

International

## NEWSLETTER

Bonhoeffer Society *for Archive and Research*English  
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Editor: Clifford Green, Goucher College, Baltimore, Maryland 21204

## BONHOEFFER ARCHIVE OPENED AT UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

March 4, 1977, saw the festive celebration of a major event in the growth of the Society, the opening of the Bonhoeffer regional archive and research collection at the library of Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Over two hundred people--members of the Society and friends of the Seminary--were on hand for the afternoon program which began with President Donald Shriver offering a welcome on behalf of the Seminary, and Dr. Robert Maloy speaking on behalf of the Library. In the library an interesting exhibit was on display featuring Bonhoeffer manuscripts, many of them highlighting Bonhoeffer's connection with the seminary especially during his studies of 1930-31 and his summer visit in 1939.

John Godsey presided over the opening session in the afternoon which consisted of Eberhard Bethge's lecture, "Freedom and Obedience in Dietrich Bonhoeffer"; this addressed the multi-faceted nature of freedom in Bonhoeffer, and its reciprocity with commitment and discipline, as that freedom was expressed in Bonhoeffer's social and familial background, his psychological maturation, his theological development, his ecclesiastical partisanship and the ethical freedom of his political action. (Plans for publication of the lecture are being discussed.)

The lecture was followed by a lively panel presided over by Paul Lehmann. Larry Rasmussen discussed the challenge of freedom and commitment as they encounter white, male theologians and ethicists in the liberation movements of blacks, women and the third world. Tom Day, who had flown over from his work in Berlin for the occasion, stressed that Bonhoeffer's "freedom for" could not be understood as a general or abstract formula, but had to be sharpened through the question "freedom for whom?"--that is, the crucial issue is how one finds freedom in solidarity with the oppressed and suffering. Henry Mottu, reminiscent of his lecture in Geneva on Bonhoeffer and "folk religion," raised questions about biography and historiography, especially the history and biography of ordinary folk in distinction from the distinguished, the elite and the "heroes." James Cone stressed how often holy, theological words were compromised by unholy actions, and insisted that the central question, in Bonhoeffer's time and ours, is: who are the victims here and throughout the world, what must we do to join them in the struggle for

freedom, and are we willing to pay the price?

After a very pleasant reception provided by the Seminary about 75 members and guests of the Society gathered in the refectory for a delightful dinner filled with moments of high hilarity sparked by the leprechaunish wit of our ever convivial secretary, Brother Geoffrey Kelly, who served as master of ceremonies. Many scholars in the gathering felt, for example, that the telegram from Pope Paul emanated not from the Vatican but from Philadelphia!

Bill Peck paid tribute to the monumental work of Eberhard Bethge and expressed the affection and gratitude of members to him for his generous help to scholars over the years, and to Renate for her charming and lively hospitality. The check which tangibly expressed this affection from members through their gifts was such a surprise that Eberhard for a time mistook it as an honorarium from the Society! John Godsey presented a fine photograph of a bust of Bonhoeffer in the Washington Cathedral which Eberhard and Renate had admired in January. Dr. Helen Thal was the bearer of another most welcome gift, namely a check for \$7,000 covering the grant from the Lutheran Brotherhood for the Society's work.

Maria von Wedemeyer was at the top of her form in giving personal reminiscences of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Clifford Green spoke on the pre-history of the Union archive, and expressed the confident hope that the collection would not be a museum for antiquarians but rather a catalyst in which Bonhoeffer's legacy stimulated the creative and constructive theological work which faithfulness of our own times-- and to Bonhoeffer's spirit--required.

Evoking Bonhoeffer's love for music, and responding to earlier suggestions of members of his family, Audley Green concluded the evening with a very accomplished and spirited short recital on the clavichord and harpsichord, playing works by Bach, Rameau and Scarlatti.

The whole occasion was marked by warm human community, intellectual stimulus and scholarly purpose, and aesthetic pleasure. It will long be remembered as a high point in the life of the Society.

#### SOCIETY TO MEET AT SAN FRANCISCO

The next annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion will be held at the San Francisco Hilton, December 28-31, 1977. The sessions of the Bonhoeffer Society will include the following papers. John De Gruchy, "Bonhoeffer and White Liberation in South Africa"; John Conway, "Bonhoeffer's forgotten mentor: Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze"; Ruth Zerner, "Bonhoeffer revisited: progress report on research into unpublished West German documentary sources"; Burton Nelson, "Correspondence between Dietrich Bonhoeffer and P.C. Toureille, and its importance for the ecumenical movement of the 1930's."

