaltheologie—eine Zwischenbilanz," *TRev* 82 (1986) 89–102; and "Fundamentaltheologie: Zum 'status quaestionis,'" *TP* 61 (1986) 321–35.

⁴⁵ "Die Ostererscheinungen" 429–30.

⁴⁶ "Zur Basis des Osterglaubens," in *Christliches ABC heute und morgen*, Heft 1/84 (Bad Homburg: DIE Verlag, 1984) Group 4, p. 11.

here. The conclusive judgment entailed by Easter faith is by definition not possible during Jesus' lifetime, for it depends necessarily on how Jesus endured death, not merely on how he may have understood his death in advance. Verweyen's position is that the adequate basis of the Easter faith is given with the completion of Jesus' earthly life.

Verweyen's goal is to specify the objective foundation of the Easter faith, not to determine when or how faith in Jesus' resurrection *de facto* came about.⁴⁷ With regard to the latter question, he grants the historical probability that Jesus' crucifixion posed such a psychological barrier to at least most of the disciples that only special occurrences after the crucifixion enabled them to overcome the shock of Jesus' execution. The *de jure* question of faith's objective basis is not, however, affected by this historical development, and it is in the *de jure* question that Verweyen's interest lies.⁴⁸ He defends his thesis on both biblical and systematic grounds.

Verweyen's study of biblical texts seeks to determine their purpose in their final New Testament contexts, not to attempt reconstruction of their possible forms and functions in earlier (preliterate) stages of the tradition. He notes the existence of diverse, and apparently contradictory, statements about the resurrection in the New Testament: "a) theologically, Jesus' death and resurrection are a single act; b) Jesus' resurrection follows temporally after burial; in any case, it becomes known only then on the basis of appearances of the Risen One; c) seeing the Risen One is explicitly designated as not being a necessary basis of belief in Jesus' resurrection."⁴⁹ Nonetheless, he argues, closer examination reveals that the New Testament as a whole insists in various ways on the unity of death and resurrection and credits the appearances at most with having provoked the factual recognition of what ought to have been known without them.

For biblical support, Verweyen's chief appeal is to Mark, where the sole uncriticized witness to faith in Jesus Christ is the centurion's confession in view of Jesus' death (15:39). Appearance stories are absent from this Gospel. The advance manifestation of Jesus' glory to three disciples in the Transfiguration meets failure to understand (9:2-13). Even the reaction of the women at the empty tomb to the resurrection

⁴⁷ "Die Ostererscheinungen" 429-30; "Zur Basis" 13-14. Verweyen holds that the discussion of Pesch's thought has suffered from failure to distinguish these two questions with sufficient clarity (cf. "Zur Basis" 13 and Verweyen's review of Winden's *Wie kam und wie kommt es zum Osterglauben?* [TRev 79 (1983) 285]).

⁴⁸ "Die Ostererscheinungen" 429; cf. also *Christologische Brennpunkte* 113 and "Zur Basis" 13-14.

⁴⁹ *Christologische Brennpunkte* 72.

message of the heavenly messenger (16:5, 6, 8) is presented in a critical tone similar to those used earlier in the Gospel to describe the disciples' response to Jesus' miracles (e.g., 4:40–41; 6:50–52). Verweyen concludes that Mark seems to fear that the traditional stories of Easter appearances, taken by themselves and as the chief Easter evidence, could tend to obscure the true nature of Jesus' exaltation.⁵⁰

Verweyen finds less support for his position in the other Synoptics. He observes, however, that Matthew gives the epiphany motif of the earthquake a place in his account of the crucifixion as well as his portrayal of later events at the grave (27:51; 28:2) and speaks of the resurrection of the bodies of many saints on Good Friday itself (27:52; but cf. also 27:53). In addition, even the final appearance of Jesus on a mountain in Galilee (28:16–20) leaves room for a reaction of doubt on the part of the disciples. For Matthew, in other words, there is no complete caesura between Good Friday and Easter, and an appearance of the risen Lord, by itself, does not lead to the certitude of faith.⁵¹

