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EDITED BY

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Contributors

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HANS-GEORG DRESCHER is professor of protestant theology and director of the Seminar für Religionspädagogik at the Pädagogische Hochschule Ruhr. At Marburg Drescher wrote his doctoral dissertation on Troeltsch, which later appeared as *Glaube und Vernunft bei Ernst Troeltsch* (1957).

A. O. DYSON was until recently principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford. He is now a canon of Windsor. Dyson wrote his doctoral dissertation at Oxford on the problem of history in Troeltsch's philosophy and theology. He has also published two books: *Who is Jesus Christ?* (S.C.M.: London, 1969) and *The Immortality of the Past* (S.C.M.: London, 1974). The latter volume originated as the Hensley Henson Lectures at Oxford.

B. A. GERRISH is professor of historical theology at the divinity school of the University of Chicago. He has written *Grace and Reason* (O.U.P.: London, 1962), and has edited *The Faith of Christendom* (World: Cleveland, 1963) and *Reformers in Profile* (Fortress: Philadelphia, 1967). Gerrish has been engaged in research on the thought of Ernst Troeltsch with a fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation. He is coeditor of the *Journal of Religion*.

JACOB KLAPWIJK is lecturer in modern philosophy at the Free University of Amsterdam. He is author of a major study of Troeltsch's philosophy of culture and religion entitled *Tussen Historisme en Relativisme* (Royal Van Gorcum: Assen, 1970). He also coedited *The Idea of a*

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Christian Philosophy (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1973). Klapwijk is currently editing a new edition of Troeltsch's *Glaubenslehre* and a fifth volume of the *Gesammelte Schriften*, both to be published by Scientia Verlag.

ROBERT MORGAN has taught christian theology at Lancaster since the department of religious studies opened in 1967. He has edited *The Nature of New Testament Theology* (S.C.M.: London, 1973) and has coedited with Michael Pye a Lancaster symposium entitled *The Cardinal Meaning: Essays in Comparative Hermeneutics* (Mouton: The Hague, 1973).

MICHAEL PYE teaches comparative religion at the University of Leeds. From 1968 to 1973 he taught history of religions at Lancaster. He has published a book introducing *Comparative Religion* (David & Charles: London, and Harper & Row: New York, 1972) and has coedited with Robert Morgan, *The Cardinal Meaning*. Pye and Morgan are currently translating and editing a collection of essays mainly from Troeltsch's *Gesammelte Schriften* to be published by Duckworth as *Ernst Troeltsch: Writings on Theology and Religion*. Pye is an editor of the journal *Religion: Journal of Religion and Religions*.

S. W. SYKES is the Van Mildert Professor of Divinity at the University of Durham. Until 1974 he was fellow and dean of St John's College, Cambridge, and university lecturer in divinity. He has written two books, *Friedrich Schleiermacher* (Lutterworth: London, & John Knox: Richmond, 1971) and *Christian Theology Today* (Mowbrays: London, 1971, and John Knox: Richmond, 1974). Sykes also coedited *Christ, Faith and History*.

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Preface

For some years now there has been in Germany and North America especially, and more recently in Britain as well, a renewed interest in nineteenth-century religious thought. Nor is this interest merely antiquarian. For many of the mainly methodological issues which are central in contemporary religious studies were either raised first or refocussed significantly during that century. In addition, a growing number of theologians are coming round to the view that the constructive task of christian theology will be advanced only after a thorough reassessment of certain developments in nineteenth-century religious thought, including some which are closely associated with the name of Ernst Troeltsch (1865–1923).

Partly in recognition of this growing area of concern, the department of religious studies recently sponsored a colloquium at the University of Lancaster on Troeltsch's intellectual legacy. The present volume of essays is based on that colloquium, which was attended by scholars from Canada, Germany, Holland, Ireland and the United States, as well as Great Britain.

The contributors to the present collection focus on some main issues raised in Troeltsch's thought which remain central in contemporary theological discussion and regarding which, it is believed, something yet remains to be gained from a critical reassessment of his writings. The contributors have consequently sought to engage Troeltsch as a discussion partner. But, ultimately, it is the issues themselves which are held to be important. Troeltsch is of interest today only to the extent that he continues to speak to the issues with which we are concerned or, perhaps, *ought* to be concerned. The authors have therefore dealt both critically with Troeltsch and con-

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structively with the issues. It is hoped that the collection will make a contribution not only to an increased understanding of Troeltsch, but also to the on-going debates in contemporary christian theology about such problems as the relationship of Christianity to 'other' religions, faith and history, the nature and tasks of theology.

No effort has been made to cover the whole range of Troeltsch's thought, nor even all those areas where he might be regarded as having made an original and lasting contribution. Troeltsch's importance for the study of church history, the sociology of religion and the philosophy of history and culture is generally acknowledged and well covered in the secondary literature. It was felt, however, that his contribution to theology in particular has not received sufficient attention.