There are still some spaces for respondents to the papers, and anyone who is interested is urged to write Geoffrey Kelly as soon as possible. Provided we are allotted enough time on the program we also plan to hold a meeting of the membership. The executive committee will also hold a meeting at the breakfast session.

Registration, hotel reservations and charter flights are already underway; see the details in the latest issue of the CSR Bulletin. Any Society members who are not members of the AAR or other societies in the Council on the Study of Religion are advised to write now to Scholars Press, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812 requesting information and forms.

#### NEWS ITEMS

The Annual Scholars' Conference on The Church Struggle and the Holocaust was held at Loews Summit Hotel in New York City, March 6-8, 1977. Eberhard Bethge gave the keynote address on Sunday evening on "The Holocaust and Christian Anti-Semitism: Reflections of a Christian Survivor." Ruth Zerner, chairwoman of the planning committee, presented a study of Bonhoeffer's literary efforts on Tegel: "Response to Nazi Imprisonment: The fiction of Dietrich Bonhoeffer."

A Holocaust Conference was held in Baltimore May 25-26, 1977, sponsored by the Baltimore Jewish Council and the local chapters of the NAACP and the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Franklin Littell and Clifford Green were among the conference leaders. Also giving a major address was Emil Fackenheim; his observations on Bonhoeffer's thought and witness (and also on Barth and Tillich) will be transcribed for a future Newsletter.

Mr. Marlin Van Elderen of Eerdmans advises that they plan to publish the Bonhoeffer Colloquim ("Festschrift") edited by A.J. Klassen in the fall. Contributors whose addresses have changed since submitting their manuscripts are asked to advise Mr. Van Elderen quickly, including their institutional affiliation. This will also facilitate the proofreading of texts by authors.

A letter from Collins-World (the international division of William Collins) indicates that two volumes previously in hardcover are now available in paperback, No Rusty Swords and I Knew Dietrich Bonhoeffer; these are in their Fountain series. Collins and Harper have now published the paperback version of Bethge's biography, hopefully making it more available for use by students in courses. Collins also plans to publish a revised translation of Bonhoeffer's Christology later this year.

Westminster has now published Martin Kuske's The Old Testament as the Book of Christ: An Appraisal of Bonhoeffer's Interpretation. We hope to publish a review in a later Newsletter.

Fortress Press had recently published Psychohistory and Religion: The Case of Young Man Luther, edited by Roger A. Johnson. This volume is a review of the contribution of Erikson's Young Man Luther to religious studies and theology; in addition to chapters by Roland Bainton, Lewis Spitz, Paul Pruyser, and others, it contains a chapter by Clifford Green on "Bonhoeffer in the Context of Erikson's Luther Study."

Martha Corcoran, a recent new member, completed a translation of Bonhoeffer's Finkenwalde sermons while studying with Robert McAfee Brown a year or so ago. She has generously made a copy of her translation available to the Society, and this will be placed in the Bonhoeffer collection at Union and will be available for others to use.

John de Gruchy, Corresponding member of the executive committee from South Africa, will be in the United States on a sabbatical beginning in June. From June 25 to July 26 he will be at the First Congregational Church, Stockbridge, Mass., 01262. Then he will teach in some summer schools, including Wesley Theological Seminary. In the fall he goes to Bethel College where he will teach a course on "The Life and

Thought of Dietrich Bonhoeffer." As noted above, he will present a paper at the San Francisco AAR meeting. Anyone wishing to invite John for guest lectures on the church in South Africa, and related subjects, is urged to contact him soon.

Bishop Albrecht Schönherr wrote in March with greetings for the opening of the Bonhoeffer Archive. He also mentions that a section of the Bonhoeffer Society in the DDR is now being organized.

Two summer courses on Bonhoeffer have come to our attention. Burton Nelson is teaching "Recent Interpretations of Bonhoeffer" at North Park Theological Seminary; Geffrey Kelly is teaching a course on Bonhoeffer with special attention to Christian spirituality-this is a graduate level course given by St. Mary's College, Moraga, California. Both courses will be given during the June-July summer sessions of the two schools.