Luke poses more of a problem because of the importance he doubtlessly attributes to appearances during the "forty days" (cf. Acts 1:3; 10:40–41; 13:30–31). Yet even here the appearances are not the *de jure* basis of faith. Jesus' words on the cross "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Lk 23:43) imply the possibility of faith in Jesus' exaltation even on Good Friday. The women at the grave are criticized for seeking the living one among the dead (Lk 24:5) and the disciples on the way to Emmaus are rebuked for their slowness of heart (Lk 24:25); the implication in both cases is that they should have believed before any self-presentation of the risen Christ took place. In addition, Luke's account of Jesus' ascension depicts a need to correct misunderstanding (imminent expectation: Acts 1:6–8, 10–11) on the part of the apostles, even at the end of the forty days.⁵²

The Fourth Gospel provides the clearest expression of the unity of Good Friday and Easter. The cross is exaltation in a twofold sense (cf. 3:14; 8:28, 12:32, 34), for Jesus' hour of death is the climax of the Son of man's glorification of the Father (cf. 7:39; 12:16, 23–24; 13:31–32) and the completion of Jesus' work. Easter faith is present and noted before any appearances have taken place (20:8), and the subsequent recounting of appearance narratives includes a criticism of those who demand a

⁵⁰ Ibid. 81–100; "Die Ostererscheinungen" 438–39; "Zur Basis" 17–18. Verweyen has studied the use of miracle stories in "Die historische Rückfrage nach den Wundern Jesu," *TThZ* 90 (1981) 41–58.

⁵¹ *Christologische Brennpunkte* 79; "Die Ostererscheinungen" 441–42; "Zur Basis" 20–21.

⁵² *Christologische Brennpunkte* 80–81; "Die Ostererscheinungen" 439–40; "Zur Basis" 19–20.

seeing of this sort (20:29). In Verweyen's judgment, the point is not to advocate belief without seeing, for that would conflict with the rest of the Gospel. Rather, the seeing of Jesus' glory is completed on the cross, and any later seeing is simply a concession to imperfect understanding.⁵³

There remains the issue of Pauline thought, a matter of particular importance in view of the concentration of most contemporary discussions of the resurrection on 1 Cor 15:3-8. Verweyen emphasizes that Paul, who is included in this list of witnesses, would not have been in a position to "re-recognize" the historical Jesus, and that Paul's understanding of the risen Christ inevitably remains dependent in some respects on historical information obtained through others. In addition, one must bear in mind that Paul summarizes his entire message as a "word of the cross" (cf. 1 Cor 1:18; 2:2). Thus, Verweyen suggests, even for Paul an appearance of the risen Christ does not establish the real basis for Easter faith; it rather exposes the basis which has already been laid.⁵⁴

Despite Verweyen's interest in uncovering biblical support for his thesis in "the New Testament authors' theological criticism of the allegedly faith-grounding character of the appearances,"⁵⁵ his chief arguments in behalf of his position are systematic in nature. His major consideration is that for appearances in power and glory to be the decisive revelation of Jesus would contradict the content of Jesus' teaching about God, undercut the folly of the cross, and degrade God's self-revelation in Jesus' death to the status of something provisional and surpassable. It would constitute a revelation of a different kind of God than the God revealed in and through Jesus' life.⁵⁶ Secondly, he insists that reference to events after Jesus' death as providing the sufficient basis of the Easter faith inevitably endangers fundamental Christian belief in the Incarnation, for then Jesus' life would not be God's definitive self-revelation; in effect, Verweyen is arguing that the content of Christian faith in Jesus as the definitive revealer of God would be contradicted if that content were revealed only after Jesus' death.⁵⁷ Thirdly, Verweyen holds that the public character of the Easter faith is better safeguarded when the basis

⁵³ *Christologische Brennpunkte* 81; "Die Ostererscheinungen" 442-43; "Zur Basis" 18-19.

⁵⁴ *Christologische Brennpunkte* 73-79; "Die Ostererscheinungen" 443-45; "Zur Basis" 21-23.

