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Edited by Bernard Orchard and Thomas R. W. Longstaff

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THE GENESIS OF THE COLLOQUIUM

William R. Farmer

At the opening of the Colloquium on Tuesday 26 July 1976, the participants assembled in the main conference room of the reconstructed library of the University of Münster, where they received an official welcome from the Pro-rector, Herr Professor Dr Friedemann Merkel. In reply, Professor William R. Farmer, representing the organizing committee, spoke as follows:

We thank you for all that you have said and for all that has been done by this university and especially by Dr Liebers and his assistant Dr Rüter of this university library. We are grateful for this fine room and for all its appointments, which are ideal for the kind of discussions we intend to hold. We especially appreciate the painstaking efforts that have been taken to assemble the Griesbachiana which grace our deliberations and for the imaginative and tasteful manner in which these books and pictures have been arranged.

On this occasion it is fitting that something should be said about the genesis of this Colloquium and about the benefactors and patrons who have helped make what started as a dream four years ago become a reality at this time.

In 1965 in Göttingen a small-scale conference was held for the purpose of discussing the importance of Griesbach's solution to the Synoptic Problem. Out of this conference, which included Eugene Roesenstock-Hussey and Hans Conzelmann, came the idea for a large-scale international conference on Gospel studies. This led to the organizing of the 'Festival of the Gospels' which was held in Pittsburgh in 1970. In a brilliant and witty essay on Mark, prepared for that conference, Professor David Dungan brought the international community of New Testament scholars to a new awareness of the viability of the Griesbach Hypothesis. A year later in a second essay on Mark prepared for the Louvain Biblical Colloquium, Dungan further demonstrated the advantages of Griesbach's solution. Among those present to hear that paper discussed was Dom Bernard Orchard, to whom credit is due for the idea to organize a bicentennial

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celebration of the work of Griesbach.

It was in the summer of 1972 that Orchard wrote a friend in the United States proposing that such a bicentennial should be held. To begin with, the idea was to increase appreciation for the contribution that Johann Jakob Griesbach had made to the solution of the Synoptic Problem. But, as is well known, this was only one of the areas of New Testament research to which this great German scholar had made a pioneering contribution. Therefore, from a very early stage in the planning for this Colloquium, provision has been made for acknowledging Griesbach's contribution to New Testament textual criticism and to his contribution to the development of the modern Gospel Synopsis, as well as to his contribution to the solution of the Synoptic Problem.

It was quickly recognized that plans for such a bicentennial could not succeed without two essential components. First, the Colloquium had to be international in its composition. Second, it had to have the sympathetic co-operation of highly respected members of the world of contemporary German New Testament scholarship. It was further decided that as far as possible, in keeping with the best of contemporary developments, the Colloquium would be ecumenical, and that, if possible, it would be held in East Germany at the University of Jena which was the principal sphere of Griesbach's scholarly career.

To this end an exploratory trip was made by Dom Bernard Orchard and Professor William R. Farmer to the University of Jena in July 1973. Preparatory to that trip several New Testament scholars were consulted about the feasibility of the idea for a Griesbach Bicentennial Colloquium. These scholars included Professor Lohse of Göttingen, Professor Bo Reicke of Basel, Professors Grässer and Greeven of Bochum and Professors Rengstorf and Aland of Münster.

The trip to Jena confirmed the desirability of such a bicentennial, but in the end it was deemed advisable to make plans to hold the Colloquium at some appropriate place in West Germany.

The financial uncertainties consequent upon the energy crisis of 1974 almost forced a postponement of plans to hold the bicentennial. Dom Bernard Orchard sent a letter to all who had been consulted, informing them that it was no longer feasible to proceed with plans unless some way could be found to assure the funding of the conference in face of the financial uncertainties that had unexpectedly developed. It was Professor Karl Heinrich Rengstorf of this university who responded that plans for the bicentennial should proceed at all costs, and who himself offered to help locate the conference, and find financial support. This made it possible to proceed without losing any of the momentum that is so

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essential to the success of a venture of this kind. At first it was thought feasible to hold the bicentennial in the famous and historic library in Wolfenbüttel. This would have been a very appropriate setting for our conference.

But we are very glad that as plans developed it has turned out that the host institution for the Griesbach Bicentennial Colloquium was to be this great university which through you, Sir, so graciously receives us on this occasion.