Michael Morrison, one of our new members, writes of his work on a thesis in the areas of discipleship and community in Bonhoeffer. This includes the role of these two concepts in Bonhoeffer's later theology, and its relation to his spirituality.

Duane Hix is working on a doctoral dissertation in the Department of Religious Studies, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario; his interest is in the theme of discipleship in Bonhoeffer's thought.

Judy Holy, who joined the Society last year, is working on Barth and Bonhoeffer with a particular interest in the topics of revelation and religion.

Among new members in recent months are students from Luther Theological Seminary in Jim Burtness's Bonhoeffer class. Among them, Dennis Johnson is working on a project dealing with the relationship between metaphysics and Christology, in large part focused on Bonhoeffer's theology. The Rev. Glenn Borreson is working on an M. Th. thesis, and is doing research in the Bonhoeffer literature on baptism, particularly baptismal discipline.

Mary Glazener of Central, South Carolina, has been working for about a year on a biographical novel about Bonhoeffer. After some reading in the subject she has been visiting various people close to Bonhoeffer last fall and planned to travel to Europe this spring to further her study.

A number of people have asked about Donald Goddard, author of The Last Days of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Harper & Row, 1976, pp. 245, \$10.95). From what we can gather, Mr. Goddard is an English writer who worked for a number of years on The New York Times but has been back in London for the last few years. His interests in the subjects of his books are diverse, and the Bonhoeffer book is sandwiched between an earlier one on a gangster and another to follow on an anarchist. According to his publisher, Goddard did not try to gather materials by interviewing a lot of people; his basic source, as is completely clear from the book itself, is Bethge's biography. Perhaps Mr. Goddard is also the author of the volume Blimey: Another Book about London, 1972.

Wilfred Harrison, whose visit we enjoyed so much in 1975, has written that his play "Coming of Age" is being performed by the Octagon Theatre Company over thirty times this fall in churches and schools in Britain. We send him encouragement and good wishes as he continues to work on his major play.

"Notes on the Concept of Religion in the Lectures and Sermons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer delivered at Barcelona. An Historical and Critical Contribution to the Theology of the Young Bonhoeffer."

by Dr. Jose J. Alemany, Departamento de Teologie Fundamental, Universidad Comillas, Madrid 54, Spain.

Translated by Otto W. Heick, Professor Emeritus, Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

The purpose of this paper is not to present an elaborate study of the subject. In keeping with the preparatory committee's suggestion I would rather submit a few principle statements which may serve as a basis for group discussion. They may also serve as a starting point for a more comprehensive study in the future. Yet first of all I shall set forth some well defined principles. My purpose is not to offer an intricate discussion of the subject. Yet it will be useful to discuss the context in which this paper is to be understood.

#### I. The Problem of non-religious Christianity

The term "non-religious Christianity" is the stock-phrase which has made Bonhoeffer famous during the last thirty years among religious and theological experts. It widely contributed to his influence on the post-war generation. Of course, his theology has much more to offer than this hermeneutically difficult statement in his Letters and Papers from Prison. However, it cannot be denied that the ideas in these documents belong to the centre of Bonhoeffer's theological legacy. Since the concept of religion plays a key-role in these letters, it is important to investigate thoroughly what Bonhoeffer meant by "religion". In order to achieve this end the Barcelona writings must be carefully compared with the prison letters. While the former were written at the beginning of a stormy theological career, the latter belong to the end of it. A fifteen-year period of a stormy journey separates these writings adding to their importance and making such a comparison the more interesting.

#### II. The Problem of a Cessura

Most scholars agree on a "cessura", a dividing line in the theological evolution of Bonhoeffer; the question however remains when this rupture took place. Bethge admits that this question is not easy to solve. If such a difficulty exists even when we deal with a relatively short period as between the dates of The Cost of Discipleship and the Letters and Papers from Prison,

the difficulty is the more apparent in texts written as far apart in time and place as those from Barcelona and Tegel. But we should not let the matter rest with this conjecture. Only a thorough investigation can establish the validity of this assumption. Besides, only in this way can the much disputed question of continuity or discontinuity in Bonhoeffer's theological development be resolved. Did his thinking move in a straight or in a curved line?