⁵⁵ *Christologische Brennpunkte* 78; cf. also 40-41.

⁵⁶ *Christologische Brennpunkte* 137-38; "Die Ostererscheinungen" 435. This point is stressed in Verweyen's review of Hans Kessler's *Sucht den Lebenden* (*ZKT* 108 [1986] 73).

⁵⁷ "Die Ostererscheinungen" 431-33; *Christologische Brennpunkte* 41-42, 112, 137. In this connection Verweyen criticizes the conceptions of both Rudolf Bultmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg ("Die Ostererscheinungen" 431-32).

of faith lies in events more readily analogous to our own experience; though differences exist between our situation and that of the first believers, we are not relegated to the status of secondhand disciples as we would be if the objective basis of faith rested in Easter appearances. Here the witness of those whose lives and deaths proclaim Jesus' victory over death plays an important mediating role.⁵⁸ Finally, Verweyen suggests that a victory over death that is revealed subsequent to death itself would come too late to address the issues raised by the problem of suffering.⁵⁹ On all of these grounds Verweyen finds decisive theological reasons favoring his thesis on the objective foundation of Easter faith in Jesus' life and death.

To date, Verweyen's argumentation has not attracted as much attention as Pesch's work. Pesch himself has drawn upon the distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* foundation of faith in his recent writing, but has applied it in a manner rather different from Verweyen's thought.⁶⁰ Lorenz Oberlinner notes Verweyen's effort to overcome the separation of the historical Jesus from the Christ of faith, but wonders if Verweyen's procedure does not risk determining pre-Easter presuppositions by retrojecting the content of post-Easter faith into Jesus' own lifetime.⁶¹ Hans-Willi Winden likewise speaks positively of Verweyen's efforts to anchor the Easter faith in Jesus' life, but classifies such foundation as inchoative and detects tension between Verweyen's notion of the resurrection and his assessment of the appearances. Terming Jesus' death a failure and considering the resurrection a distinct and underivable later event, Winden also rejects Verweyen's foundational position on the unity of death and resurrection.⁶² In a similar way Hans Kessler insists that Jesus' failure in death prevents the Easter faith from being adequately grounded in his life. Special experiences after the crucifixion are necessary objectively, and not only for subjective psychological reasons; the foundation of faith cannot be derived solely from the earthly Jesus. In Kessler's judgment, Verweyen's conception wrongly historicizes the redactional conception of New Testament authors and does "not take sufficiently seriously the discontinuity of the death on the cross, which demands a

⁵⁸ *Christologische Brennpunkte* 138; "Die Ostererscheinungen" 433-37.

⁵⁹ "Die Ostererscheinungen" 430-31; cf. also *ZKT* 108 (1986) 73.

⁶⁰ Cf. esp. "Zur Entstehung" 86-87.

⁶¹ "Zwischen Kreuz und Parusie" 87 n. 68. Verweyen replies in his review that Oberlinner underestimates the eschatological role of the historical Jesus and is unwise in concluding that the crucifixion objectively undercut Jesus' claim to authority (*TRev* 82 [1986] 307).

⁶² *Wie kam und wie kommt es zum Osterglauben?* 229, 233, 278-79, 320. In a review of this book (*TRev* 79 [1983] 285-87) Verweyen rightly notes (287; cf. also *Christologische Brennpunkte* 139-40) that the key point in Winden's argument is the dubious classification

new initiative of God and the new presence of his mediator."⁶³

III

Any effort to assess the current work of Pesch and Verweyen must begin by recognizing the different questions that each author has chosen to pursue. Pesch's effort to determine the way in which belief in Jesus' resurrection *de facto* originated is quite distinct from Verweyen's interest in examining the *de jure* basis of the Easter faith. Each author finds it possible to accept the basic position espoused by the other: Pesch speaks of the Easter appearances as the factual breakthrough of a recognition which ought to have occurred without them, while Verweyen concedes that the origin of the Easter faith in fact derives from visions of the risen Lord. Despite this agreement, however, it is clear that their differing interests reflect significant divergences in overall theological perspectives.

