

TRADITION AND LIFE IN THE CHURCH, by Hans von Campenhausen. *Collins*, London, 1968. 251 pp. 42s.

THE WORD OF GOD AND TRADITION, by Gerhard Ebeling. *Collins*, London, 1968. 235 pp. 42s.

Despite the similarity of their titles, these two books by distinguished German theologians have little in common.

Professor von Campenhausen's book is a collection of essays on early Church history, and is, as one would expect, both scholarly and stimulating. The best procedure open to a reviewer seems to be to give the reader some idea of the author's thought. Reluctantly leaving aside the treatment of Church Order, sacred art, St Augustine and the fall of Rome, and exile as a form of asceticism, I shall concentrate on four chapters.

The essay entitled 'The Events of Easter and the Empty Tomb' is of great importance, yet succeeds in expounding a complicated thesis with the rapidity and power to surprise of a Len Deighton novel. Campenhausen takes the list of appearances in I Cor. 15 to be the most reliable of the N.T. accounts. The appearances seem to be arranged in chronological order; the encounter with Peter comes first. Luke preserves the same order of events (24, 34), but why does he not describe the appearance to Peter? The answer is that he does so in his description of the miraculous catch of fish (5, 1-11), but transposes the incident to the time of the calling of the Apostles. John 21 elaborates the same incident in a different way. The author therefore concludes that probably the appearance to Peter was at the Lake of Gennesaret, and that the Galilean setting (indicated by Mark 14, 28, Matt. 26, 32; and Mark 16, 7, Matt. 28, 7) is the correct one for most, if not all, of the appearances. The Jerusalem location is a transference for theological reasons.

The next step in the *dénouement* is the Empty Tomb. Unlike most Protestant scholars, Campenhausen accepts this as historical. The women did find it empty and told the Apostles, who disbelieved them (Luke 24, 22-24) and went back to Galilee. Mark's statement that the women did not tell the Apostles that the

body had vanished was intended to exonerate them from the accusation that they had stolen it: they had not even heard of it.

The third step is the discovery of Peter's rock-like role. Satan will tempt him, but his faith will not fail; he will repent and strengthen his brethren (Luke 22, 31-2), even though he will deny Jesus three times (22, 34). When Jesus caught Peter's eye after the denials (Luke 22, 61), he was reminding Peter of his task. Peter fulfilled this when he was the first to believe in the Resurrection and taught the other Apostles to share his belief, and led them into Galilee to meet the risen Lord.

The essay on 'Early Christian Asceticism' examines the early Church's attitude to voluntary poverty, fasting and virginity. The author dispels the illusion that the early Church was 'communist'; such communism as there was was voluntary (Acts 5, 4) and apparently confined to Jerusalem. All the same, the N.T. teaches consistently that 'the step from poverty into the freedom of God is the only one presented as easy and short, compared with the frightful danger in which the rich are placed' (p. 97). Campenhausen's discussion of St Paul's treatment of virginity is of great interest now that priestly celibacy is so much discussed; Paul sees that virginity, like poverty, can bring freedom for 'absolute obedience'. But the N.T. rejects asceticism in food 'as a means of salvation or purification', though clearly envisaging some degree of fasting. But this fasting did not have an 'ascetic intention'; the N.T. nowhere implies it is 'better' to fast as it implies it is 'better' to be poor or celibate. (Campenhausen does not consider the reading in Mark 9, 29: 'This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting'.)

The chapter on 'Christians and Military Service in the Early Church' adds precision to the commonly over-simplified statement that the early Church condemned war. While Christians are forbidden to kill in war (though

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they may serve as soldiers), many Fathers grant the necessity of war and praise the fighting of *non-Christian* soldiers. But from 416 the position was reversed; Theodosius II allowed no one but Christians to join the army.

In his treatment of the priesthood, the author traces a three-stage development in the Church's theology. First the priest is defined by his function of presiding over worship; he is privileged in his role, not his person; a bishop or priest without a flock was a contradiction in terms. After Tertullian, the priesthood began to be considered as a quality belonging to the individual, which could be conferred only by another who himself possesses it (the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession!); but in controversy with the Donatists, who maintained that only one who himself possessed the Spirit could validly confer a sacrament, St Augustine worked out the doctrine that the powers of the priesthood derive from a *character*, which is a personal quality of the priest, but belongs to him independently of his own moral dispositions. The third stage is the theory which became current in the East that priesthood is a 'perfection' (*teleiotes*) of the individual which does elevate his moral personality; this theory derives from Gregory of Nyssa and pseudo-Dionysius. But unlike the Western character, which is indelible ('Thou art a priest forever'), the Eastern 'perfection' can be forfeited by apostasy.