#### III. Evaluation of the Earlier Writings of Bonhoeffer

Theological as well as non-theological students have paid special attention to the later or even post-humous works of Bonhoeffer. This is easily understandable. On the one hand, the later works reflect a greater maturity. Their influence is also enhanced by the fact that they have a more direct bearing on the tragic facts of the author's life. On the other hand, the earlier minor writings of Bonhoeffer have been published only more recently. Volume V of his Gesammelte Schriften was published as late as 1972.<sup>2</sup> Before that time we had only a few fragments quoted and partly interpreted by Bethge in his biography on Bonhoeffer.<sup>3</sup> Another effort to evaluate the earlier writings before their publication was made by Ernst Feil.<sup>4</sup> The author's brief article is of special interest because it deals with Bonhoeffer's understanding of religion. I may also mention my own article "La teologia barcelonesa de D. Bonhoeffer"<sup>5</sup> where I discussed Bonhoeffer's critical approach to religion as one of the three main trends in this theology. Nevertheless, it would be desirable to investigate this problem more fully; keeping in mind the age of the young scholar, the contemporary student can possibly arrive at a better understanding of Bonhoeffer's theology as an organic whole.

#### IV. The Sources

Bethge informs us that the youthful vicar of the Evangelical community in Barcelona had to prepare and deliver nineteen homilies in the year 1926.<sup>6</sup> Eleven of these are included in Vol. V of Bonhoeffer's Gesammelte Schriften, plus another one preached in 1929. Adding the diary and the copious correspondence of this period,<sup>7</sup> we have access to a relatively large amount of material for a study of the early theological insights of the young scholar which deserves to be investigated as to their historically conditioned and permanent significance. Concerning the concept of religion, two shorter writings are of special interest: the lecture, "Jesus Christus und vom Wesen des Christentums"<sup>8</sup>

and the homily on Romans 11:6, "Rechtfertigung und Religion".<sup>9</sup> Both are replete with the author's critical evaluation of religion. An analysis of these texts produces the following evaluation of religion by the young vicar:<sup>10</sup>

1. For the mind of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, religion was like a parlor where man may spend a short span of the day but from which he will soon retire to his respective field of activity (p. 135).
2. The religion of Christ is not the delicate morsel after the bread; it either is the bread itself or nothing (p. 135).
3. Christ is interpreted on aesthetic grounds as a religious genius ... but one thing is omitted - he is not taken seriously (p. 135).
4. The religious road of man to God leads to the idol of our own hearts, to an idol which we have created in our own image (p. 148).
5. Neither knowledge, nor morality nor religion leads to God (p. 148).
6. Religion, too, Luther once said, is a part of our carnality (p. 148).
7. When God seems farthest in irreligion and amorality he is closest to him [man] (p. 148).
8. The seed of hybris - detested by the gods in Greek thought - is found in religion and morality (p. 148).
9. Thus religion and morality may become the most formidable enemies of God's approach to man, i.e. to the Good News of the Gospel (pp. 148 f.).
10. Ethics and religion and the church are man's avenues to God, yet Christ proclaimed exclusively God's outreach to man (p. 149).
11. Morality and religion are the crowning points of man's cultural achievement (p. 150).
12. Humanism and mysticism, apparently the two most beautiful flowers of the Christian religion ... must be rejected in the name of genuine Christianity as the deification of the creature (p. 152).
13. Ethics, religion, and church are man's wisdom before God (p. 152).
14. Not as "religion" is the Christian religion divine. On the contrary, as such it is only another human attempt to reach God (p. 154).
15. Christ is not the bringer of a new religion; instead he brings God (p. 154).
16. As an impossible road from man to God the Christian religion is placed beside other religions (p. 154).
17. Christ's gift is not religion, but God's grace and love, culminating on the cross (p. 154).

18. Both the most grandiose and the tenderest effort of men to reach the Eternal as an escape from the anxiety and restlessness of the heart: this is religion (p. 419).
19. It is not religion which makes us good in the sight of God, rather God makes us good (p. 420).
20. Both culture and religion are under the judgment of God (p. 420).
21. The motives of our morality and religion have been disclosed: we wanted to be masters of the Eternal, but now we are his slaves (p. 420).
22. Our religion is nothing unless affirmed by God (p. 420).
23. Not religion, but revelation, grace and love; not man's way to God, but God's way to man: this is the meaning of Christianity (p. 420).
24. Religion and morality are the most formidable impediments for the knowledge of divine grace (p. 421).
25. Even in his spirituality, i.e. in religion, man remains man, i.e. a sinner (p. 422).
26. Man's religion is a part of his carnality (p. 422).
27. Not religion, but revelation and grace: this was the saving Word (p. 422).