We are also very grateful that the ecumenical character of this celebration can be publicly apparent through the joint sponsorship of the Right Reverend Bishop of Münster, Heinrich Tenhumberg, and the Right Reverend the Präses of the Evangelical Church of Westphalia, Dr Hans Thimme.

It is appropriate that we acknowledge that the funding for our conference has come from two German foundations. Seed money for the planning of the conference was obtained from a private benefactor who wishes to remain anonymous. The funds necessary to turn the carefully laid plans into a living reality have been provided by the Volkswagenwerk Stiftung of Hannover. We are very grateful for the benefactions from both these sources.

From 1973 onward, Dom Bernard Orchard kept the officers of the international Society for New Testament Studies informed as plans for the bicentennial developed. From that beginning until now, those planning this conference have enjoyed the recognition and encouragement of this society. The international and ecumenical character of our conference was assured once Bernard Orchard, an English Roman Catholic, invited Karl Rengstorf, a German Lutheran, and William Farmer, an American Methodist, to join him to form the organizing committee for the bicentennial. Because of the location of the conference, it has been inevitable that the two Europeans on the committee have done the lion's share of the work.

Needless to say, there have been countless problems that have needed to be worked out in order to reach the happy result you see before you, an unprecedented gathering of scholarly talent to honor a great German New Testament scholar, whose work, after 200 years, continues to stimulate new research.

Those gathered here come from many different lands. They have come from as far south as Rome, Italy. They have come from as far north as Uppsala, Sweden. They have come from as far west as Hamilton, Ontario and Dallas, Texas. And they have come from as far East as Pune, India. They represent many different universities, such as Oxford, Princeton and

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Heidelberg, and some very important centers of biblical studies such as the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem and the Pontifical Biblical Institute at Rome.

In an atomic age when the world is presently witnessing by live telecast both the Olympic Games in Montreal and a space-craft landing on Mars, we must seem to be a small and unimportant gathering. But in a world which has much to learn about how the human family can best live together, we think that there is some point in our coming together to do what we can to help ourselves and others better to understand the New Testament – and better to understand the central figure of the New Testament, who taught us to pray to a heavenly Father and to treat one another as brothers and sisters. You will be interested to know that it is our intention not only to work together, but also freely to pray together: in the morning before breakfast, at noon before lunch, and in the evening before supper. We sincerely hope that through our working and praying together in these days some good may come not only to ourselves but to others, not only to this land but to people in every land. To this end we pledge our common efforts and we begin by thanking you and all your colleagues who have helped make this day possible.

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**JOHANN JAKOB GRIESBACH:
HIS LIFE, WORK AND TIMES***Gerhard Dellling*¹*Translated by Ronald Walls*

Recalling his own youth,² Goethe says of the young Griesbach³ and the brothers Schlosser,⁴ that in Frankfurt ‘everyone cherished the sure hope that they would accomplish outstanding things in State and Church’. ‘Distinguished in those linguistic and other studies that open up the way to an academic career’, by their own excellence they stimulated others ‘to immediate emulation’. In this connection Goethe mentions that, ‘subsequently he formed a closer tie with these men, a tie that endured unbroken for many years’. In fact Goethe moved to Weimar in 1775, the same year in which Griesbach moved to Jena; as a result, there grew up a frequent interchange between the two men.

Growing up as he did in an intellectually lively Frankfurt bourgeois family, Johann⁵ Griesbach saw a wide horizon open out to him from his earliest days. Until 1806 Frankfurt was *de facto* a free imperial city;⁶ it had a great market, was a centre of international trade, a city of banks;⁷ it boasted also a busy book-fair, and was a city of both printing-presses and publishing houses. The *Römer* at Frankfurt was more than a well-known market-hall; it was distinguished by the part it played in the coronation of the emperor, which was solemnized in Frankfurt from 1562 to 1792. Goethe has given us a detailed description of his impressions of the events surrounding the coronation of Joseph II as ‘King of the Romans’ in April 1764.⁸

Our Johann Griesbach was the son of Konrad Kaspar Griesbach, a Pietist minister of Halle. His father had saved enough from his earnings as a chorister in Frankfurt to finance a three-year course of study at Jena. Then in 1730, in order first of all to finance his further studies, he went to the institute of Francke at Halle where he came in contact in particular with August Hermann Francke’s like-minded successor at the theological faculty – Johann Jakob Rambach.⁹ When in 1731 Rambach moved to Giessen he took Konrad Kaspar Griesbach with him as tutor for his children. After Rambach’s untimely death in 1735 Griesbach continued in this office for some time longer. Soon – according to his *Vita*¹⁰ – K. K.

