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This study offers a new and original analysis of the problem of religious language. Taking as its starting point Karl Barth's doctrine of analogy, it places this doctrine within the context of German *Sprache* and *Rede* philosophies and reveals the historical links between them and the work of the philosophers Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida. Drawing out the parallels between this work and Barth's insights into the language of theology, it concludes that Barth's doctrine of analogy is a theological reading of Derrida's economy of *différance*.

This important contemporary interpretation of Karl Barth reveals his closeness to postmodern thinking and underlines his relevance to current debates on the language of theology. It will be of interest to those studying both general questions of theology and language and the particular relationship between theology and postmodernism.

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GRAHAM WARD

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*For
Mary, Rachel and David*

*We walk by the sea-shore
holding firmly in our hands
the two ends of an antique dialogue
– do you love me?
– I love you.*

Zbigniew Herbert

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An earlier version of chapter 7 appeared in *Modern Theology*, vol. 9, no. 2, April 1993. I would like to thank Gregory and Stephen, the editors, for their patience and encouragement.

Abbreviations

Wherever it is deemed necessary, or where my study of a text is detailed, the page reference to the English translation is followed by the page reference to standard editions of the text in the original language. Where texts have not yet been translated I refer to the title in its original language. Similarly, where the titles of texts are untranslatable, then I have kept to the original. Following what has now become a custom in translating Levinas's terms *Autru* and *Autre*, Other with a capital is used for the former, with other in the lower case for the latter.

K. BARTH

- 1R* *Der Römerbrief: Erste Fassung*, Gesamtausgabe Bd. 16 (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1985)
- 2R* *The Epistle to the Romans*, tr. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933). *Der Römerbrief: Zweite Fassung* (Munich, 1926)
- WW* *The Word of God and the Words of Men*, tr. D. Horton (London, 1928). *Das Wort Gottes und die Theologie* (Munich, 1924)
- GD* *The Göttingen Dogmatics: Instruction in the Christian Religion*, vol. 1, tr. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Eerdmans: Michigan, 1991). *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion* Gesamtausgabe, Bd. 17 (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1990)
- A* *Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum* (London: SCM, 1960)
- CDE* *Die christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf*, Gesamtausgabe, Bd. 14 (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1982)
- I.1, I.2, II.1, III.2* *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark), volumes I.1 (1936, revd edn 1975), I.2 (1956), II.1 (1957) and III.2 (1961). *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*, I.1 (Evangelischer Verlag A. G. Zurich: Zollikon, 1952), I.2 (1948), II.1 (1948) and II.2 (1948)

List of abbreviations

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M. BUBER

- L* *Logos* (Heidelberg, 1960)
KM *The Knowledge of Man*, tr., Maurice Friedman (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960)
D 'Dialogue' in *Between Man and Man*, tr. Ronald Gregor Smith (London: Fontana, 1961)
IT *I and Thou*, tr. Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Scribner's, 1958). *Dialogisches Leben* (Zurich: Gregor Muller, 1947)

E. CASSIRER

- EM* *An Essay on Man* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944)
PSF *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, in three volumes, tr. R. Manheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953)
LM *Language and Myth*, tr. S. K. Langer (New York: Dover Public., 1953)

J. DERRIDA

- SP* *Speech and Phenomena*, ed. and tr. David B. Allison (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973). *La Voix et le phénomène* (Paris: Presses Universitaires of France, 1967)
WD *Writing and Difference*, tr. Alan Bass (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1978). *L'écriture et la différence* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1967)
OG *Of Grammatology*, tr. Gayatri Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976). *De la grammatologie* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1967)
D *Dissemination*, tr. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981). *La dissémination* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1972)
MP *Margins of Philosophy*, tr. Alan Bass (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982). *Marges de la philosophie* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1972)
Pos. *Positions*, tr. Alan Bass (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981). *Positions* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1972)
LI *Limited Inc.*, tr. Samuel Weber, ed. Gerald Graff (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988).

- French edition (Paris: Galilée, 1990). First published in *Glyph* 2, 1977
- Sp.* *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles* (bilingual edition) tr. Barbara Harlow (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1979)
- EO* *Ear of the Other*, tr. Peggy Kamuf and Avital Ronell (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988)
- TA* 'Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy', tr. John P. Leavey, Jr. *The Oxford Literary Review*, vol. 6, no. 2 (1984). *D'un ton apocalyptique adopté naguère en philosophie* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1983)
- Alt.* *Altérités*, with Pierre-Jean Labarrière (Paris, Osiris, 1986)
- OS* *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, tr. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989). *De l'esprit: Heidegger et la question* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1987)
- P* *Psyché: Invention de l'autre* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1987)
- DR* *Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*, ed. Peggy Kamuf (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991)
- MPM* *Memoires for Paul de Man*, tr. Cecile Lindsay, Jonathan Culler, Eduardo Cadava and Peggy Kamuf (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989). French edition (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1988)

F. EBNER

- S* *Schriften*, Bd. 1 (Munich, 1963)

J. G. HAMANN

- Nadler* *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Josef Nadler, Bd. 1–6 (Wien, 1949–57)
- Ziesemer* *Briefwechsel*, ed. Ziesemer and Henkel (Leipzig, 1949)

M. HEIDEGGER

- BT* *Being and Time*, tr. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962)
- OWL* *On the Way to Language*, tr. Peter Hertz and Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1971). *Unterwegs zur Sprache* (Pfullingen: Gunter Neske, 1959)