#### V. Notes on Procedure

1. An investigation of the use of the term "religion" in Bonhoeffer's early writings is indispensable for a coherent understanding of his pronouncements on the subject.
2. Such an investigation cannot be considered complete unless it includes, among others, the following topics:
  - a) From the historical point of view it would be necessary to thoroughly investigate the diverse influences of past and contemporary theology that might have contributed to Bonhoeffer's concept of religion. These factors are observable in Bonhoeffer in manifold and various forms of expressions. He may use the term "religion" as the ideological basis in a theological discussion, positively or negatively, or as an expression of refuting a contrary opinion, or as a verbatim repetition of a current statement, etc.
  - This diversity requires the discriminating application of the analytical method best suited for each particular case.
  - b) Making use of the results of structural text-semantics one should try to examine and clarify the semantic coherence of the text. The so-called "actantielle" analysis could be useful to understand the text as a "force-field" where concepts appear performing different functions. (Cf. e.g., Bonhoeffer's equation of religion with "enemy of the Lord's coming.") Other

linguistic methods, too, could be used in order to arrive at a better and more penetrating understanding of the text.<sup>12</sup>

c) Likewise one should examine all those concepts that either are presented in starting parallelism to the concept of religion or that are contrary to its true nature.

Among the former are the following: religion, ethics, church, morality, morals, man's way to God. Among the latter are: revelation, grace, love, God's way to man. Methodologically, one can proceed in two ways:

By isolating each term from the other parts of the sequence of concepts, one could study each term according to its proper meaning.

Or one could study each concept presuming that it is inherently related to all the other concepts. By doing this one must however face a twofold question: whether or not the parallelism is actually justified or whether this method would not distort the proper meaning of each term, rendering thereby more difficult the hermeneutical principle. This principle may again be endangered in a twofold manner: either by presupposing an established concept of religion as a means of interpreting the other concepts or vice versa, by proceeding from a perceived notion of the other concepts as a means of arriving at the proper meaning of religion.

d) Only when the concept of religion in the earlier and later writings of Bonhoeffer has been clearly established can a reliable intertextual comparison be made. Searching for identical and/or conceptual parallels between the two kinds of texts, one may discover a possible change of stress in homonymous phrases. This approach diminishes the risk - though always real - to become bogged down in a superficial study, unable to realize a difference in content due to a difference of viewpoints, spatio-temporal or theological.

VI. Statements Concerning Content

1. In passing, Ernst Feil has made reference to Karl Barth's influence on the younger Bonhoeffer. As a matter of fact, their criticism of religion reached its climax in their confrontation of religion with revelation. However, the seemingly identical approach ought to be more fully investigated in order to bring to light their respective points of agreements and disagreements.
2. It is evident that Barth's criticism of religion is more frequent in the earlier writings of Bonhoeffer than in Letters and Papers from Prison.
3. Likewise, during the Barcelona period Bonhoeffer was very much concerned with the impact of liberal theology (Schleiermacher, Troeltsch, Harnack).

At that time his criticism of religion was more motivated by refuting the postulates of these men than is the case in his later period.

4. Though Bonhoeffer shared his criticism of religion with other contemporary scholars, pronounced differences between him and other writers are noticeable.<sup>13</sup>
5. As an indication of his later criticism of religion notice the following: the refutation of "parlor religion" (cf. above IV, 1, 2; in LPP, pp. 151-155, 361-365); the emphasis on the qualitative difference between Christ and religion (above IV 5, 15, 17; in LPP, pp. 278-282); identifying not Christianity but the Christian religion with other religions (above IV, 16; in LPP, pp. 335-337); the assertion that remoteness from God can mean being closer to God (above IV, 7; LPP, pp. 361-363).

6. On the other hand, some important statements in Letters and Papers from Prison are missing in the Barcelona period. Among these are, for example, the term "the world coming of age" (LPP, pp. 357-361), the acceptance of the non-religious world as an irreversible fact (LPP, pp. 343-345), "etsi Deus non daretur" as a working hypothesis (LPP, pp. 357-361), the quest for the meaning of church, culture and prayer in a non-religious world (LPP, pp. 278-282), the indictment of a rigid method for training in religion and its fatal consequences as "secularized methodism" (LPP, pp. 324-329).