This is a valuable book, which the reviewer can, with admiration, warmly recommend. It does, however, reveal traces of a Protestant *parti pris*. It is stated, for example, without further argument that 'it cannot be maintained that Mary remained always a virgin, for Jesus is the first-born, who was followed by many brothers' (p. 117). Tertullian's statement that any layman can be his own priest and offer sacrifice if no ordained priest is available (*Exh. cast.*, 7) is quoted without any suggestion that Montanist influence may be perceptible here.

Professor Ebeling's book is a treatise on ecumenism: some preliminary chapters on ecumenical method, in which he rightly insists that it is necessary to highlight confessional differences rather than to gloss them over, are followed by some studies of particular disputed doctrines.

One approaches this book with respect for the author's deserved reputation; but the reviewer ventures to think he will not be the only one to experience disappointment. The author is a dense writer, and German is an

opaque language. But much blame must attach to the translator, the late S. H. Hooke. Comparison with the German shows him to be guilty of the slight mistranslation of the occasional word which can effectively obscure the run of an argument. But, far worse, he makes Ebeling commit major theological solecisms of which the author is, as one would expect, innocent. The following examples occur in the course of two pages (183-4): (1) to the Franciscans is attributed the view that Mary 'might have been born miraculously through an immaculate conception'. (The German

means that her *immaculate* conception may have been due to a *miraculous* conception.) (2) 'Pius V declared that no one but Christ was free from original sin'. (For 'declared' read 'condemned the view that'.) (3) In defining the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854, Pius IX 'assumed the authority which had been accorded to him in Vatican I' (in 1870!). (German: 'anticipated the authority which was to be accorded'.) Regrettably one cannot recommend the book in this translation.

E. J. YARNOLD, S.J.

EUCCHARISTIC THEOLOGY, by Joseph M. Powers, S.J. *Burns & Oates/Herder & Herder*, London, 1968. 192 pp. 30s.

THE EUCHARIST, by E. Schillebeeckx, O.P., translated by N. D. Smith. *Sheed & Ward Stagbooks*, London and Sydney, 1968. 160 pp. 9s.

HIS PRESENCE IN THE WORLD, A STUDY OF EUCHARISTIC WORSHIP AND THEOLOGY, by Nicholas Lash. *Sheed & Ward Stagbooks*, London and Sydney, 1968. 213 pp. 30s.

EUCCHARISTIC THEOLOGY THEN AND NOW, Theological Collections, 9. S.P.C.K. London, 1968. 116 pp. 19s. 6d.

The Decree on the Liturgy of Vatican II and the changes in the Liturgy have done much to reawaken popular interest in the theology of the Eucharist. Mass in the vernacular, experimentation, changing rites and, in these last days, the new Canons have all helped people to regain some of the Eucharistic riches which have lain dormant in the Church for so long. Before the Council and parallel with the liturgical movement, Eucharistic theology had been quietly on the move, not without occasional clashes between opposing schools of thought, but for the most part within the specialist circles of the theological schools. The renewed thinking about the Eucharist has gradually gained acceptance and been presented to the Church as a whole through the Encyclicals *Mediator Dei* of Pius XII and *Mysterium Fidei* of Paul VI, and through the Decrees of Vatican II. Since the Council, the market has been flooded with works of theology, technical and popular. For the theologically literate, but not necessarily specialist, reader, the first three books under review will present a very fair and quite comprehensive view of contemporary thought about the Eucharist.

In the first chapter of *Eucharistic Theology*, Fr Powers, an American Jesuit, traces how the understanding of the early Church of the community aspect of the Eucharist, the faithful concelebrating with the bishop, as the image and source of the Christian community, gradually gave place in the eighth and ninth centuries to the idea of the sacrament as 'sacred secret'. As a consequence, the Eucharist

became more and more a clerical preserve, something done—or later even 'said'—by a priest, with the laity no longer exercising their priesthood, no longer participating, but watching and worshipping from afar. There was also a corresponding shift in theology from its emphasis on the Eucharist as the sacrament of the community to an investigation of the real presence of Christ and the modes of that presence. He notes that the term 'transubstantiation' first came into vogue in the early part of the twelfth century. The Reformation raised its own crop of problems with regard to the Eucharist and, says Fr Powers, 'it is in the context of these problems, then, that the Council of Trent took up the question of the Eucharist in a well-balanced and comprehensive statement of the theology of the Eucharist . . . perhaps the most comprehensive conciliar statement in the history of the Church'. He devotes a long section to the teachings of the Council and concludes that its 'disparate emphasis on the real presence, communion and sacrifice of the Mass as three rather unrelated values in the Eucharist set the tone for the theology of the Eucharist and Eucharistic piety for several centuries'. If any theology of value emerged from the speculations on the teaching of this Council, it is to be found only in the attempts to explain how the Eucharist is a sacrifice, attempts which in fact have resulted in isolating the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist from its sacramental character. The last part of this chapter is concerned with the broader theology of the