For this reason it is all the more striking that, in their different ways, both Pesch and Verweyen reflect the current tendency in study of the resurrection to find at least some aspects of the basis of Christian faith in the risen Jesus in events which took place prior to the crucifixion. Neither Pesch nor Verweyen attributes much historical significance to traditions regarding the empty grave (despite recognition of theological value in the Gospels' empty-tomb stories, understood as expressions of the Church's faith). Both insist that, whatever is to be said about the appearance tradition, the importance of the pre-Easter impact of the historical Jesus on his disciples must be clearly recognized in any attempt to account for later developments. This agreement on the need to refer to the historical Jesus in accounting for the disciples' faith in him as risen Lord is a valuable reminder for contemporary theology. Legitimate doubt that the Gospel passages in which Jesus directly predicts his own resurrection (Mk 8:31 parr.; 9:31 parr.; 10:34 parr.; Jn 10:17-18) are

of the cross as a failure and correctly observes (286-87) that Winden's assertion (233) of tension between Verweyen's understanding of the resurrection and his account of the appearances rests on a misrepresentation: a passage in which Verweyen speaks of the NT "Easter witness" (*Christologische Brennpunkte* 115) is wrongly cited by Winden as a statement about Easter appearances.

⁶³ *Sucht den Lebenden* 239, 243, 306; the citation is from p. 243 n. 14; cf. also H. Kessler, "Auferstehung," *Neues Handbuch theologischer Grundbegriffe* 1, ed. Peter Eicher (Munich: Kösel, 1984) 84-89. Verweyen (*ZKT* 108 [1986] 70-74) praises Kessler's book as a whole, but criticizes the analysis of the function of appearances in NT texts, the use of formulations which sound adoptionist in reference to the resurrection, and the assessment of the effects of the crucifixion on the disciples. He also charges that some comments on Verweyen's own work (the identification of Verweyen's thought with Pesch's earlier view; the accusation of historicizing Mk 15:39) reflect inattentive reading of the texts.

historically accurate should not lead to abstraction from the historical Jesus in analyzing the Easter traditions. Jesus' assurance of his personal future participation, despite death, in the kingdom of God (Mk 14:25 parr.) may be an indispensable factor in the development of the disciples' later convictions and is in any case of inestimable theological import.⁶⁴

In contrast to this useful contribution, Pesch's effort to identify visions of the crucified and risen Jesus precisely as Son of man as the foundation of the restored faith of his disciples must be judged unconvincing. By his own account, only very few of the New Testament Easter texts make direct use of this vocabulary; in most instances he is only able to claim that a hypothetically reconstructed prior formulation referred to Jesus as the Son of man. It would, of course, be difficult, if not impossible, to disprove this hypothesis, but its textual foundation is so shaky that it cannot be established as certain or even probable.⁶⁵ In addition, one can question if Pesch is on sure ground in distinguishing between high and low Christological titles as sharply as he does in his recent work. Without such a sharp dichotomy within New Testament Christologies, his current concentration on Son-of-man terminology would seem unnecessary.

A further difficulty with Pesch's current position suggests itself here. It is not clear what would constitute a vision of the exalted Jesus as Son of man, so that one would be in a position to ask whether or not such a vision had taken place. The credal confession that the exalted Jesus sits at the right hand of God offers a possible point of comparison. With regard to this clause and the creed's prior reference to Christ's ascension, J. N. D. Kelly observes: "The Ascension and the Session . . . meant much more than might seem apparent on the surface. The first- and second-century Christian who expressed his faith in them understood them as implying that Christ had beaten down the hostile powers opposed to Him, and consequently to His Church."⁶⁶ The statement thus has a content which can be specified in terms of judgment and hope. But to transpose this content into the form of a vision is to suggest that the metaphorical language of the imagery be taken pictorially and thus misunderstood. To confess that Jesus sits at the right hand of God no more implies that Jesus can be seen sitting at the right hand of God than it implies that God has in fact a right hand.⁶⁷ But then the appeal to

⁶⁴ For a similar stress on the importance of the historical Jesus in this connection, cf. Oberlinner, "Zwischen Kreuz und Parusie" 66.