NOTES

1. E. Bethge, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Theologe, Christ, Zeitgenosse. Muenchen. 2nd. ed, 1967. pp. 964f. E.T. pp. 762f.
2. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Gesammelte Schriften. E. Bethge, editor. Vol. V: Seminare, Vorlesungen, Predigten, 1924-1941. Muenchen, 1972. Hereinafter referred to as GS. The references to Letters and Papers from Prison are to the SCM Press edition of 1971.
3. Ibid., V, 144-155.
4. Ernst Feil, Die Theologie D. Bonhoeffers. Muenchen-Mainz. 2nd ed. 1971. pp. 336-339.
5. Jose J. Alemany, "La teologia barcelonesa de D. Bonhoeffer." Estudios Eclesiasticos. Vol. 49 (1974), pp. 59-77.
6. Ibid., p. 144.
7. GS Vol. VI: Tagebuecher, Briefe, Dokumente, 1925-1945. Muenchen 1974.
8. Delivered December 11, 1928. GS V, 134-136.
9. Delivered March 11, 1928. GS V, 417-423.
10. All references are to GS, Vol. V.
11. Cf. A. J. Greimas, Semantique Structurale. 1966. (According to Greimas, "actants" are those elements in a story which are the chief bearers of those functions that are essential for its development. Note by trs.).
12. Cf. A. Stock, Umgang mit theologischen Texten. Einsiedeln 1974.
13. Cf. above sources, 20, with Fr. Gogarten, "Die Krise unserer Kultur" (1920), reprinted in J. Moitmann, editor, "Die Anfänge der dialektischen Theologie", Muenchen. 2nd ed. 1967, pp. 101-121.

NEWS ITEMS (cont.)

The Rev. Dr. Ralph Elliott writes of a visit of Eberhard and Renate Bethge to the First Baptist Church in White Plains, N.Y., last December. Eberhard spoke on "The Legacy of Bonhoeffer," and Renate offered some informal remarks about the Bonhoeffer family. Some 300 attended, and the occasion stimulated requests for continuing Bonhoeffer study.

The third issue of the "Bonhoeffer Rundbrief" of the West German Section of the Society appeared last February. It contains Han Pfeifer's report on St. Louis, Eberhard Bethge's report on the Roederprozess at Heilbronn last July, a bibliographical update, and a notice of the meeting of members of that Section which was held at Loccum on May 7. Several copies of the Rundbrief were mailed to our section, and any members who wish a copy should write to Geoffrey Kelly.

Copies of Genf '76. Ein Bonhoeffer Symposium which were supplied by Chr. Kaiser to members of our section at a special price have now sold out. Those who wish copies are advised to write direct to the publisher.

Discussions are continuing with Fortress Press about the possibility of publishing the Proceedings of the Geneva conference in an English language version. This would be substantially different from the German version, Genf '76. Ein Bonhoeffer Symposium in that, in addition to the major addresses in the latter, it would also include the following papers by members of our section: Burton Nelson, "Bonhoeffer at Fanö"; John De Gruchy, "Bonhoeffer as Dialogue Partner for Theology in South Africa Today"; Ruth Zerner, "Bonhoeffer's American Experiences"; John Godsey, "Towards a Theology for Maturity"; Larry Rasmussen, "Bonhoeffer and Worship"; Geoffrey Kelly, "Bonhoeffer's Concept of Faith"; Tom Day, "The Christian Community and Ethics in Bonhoeffer." If Fortress is unable to do the book, an important decision is required of members: can we guarantee 75-100 purchases to warrant a private printing. Please indicate your response on the return slip.

PAPER RESPONSE

The following is a response by Clifford Green to the paper of Bill Peck, "Psychohistory and Bonhoeffer Scholarship," given at St. Louis last fall.

Bill Peck's paper (which I had expected to be only about van den Berk!) is very gratifying in its kind remarks about my own work. Lest there be even the appearance of connivance in the Executive Committee, however, I would first note some discomfort in having my book described as a "psychohistory"; see the Preface to Bonhoeffer: The Sociality of Christ and Humanity, p. xiv. (Nor am I persuaded that "conversion experience" is the best way to speak of the changes in Bonhoeffer's life in 1932, or that narcissism is "finally curbed"--short of the eschaton!) Nevertheless, I am in fundamental agreement with Peck that psychological theory may be used in a heuristic manner to help interpret a theologian and his work; and I share his critique of the reductionism (and other problems) in van den Berk's portrait of Bonhoeffer.