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Griesbach had become a much sought-after preacher. Until 1740 he remained in Giessen; in 1743 he went to Butzbach (Hessen-Darmstadt) taking with him as his wife Dorothea, eldest daughter of his patron Rambach. He had watched her grow up in her parents' home – she was twenty years younger than himself. Shortly after the birth of their only son on 4 January 1745 – not for nothing named after his grandfather, Johann Jakob –¹¹ K. K. Griesbach accepted a call to his birthplace, Sachsenhausen, a suburb of Frankfurt. In 1747 he became pastor of the Church of St Peter at Neustadt, Frankfurt. Goethe describes his wife, Dorothea, as 'pre-eminent' among the outstanding women of the Pietist circle in Frankfurt.¹² But, he comments, she was 'too severe, too arid, too learned'; 'she knew, thought, and comprehended more than the others'. In fact her knowledge of Latin¹³ and Greek (37 I: iv) allowed her a deeper penetration into theology. The Pietistic attitude of her husband is clearly evident in – among other things – his preface to J. J. Rambach's *Moral Theology*, published by his son-in-law in 1738 in Frankfurt/M (1434 pp.). In his view this is a work in which the author describes the corruption of nature and the way of grace; it presents a theology of conversion (para. 3 of the preface). In those days, within the markedly Lutheran Church of Frankfurt Pietism was fairly general. From 1743 to 1761 the leading clergyman (*Senior*) in Frankfurt was Johann Philipp Fresenius, who had met Rambach during his first ministry in Giessen (1734–6).

In his address to J. Griesbach when he was defending his first treatise (1), Semler, Griesbach's teacher, referred to the outstanding example of noble piety, especially that set by Rambach's daughter. 'I know', he said, 'and I rejoice, that here (in Halle) you have lost nothing' of that spiritual treasure which you inherited from your parents' home (37 I: 165). Our Griesbach did not in reality think of himself as a Pietist; later on he explicitly dissociated himself from Pietism and from the 'enthusiastic and mystical parties' in general (33: 5). Nonetheless it has to be remarked, that his lecture on dogmatics in the concluding part 7 – under the title, 'How is the Christian led by his religion to his great destiny?' – treats specially of 'complete change of heart and mind', that is of conversion.¹⁴ This is necessarily linked to 'a lively awareness' of 'the divine decrees concerning the redemption to blessedness, of sinful man' and to the ever-renewed devout contemplation of these decrees (para. 155), as well as to 'frequent renewal of feelings of love for God and for Jesus' (para. 160). At all events, during the five semesters when he studied at Tübingen, J. Griesbach was brought into contact with the Württemberg style of Pietism, through Jeremias Friedrich Reuss.¹⁵ By and large the theological faculty at Tübingen was moulded by Lutheran orthodoxy. Here Griesbach made

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a closer acquaintance with 'the older system of theology with its proofs'; this enabled him, 'as he progressed gradually, and without jumping hastily to conclusions, towards a freer style of theology' to reach – among other things – an objective and just judgement concerning orthodoxy (35: 537f.).

It was during the decade he spent at Halle (1764–75) that the development, which he himself has described, took a turn that decisively determined the course of his life. Here he soon came in contact with Johann Salomo Semler, with whom he lived as a student, and also after his great tour abroad (40: 18). Semler claimed him for an academic career, and marked him out for special research in the field of textual criticism of the New Testament. It is worth noting with what determination Griesbach took up the execution of the plan. In the course of a double semester at Leipzig he studied first the lecturing method of the professors there, and then devoted himself in particular to 'reading the ancient sources' of Church history (1766–7).¹⁶ He continued this study in Halle 'joining with it the more exact critical investigation of the New Testament' (35: 538). After gaining his master's degree in the faculty of philosophy at the Regia Fridericiana (2), at twenty-three years of age, he set off on an extensive tour in order to widen his horizon, and, in particular, to get to know the teaching methods of a wider circle of professors, and to make use of the treasures of New Testament manuscripts contained in other libraries (35: 539). His sojourn in England and in Paris was devoted especially to this last objective. Griesbach travelled for a full half year in Germany, then went to the Netherlands. In England (September 1769 – June 1770) he spent long hours working in the library of the British Museum. An additional two months were spent at the Bodleian in Oxford, and a short spell at Cambridge. In Paris he buried himself chiefly (34: xiv) in the Royal Library, and in that of Saint Germain and others. The fruits of the months spent in these libraries determined Griesbach's work in textual criticism until the end of his life. Back home with his parents from October 1770 until Easter 1771, he continued to prepare himself for the work of university teaching. In Halle in October 1771 he won the *venia legendi* with his treatise on the importance of the Church Fathers (as exemplified in Origen) for New Testament criticism. This treatise concludes with six theses on New Testament textual criticism in general (3). Straightaway Griesbach took up his work of lecturing. In February 1773 he was nominated *extraordinarius* by Friedrich II. To this period belongs the oil painting of Griesbach by Johann Daniel Bager¹⁷ of Frankfurt. The painting now hangs in the Schiller Memorial in Jena.