Reasons for this neglect are not difficult to find. Nor can all of them be attributed to what Richard R. Niebuhr once aptly described as 'the Barthian captivity of the history of modern Christian thought'. For there are occasions in his writings when Troeltsch himself exhibits manifest lack of concern as to whether his thought should be described as 'christian' or not. And in his lectures intended for delivery in England, published posthumously as *Christian Thought: Its History and Application*, his grounds for commending Christianity as a faith to live by are at best pragmatic. The view is widely held, and not only amongst those who would discredit him, that Troeltsch may have begun as a christian theologian but that, in the end, he turned rather to a more general philosophy of culture [cf. *Gl.*, p. vi]. Despite such considerations, there is today evidence of a renewed interest in Troeltsch's more specifically theological writings and of an increasingly uneasy conscience that the extent of his contribution to christian thought might remain one of the 'unsettled questions for theology today'. It is to be hoped that this symposium will add in some measure to the discussion of that question.

The collection consists of three parts, the first of which concerns Troeltsch's standing as a christian theologian. In his introductory essay on Troeltsch's intellectual development, Hans-Georg Drescher emphasises that, contrary to the widely-held view mentioned above, Troeltsch remained throughout his life principally (though not narrowly) a theologian. This

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judgment is reinforced by Robert Morgan's subsequent observation that when Troeltsch remarked that he had outgrown the theological faculty [*GS* IV, 12], this need not be taken to imply that he had also outgrown theology [p. 76]. The so-called 'dialectical' theologians have taught us to believe otherwise. Indeed, the emergence and subsequent ascendancy of this sort of theology has unmistakably been a major factor in Troeltsch's not having been taken seriously in the twentieth century as a christian theologian. Consequently, it is right that a volume which lays stress on his specifically theological contribution should at the outset contain an assessment of the justice of Troeltsch's fate at the hands of Barth, Bultmann and Gogarten especially.

The quotation from Troeltsch with which Mr Morgan concludes his essay provides a bridge to Part II, in which the question is raised as to 'what we take theology and its task to be' [*GS* II, 227]. Here basic issues of theological method are raised and examined, though from different perspectives, by A. O. Dyson and B. A. Gerrish. Dr Dyson approaches the problem of theology's task at a formal level, 'looking at the structure and relationship of Troeltsch's closely argued historical, philosophical and theological standpoints with a view to exploring their implications for the task of systematic theology' [p. 83]. Professor Gerrish, on the other hand, approaches the same methodological question at a material level through a careful and detailed analysis of Troeltsch's own 'systematic theology', namely his posthumously published and frequently neglected *Glaubenslehre*, a volume which is fortunately soon to be reissued. These two papers complement each other and interconnect at a number of specific points.

Professor Gerrish's question whether it is possible for christian theology to be 'historical' as regards *content* or *substance* as well as regards *form* raises the unavoidable issue as to what makes Christianity christian and as to whether christian truth-claims can be regarded as in any sense 'absolute'. Troeltsch's approach to this issue – or, rather, this cluster of issues – is weighed in Part III by S. W. Sykes, who measures the strengths and weaknesses of the essay, 'Was heißt "Wesen des Christentums"?', and by Michael Pye, whose paper though last is not merely an appendage in the sense that

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'other' religions are sometimes treated as appendages in christian theologies (and even university faculties!). For, as is being acknowledged increasingly in recent religious thought in Britain and elsewhere, it is precisely at this point that an important task lies for the theology of the future: namely, doing christian theology from within the context of the universe of faiths. And here, too, Troeltsch points a way forward, even if – as Mr Pye argues – his approach requires substantial modification.

In addition to those who prepared papers for the colloquium at Lancaster, others assisted in different ways. A number of scholars served as interlocutors: W. F. Bense (Wisconsin), D. W. Hardy (Birmingham), Van Harvey (Pennsylvania), Jacob Klapwijk (Amsterdam), R. W. A. McKinney (Nottingham), G. M. Newlands (Cambridge), D. E. Nineham (Oxford), Thomas Ogletree (Vanderbilt), D. A. Pailin (Manchester), James Richmond (Lancaster), Ninian Smart (Lancaster), and M. F. Wiles (Oxford). Professor Drescher was chairman of the two lively discussion sessions which were conducted in German. Special mention should be made of the assistance and encouragement given by James Luther Adams, whose enthusiasm and advice throughout the planning stages and in the compiling of the Bibliography were much appreciated and whose insightful comments about specific details of interpretation added immeasurably to the quality of discussion during the colloquium itself.

Bairrigg
Lancaster
1976

J.P.C.

Abbreviations

Where possible references to some of Troeltsch's main works have been incorporated into the text and enclosed within square brackets. The following abbreviations have been used throughout the volume.

- AC* *The Absoluteness of Christianity and the History of Religions*, trans. David Reid. Richmond, 1971; London, 1972.
- CT* *Christian Thought: Its History and Application*. London, 1923.
- Gl.* *Glaubenslehre nach Heidelberger Vorlesungen aus den Jahren 1911 und 1912*, ed. Gertrud von le Fort. Munich and Leipzig, 1925.
- GS* *Gesammelte Schriften*. 4 vols. Tübingen, 1912–25.
- PP* *Protestantism and Progress: A Historical Study of the Relation of Protestantism to the Modern World*, trans. W. Montgomery. London and New York, 1912.
- STCC* *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, trans. Olive Wyon. 2 vols. London and New York, 1931.