⁶⁵ Gerald O'Collins (*Jesus Risen* 210-16) offers similar criticisms of James M. Robinson ("Jesus: From Easter to Valentinus (Or to the Apostles' Creed)," *JBL* 101 [1982] 5-37), whose argument that the original Easter experiences were luminous appearances of the risen Christ parallels in places Pesch's appeal to Acts 7:55-56 and Rev 1:13-16.

⁶⁶ *Early Christian Creeds* (3rd. ed.; New York: Longman, 1972) 151.

⁶⁷ Cf. the remarks of Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.11.68.3 and 5.11.71.4 on biblical anthropomorphisms; these texts are cited to similar purpose by Bernard Lonergan, *Method*

such visions as the historical foundation of faith in Jesus' resurrection is highly dubious.⁶⁸

Similar doubts concerning Pesch's specification of the Easter appearances as visions of the Son of man in heavenly glory have also been expressed by Gerald O'Collins and Heinz Giesen, who nonetheless welcome in general Pesch's new evaluation of the appearance tradition. Yet, as William Loewe has shown, efforts to identify the origin of faith in the resurrection as visions of the risen Jesus are often unwilling or unable to specify convincingly what exactly was seen.⁶⁹ Pesch's new hypothesis is no exception to this rule; on the contrary, its weakness is typical of such approaches. Postulating the occurrence of certain historical events (discovery of empty grave; appearances) on the basis of supposed psychological needs of the original disciples⁷⁰ may initially seem attractive, but such arguments are inevitably too conjectural to prove conclusive. Under these circumstances a suggestion made some years ago by Franz Schupp may deserve attention. Schupp holds that, while historical reconstructions of the origin of faith in the resurrection may be reduced to a few basic types, our sources are too limited to enable us to achieve a certain resolution of these historical questions. Given this situation, Schupp draws attention to the fact that the truth of a statement (in this case, the confession of Jesus' resurrection) is logically independent of the genesis of the statement. While insistent that considerable factual knowledge about Jesus is essential to faith, Schupp therefore proposes that discussions of the content and foundation of Christian faith in the risen Jesus prescind from efforts to determine its precise historical origin.⁷¹ In

in *Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972) 307, 319, 329, 344. Commenting on an essay on the appearance narratives, Nicholas Lash observes: "I am not at all sure what would count as 'seeing', in 'the ordinary sense', a dead man walking through walls" ("Easter Meaning," *Heythrop Journal* 25 [1984] 8 n. 8).

⁶⁸ Ingo Broer's doubt that it is appropriate to the nature of Christian faith to base its origin on visions ("Der Herr ist wahrhaft auferstanden" 60-61) is also pertinent to this consideration.

⁶⁹ For examples cf. William P. Loewe, "The Appearances of the Risen Lord: Faith, Fact, and Objectivity," *Horizons* 6 (1979) 177-92.

⁷⁰ Cf. Sebastian Moore's arguments regarding the empty grave ("The Resurrection: A Confusing Paradigm Shift," *DRev* 98 [1980] 257-66; "An Empty Tomb Revisited," *DRev* 99 [1981] 239-47), and many treatments of the appearance tradition.