List of abbreviations

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- PLT* *Poetry, Language, Thought*, tr. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971)
- DT* *Discourse on Thinking*, tr. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund (New York: Harper and Row, 1966)
- EGT* *Early Greek Thinking*, tr. David Farrell Krell and Frank A. Capuzzi (New York: Harper and Row, 1975)
- ID* *Identity and Difference* (Bilingual edition), tr. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Doubleday, 1962)
- MFL* *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, tr. Michael Heim (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984)
- WP* *What is Philosophy?*, tr. W. Kluback and J. T. Wilde (New York: Twayne, 1958)
- TB* *On Time and Being*, tr. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1972)

J. G. HERDER

- OL* *On the Origin of Language*, tr. Alexander Gode (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966)
- Suphan *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Bernhard Suphan, Bd. 1–33 (Hildesheim, 1967)

W. HUMBOLDT

- DHS* *On Language: The Diversity of Human-Language Structure and its Influence on the Mental Development of Mankind*, tr. Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)

E. HUSSERL

- CM* *Cartesian Meditations*, tr. Dorion Cairns (Le Hague: Nijhoff, 1960)

E. LEVINAS

- To.In.* *Totality and Infinity*, tr. A. Lingis (Le Hague: Nijhoff, 1969). *Totalité et infini* (Le Haye: Nijhoff, 1961)
- EDE* *En découvrant l'existence avec Husserl et Heidegger* (Paris: Vrin, 1967)
- NP* *Noms Propres* (Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1976)
- OB* *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, tr. A. Lingis (Le

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List of abbreviations

- Hague: Nijhoff, 1981). *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence* (Le Haye: Nijhoff, 1974)
- DVI** *Le Dieu qui vient à l'idée* (Paris: Vrin, 1982)
- TI** *Transcendance et intelligibilité* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1984)
- CP** *Collected Philosophical Papers*, ed. and tr. A. Lingis (Le Hague: Nijhoff, 1987)
- TO** *Time and the Other*, tr. Richard A. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne, 1987)
- LR** *Levinas Reader*, ed. Sean Hand (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989)

E. ROSENSTOCK-HUESSY

- JC** *Judaism Despite Christianity: Letters between Rosenstock and Rosenzweig* (University of Alabama Press, 1969)
- CF** *The Christian Future* (London: SCM, 1960)

F. ROSENZWEIG

- SR** *The Star of Redemption*, tr. William W. Hallo (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1970)
- B** *Briefe* (Berlin: 1935)
- KS** *Kleinere Schriften* (Berlin: 1937)

F. SAUSSURE

- CGL** *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Roy Harris (London: Duckworth, 1983)

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Preface to the first paperback edition

Since this book was first published the debates concerning, on the one hand, Karl Barth's relationship to postmodernism and, on the other, Jacques Derrida as a *homo religiosus* have continued. While academics like Walter Lowe, Garrett Green and Isolde Andrews have been investigating the affinities between Barth and Derrida, others, like William Stacy Johnston, have been examining Barth's postmodern foundations. Meanwhile Jacques Derrida has continued to write about theological discourse, most importantly, in his examination of prayer and confession in *Circumfession: Fifty-nine Periods and Periphrases* (1991, translation 1993), in his analysis of Angelus Silesius's work in *Sauf le nom* (1993), in his enquiry into the differences between teleology and eschatology in *Spectres of Marx* (1993, translation 1994) and in his long essay *Foi et savoir: les deux sources de la 'religion' aux limites de la simple raison* (1996). Derrida's preoccupation with explicit theological themes has been accompanied by a number of significant theological interpretations of Derrida's work, by John Caputo and William Dean in the United States, and Rico Sneller in Holland. The University of Villanova has staged one important conference, in 1997, at which Derrida spoke directly to theologians. Its success has led to plans for a second conference in 1999. Meanwhile, there have also been spirited theological attacks both on Derrida's work, most notably by Catherine Pickstock, and the work of those attempting to read Barth through Derrida, most notably by Bruce McCormack.

Reading and evaluating this material, and being involved in various seminars here, in Holland and in the United States, has caused me to see more clearly what my question was concern-

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ing the relationship between Karl Barth and Jacques Derrida with respect to the language of theology. It has also enabled me to understand how some of the misconceptions critics had about my thesis have arisen. For it is a misconception to interpret this book as either providing Barth with a philosophical foundation for his theology, or suggesting that Derrida's examination of *différance* offers a basis for a natural theology. *Différance* installs a theological question and it does so necessarily according to Derrida. That is the important point. Negative theology, in its many guises, most clearly exemplarises the economy of *différance*. Barth's own self-critical, dialectical discourse constitutes a form of negative theology – a form which develops out of the *theologia crucis* tradition of the Reformation. This form of negative theology, like deconstruction, is also affirmative. So, for Barth, a *theologia crucis* promises also a *theologia resurrectionis*. But, and this is the important but, God is not *différance* for Derrida; and Barth's self-critical, dialectical discourse (which I examine in terms of *différance*) only participates in the unfolding and dissemination of God's Word on the basis of *analogia fidei* which is, more explicitly, an analogy of relations with respect to Christ. Nevertheless, what this cross-examination of two voices – a philosophical voice which fights shy of investigating the theological questions it raises and a theological voice which fights shy of engaging with the philosophical issues it cannot avoid – suggests is a new approach to philosophical theology; an approach that would be both philosophically radical and yet theologically orthodox.

Graham Ward
Peterhouse