While in Halle Griesbach laid the foundation of his great editorial works, through which he made his mark in the history of research. 'He had scarcely

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returned from his tour to Halle when he provided New Testament criticism with a new style, so that . . . not long after he became *praeceptor Germaniae*' (37 I: v). In Halle he produced the manuscripts of his great editions of the New Testament – those of 1774 and 1775 (4 and also 5 II) – and the *Synopsis* of 1776 [but see Greeven, chapter 3, n. 17]. The ground-plan of the *Symbolae criticae* (22) dates also from the Halle period.¹⁸ Griesbach's publications of his last two decades were again devoted almost exclusively to the form of the text of the New Testament; the beginnings of these go back to the Halle decade of 1764–75 (including the grand tour; see the preface to 22 II, at the beginning).

Griesbach felt bound in many ways to Halle, not least through personal ties – through the 'quite unique goodwill of patrons and friends' – as he says (34: xv). However, as he had been assured that working in Jena¹⁹ he would enjoy 'all such freedom in teaching', as 'an academic teacher can reasonably hope to enjoy at a Lutheran university', and as, on the other hand, the Curator at Halle 'seemed to avoid giving a positive answer on the subject of Griesbach's release from the King's service', which behaviour 'offended Griesbach's sense of freedom, he resolved to accept the call he had received' (35: 541). Here one sees the bourgeois pride of the son of a free imperial city. Chief among his Halle friends was Christian Gottfried Schütz²⁰ (in Halle 1769–79, then in Jena), whose sister Friederike became his wife on 16 April 1775, after an engagement of a year and a half (40: 21, 47).

On his installation as a regular professor at the 'Princely Saxon Comprehensive Academy at Jena'²¹ (his installation took place in December 1775)²² Griesbach embarked upon a concentrated spell of lecturing.²³ In the five semesters from the winter of 1777/8 until the summer of 1780 Griesbach actually offered four full lecture-courses.²⁴ He went systematically through Church history – the whole *historia ecclesiastica* indeed, divided out generally speaking over three semesters. From the time of its publication he based his lectures upon the outline of Church history by Johann Matthias Schroeckh.²⁵ Griesbach's earliest publications (1768) dealt with themes belonging to the field of historical research. His first, on the history of dogma, treated of the doctrine of Leo I on scripture, on Christ, on sin and grace, on the law, and on the sacraments, etc. (1); the second, Griesbach's dissertation for the master's degree, was basically an inquiry into norms for judgement of the reliability of historical records (2). Later, in the invitation to his inaugural lecture in Jena in 1776, Griesbach expounded the manifold uses of Church history in judging contemporary problems in theology and in the Church (7), and, finally, in a Whitsun programme for 1779 (13), discussed the position of the Church of Rome

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according to Irenaeus III.3.1. Griesbach's far-reaching and intense interest in Church history is indicated by the catalogue of the library he left behind (38).²⁶ This contains some 2500 items on Church history (*libri exegetici*, Old and New Testament, amount to less than 1600, including straightforward texts, the 'apparatus for the interpretation of holy scripture', etc.); within the list is a special section for *patres et scriptores ecclesiastici* (almost 500 items) under which heading are no less than 200 quarto volumes concerning the early Church period, for example a 17-volume edition of the works of Gregory the Great (Venice, 1768-76) and - *nota bene* - the Delarue edition (1733-59) of Origen, following the volumes and pages of which Griesbach inserted New Testament variant readings in an interleaved working copy.²⁷ For the rest, by way of comment on the 12,526 items, it may be said, that there are a host of minor treatises that are not catalogued in detail, and - not least in importance - that by 1804 Griesbach - as he wrote to Gabler -²⁸ 'had twice already thrown out 1000 books'.