There is a danger that psychological perspectives in theology (whether of van den Berk, Green, Hopper, Lovin & Gosser) unwittingly fall prey to the individualism and subjectivism of our culture. So I heartily agree with Peck "that autobiography must be seen as a relation to politics and culture as much as to church and family." However, I am very dubious about distinguishing periods in Bonhoeffer's life, or different volumes in his writings, as psychological and socio-political respectively (a point made in the discussion). Rather, it is a matter of both-and; at best, any distinction must be one of relative weight in every period of life and each writing.



The theological and ethical yield of psychological insights into Bonhoeffer's work might be suggested briefly as follows. Erikson remained on fairly orthodox Freudian ground in analyzing superego and oedipal problems in Luther and his theology. Bonhoeffer presents us with a different psychosocial gestalt. If there are reasons to think that he is a significant representative of his contemporaries, what does this mean for constructive work in soteriology, Christology, ethics and ecclesiology? I have tried to offer some preliminary answers to such questions in my book, and also in an essay in Roger Johnson's Psychohistory and Religion: The Case of Young Man Luther (Fortress Press, 1977).

GODDARD ON BONHOEFFER'S "LAST DAYS" (Reviewed by Geoffrey B. Kelly)

"Donald Goddard's The Last Days of Dietrich Bonhoeffer can hardly be classified as either a theological analysis or a scholarly collection of previously unpublished documents on this important phase in Bonhoeffer's eventual martyrdom. Still less is this a contribution to Bonhoeffer research. Those who purchase the book in anticipation of finally overcoming biographical lacunae concerning the final days of Bonhoeffer will be disappointed.

"On the other hand, Goddard does provide an imaginative and, at times, fascinating reconstruction of Bonhoeffer's arrest, imprisonment, interrogations, and execution. While the author's dramatized version of those events lacks the documentary strength of Mary Bosanquet's The Life and Death of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the book does fire the reader's imagination to wonder beyond the sober details of its sources, the prison letters and Bethge's definitive biography, and to "relive" the dangers which confronted this heroic conspirator against Hitler. Goddard displays a flair for conjuring up a probable dialogue for the historical personages already well known through careful theological, historical and biographical studies. One wonders whether this imaginative work presages an upcoming television drama or screen play bearing the same name. Critical theology or carefully documented biography, this book is not. Good drama? Perhaps."

#### NEW MEMBERS

The Society continues to grow at a healthy rate. It is a pleasure to welcome the following new members.

Richard E. Schedtler, 1588-B Eustis, St. Paul, MN 55108

Rev. Dr. Donald C. Thompson, Paramount United Methodist Church, Paramount, CA 90723

Rev. Norman Hjelm, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, Pa.

Martha Corcoran, % Schwegler, 7056 Weinstadt-Ebbersbach, Schulstr. 7, Germany

Rev. Charles W. SENSEL, First United Methodist Church, 305 S. Borad, Knoxville, IL 61448

Prof. Susan F. Wiltshire, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn. 37235

Prof. Dwight W. Vogel, Westmar College, LeMars, Iowa 51031

H. Gaylon Barker, 1430 Commerce St. Roseville, MN 55113

Vaughn Artley, 151 Buffalo Ave., Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Ken Sutherland, 1276 Keston St., St. Paul, MN 55108

Rev. Ronald Christian, 9813 Covent Ct., Fairfax, VA 22030

Charles Streich, 8114 Eastern Ave., Wyndmoor, PA 19118

Dr. Duane Addison, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, S.D. 57102

Ms. Prudence B. Yelinek, Box 122, South Mountain, PA 17261

Michael L. Morison, Loyola University of Chicago, Chicago, ILL 60626

John W. Cooper, 8864 Beach Rd. Brewerton, N.Y. 13029

Dr. Ira Zepp, Western Maryland College, Westminster, Md. 21157

Prof. Martin Marty, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill. 66037

Joan Wingert, 4900 Pulaski Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19144

Ka-Heng-Yapp, Taiwan Christian Church Council of North America, 11418 S. Michigan, Chicago, Ill. 60628

Dr. Edward Huenemann, United Presbyterian Church, 475 Riverside Drive, N.Y. 10027

145 total

GOUCHER COLLEGE  
founded  
1885



Clifford Green  
Bonhoeffer Society  
Goucher College  
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Pastor John Matthews  
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