⁷¹ *Vermittlung im Fragment: Überlegungen zur Christologie* (Innsbruck: ÖH-Druck, 1975) 30-37; "Bemerkungen zum Theoriebegriff in der Theologie," *Auf dem Weg zu einer kritischen Theologie* (QD 64; Freiburg: Herder, 1974) 130-32. Schupp refers to comments of Gerhard Sauter ("Grundzüge einer Wissenschaftstheorie der Theologie," in *Wissenschaftstheoretische Kritik der Theologie*, ed. G. Sauter [Munich: Kaiser, 1973] 308-15) on the distinction between contexts of discovery and contexts of validation. Cf. also Francis Fiorenza's criticism of approaches to the resurrection which confuse "the genetic question

a similar vein, Nicholas Lash observes that "the evidence for Jesus' resurrection is the evidence of his life and teaching and the manner of his death."⁷²

In this light Verweyen's analysis of the basis of faith in the resurrection attains added importance, especially if one abstracts from his passing remarks about the *de facto* emergence of Easter faith. His investigation of biblical texts shows at least that generalized comments about the New Testament's emphasis on the significance of Easter appearances are often exaggerated. While doubts remain about his comparison of the situation of the first disciples to that of later believers, his soteriological and incarnational arguments are, in my judgment, quite telling. That some appeals to the importance of visions for the origin of Christian faith have the unintended effect of undermining basic Christian convictions regarding Jesus seems undeniable, and the same is true of some other appeals to the events after the crucifixion. If the decisive revelatory and salvific events occur after Jesus' death, it would seem impossible to identify Jesus as the definitive Savior—a fundamental conviction of Christians, whatever vocabulary they choose for development and expression of their Christology. In raising theological considerations of this sort, Verweyen has put his finger on a decisive issue, all too frequently ignored in exhortations to see things in the light of the resurrection.

Central to the examination of these issues, as Verweyen himself has recognized, is the theological assessment of the crucifixion. It is striking that Winden insists on calling Jesus' death a failure,⁷³ that Kessler terms the cross a failure and a catastrophe,⁷⁴ and that Oberlinner specifies his very reasonable requirement that interpretation of the Easter experience must also consider the fact of the crucifixion solely by reference to "the scandal of the cross."⁷⁵ The widespread use of such terminology suggests that analyses of the resurrection tradition are often influenced by unduly negative assessments of the crucifixion. While modern treatments of soteriology have often tended in this direction, partly in reaction against Anselm's theory of satisfaction, some current soteriology has begun to

(how did faith in the resurrection emerge) with the foundational question (of its truth and credibility) and with the question of its meaningfulness" (*Foundational Theology* 28).

⁷² "Easter Meaning" 13. Lash adds: "It does not follow that the evidence which the manner of his living and dying affords is *sufficient* to warrant the confession of Easter faith" (14).

⁷³ *Wie kam und wie kommt es zum Osterglauben?* 228–29.

⁷⁴ *Sucht den Lebenden* 104–8, 240; "Auferstehung" 85. Kessler's interpretation of the crucifixion is rightly criticized by Augustin Schmied ("Fragen um die Auferstehung Jesu: Zu beachtenswerten Veröffentlichungen," *Theologie der Gegenwart* 30 [1987] 58–64).

⁷⁵ "Zwischen Kreuz und Parusie" 65.

reconsider Jesus' death in more positive perspective.⁷⁶ Such renewed theological reflection on the crucifixion may contribute to overcoming the unfortunate gap, in many theological conceptions, between the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith.

In any case, intensive consideration of the resurrection, from both exegetical and systematic perspectives, will no doubt continue in the years ahead. The recent work of Rudolf Pesch and Hansjürgen Verweyen, though but a small portion of that study, may indicate some pitfalls and alert us to some easily-neglected aspects of this central Christological issue. If so, their contributions to the debate will have served a very useful purpose.

⁷⁶ In addition to Gisbert Greshake's reinterpretation of Anselm ("Erlösung und Freiheit: Eine Neuinterpretation der Erlösungslehre Anselms von Canterbury," *Gottes Heil—Glück des Menschen: Theologische Perspektiven* [Freiburg: Herder, 1983] 80–104); cf. Walter Kern, "Das Kreuz Jesus als Offenbarung Gottes," *Handbuch der Fundamentaltheologie* 2, 197–221; Raymund Schwager, *Do We Need Scapegoats?: Violence and Redemption in the Bible* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987); and *Der wunderbare Tausch: Zur Geschichte und Deutung der Erlösungslehre* (Munich: Kösel, 1986).