In addition to Church history, from the winter of 1779/80 certainly until the summer of 1790²⁹ Griesbach lectured on 'theologicam *dogmaticam* methodo populari, h. e. futurorum verbi divini ministrorum usibus accommodata',³⁰ from the time of its publication in his *Anleitung* (23). This was not intended as a 'theology for non-theologians', but, as the prospectus indicates, as a course for theological students (cf. 23: 3).³¹ This outlines certain hypothetical discussions of the traditional dogmatics of his time ('pure speculations'³²) and treats the biblically based *theologumena*,³³ which are normative for the Church's preaching. The treatment most certainly goes beyond what is to be utilized in catechesis and preaching (preface of 1786). In this way Griesbach presents, among other things, the essence of 'authentic divine revelation' (para. 8), the doctrine of the two natures in Christ (paras. 54-8, 134f., 147), discusses man's fallen nature (para. 123) and, within a wide context of New Testament affirmations, expounds the Biblical interpretation of the cross (paras. 141-4, and cf. his footnote to para. 132). In his preface of 1786 Griesbach said that to some extent he would be referring to 'the precious "enlightenment" of many dogmas' provided by modern scholars, so that certainly some of his readers 'will shake their heads suspiciously at supposed heterodoxies - known now as neologies', whereas others 'will shrug their shoulders indulgently at the author's attachment to old-fashioned orthodoxy'.

Griesbach's *Anleitung* deals in great detail with New Testament texts - citing numerous authorities; in his view, 'popular' dogmatics must be 'firmly grounded upon' Biblical theology (23: 4f.).³⁴ Griesbach's New Testament courses were predominantly exegetical in content, and in fact

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he gives us an exegesis of what amounts to the whole of the New Testament, with the notable exception of the Apocalypse.³⁵ The whole cycle took from four to five semesters. The importance that was attached to exegetical courses can be estimated by a comparison with other disciplines. At Jena in 1800 one read Church Dogmatics in a single semester.³⁶ Between 1779 and 1803 Griesbach devoted one semester in each cycle to the Synoptics and another to John and Acts. As a rule Romans and the two Letters to the Corinthians were taken along with a number of the shorter Pauline letters, and more than once we find Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles; but we also find other combinations of the letters. Besides exegetical lectures Griesbach offered an introduction to the New Testament as a whole, at intervals of from three or four semesters – until a pause in 1800.³⁷ In addition, every fourth or fifth semester, he gave a course on the hermeneutics of the New Testament – with application to particular texts.³⁸ This was published in a transcript in his last years (33). On one occasion he gave an introduction to the rules of textual criticism (winter 1784/5).

In hermeneutics³⁹ Griesbach stressed the necessity not of dogmatic, but of ‘historical-grammatical interpretation’ (33: 48). The philological aids for this are the same as those used for all ancient texts (p. 53). Griesbach produces these sources of knowledge (pp. 56–63) in respect of other ancient authors. It is true that the purely Greek linguistic usage is not sufficient, for the New Testament is written in Hebraic Greek⁴⁰ (pp. 74–82, 85–7; for the LXX pp. 75–80). ‘To begin with, the pure philologist and exegete alone is allowed to speak’ (p. 47). Then he has to inquire further into the historical circumstances in which the book was produced (pp. 100–1, 92f.),⁴¹ and into the purpose the author had in mind (pp. 91–4) in the context of the sentence, the passage, etc. (pp. 87–91, 93). But although the New Testament must be interpreted just like any other ancient book, ‘constant regard’ must be given to the ‘whole peculiar character of the content and the form’ of the New Testament (p. 53).

The way in which Griesbach applied the rules of hermeneutics can be seen from the numerous exegetical or Biblical-theological treatises which he published from 1776 to 1793. It is noteworthy that these works become more numerous especially in the decade and a half from 1778 to 1793. During the height of his work as a theological teacher it becomes evident that Griesbach saw his responsibility as that of a Biblical theologian. We ought at least to mention, as examples of the interpretation of longer passages, his expositions of Rom. 8 and 1 Cor. 12 (8; 14); unfortunately the method used in these expositions cannot be explained here. The fact that the greater number of these treatises, of which we now speak, are almost entirely so-called programmes for the great Christian feasts,⁴² does