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EXEGESIS AND THE HISTORY OF THEOLOGY: REFLECTIONS ON THE ADAM-CHRIST TYPOLOGY IN CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA*

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The history of exegesis as a discipline is one of the stepchildren of Church History. As such it has not only been neglected by Church historians, but even if studied, it has received inferior treatment.¹ Surely there is something ironical about an age of theological scholarship which has so self-consciously bought the historical method to study the Bible, but which nevertheless allows scholars to be so un-historical in their approach to the history of its interpretation. Consider that much of the material in the history of exegesis has been mined by scholars whose proper business is the study of the Old and New Testaments; or that the history of interpretation is usually considered a part of biblical studies. Inevitably the question asked by biblical scholars sounds something like this: how does a man, a school, or epoch interpret such and such a passage? Frequently this question issues in monographs tracing the history of interpretations of the chosen passage. The result is usually a catena of citations classifying and cataloguing the answers given to problems in the text. Most often the perspective brought to the material is that of the contemporary exegete, who, either explicitly or implicitly thinks he knows what the passage meant—or at least what it could not mean.

But such an approach is not really historical. It does not raise a genuine historical question—at least not a historical question about the exegesis of the fathers. For in such an approach the fathers are not read to discover what they thought and why, but they are read to serve the ends of the present interpreter: to aid him in expounding the text, to give fodder for his commentary, or to illustrate how far one can stray unless enlightened by historical science.² This explains in

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1. In his article, "Luthers Bedeutung für den Fortschritt der Auslegungskunst (*"Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte 1,"* 6 Aufl., 1932), p. 544, Holl writes: "Die Geschichte der Auslegung gehört bei uns zu den allervernachlässigsten Gebieten." See also the introductory comments in Karl Schelkle, *Paulus Lehrer der Väter* (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1956), 11-14; he cites Bardy, writing in 1934, who deplores the state or research in the history of exegesis. See also Jaroslav J. Pelikan, "Exegesis and the History of Theology," *Luther the Expositor* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), pp. 5-31, and his bibliography.
2. Two examples should suffice, one from the nineteenth century and the other from several years ago. A. Merx, *Die Prophetie Joel und ihre Ausleger* (1879), p. 112: "Wo die Allegorie und ihre Abarten, die Anagoge und die moralische Deutung auftreten, ist das Textverständniss gemordet." Cf. his comments on Ephraem, Theodoret, and Cyril, p. 156, and on Jerome, 168-9. He praises Jerome above the other three because he learned Hebrew and "damit die elementaren Vorkenntnisse des Exegeten sich anzuzeigen." In the recent work by Klaus-Peter Köppen, *Die Auslegung der Versuchungsgeschichte unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Alten Kirche* ("Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese," 4; Tübingen, 1961), the history of exegesis is examined to aid the present day interpreter: "In den modernen Kommentaren findet man nur selten Quellenangaben oder Zitate, in denen die Kirchenväter zu Wort kommen. Es muss aber geprüft werden, ob nicht in diesem oder jenem Falle die Auslegung der Väter auch zur modernen Exegese etwas Bemerkenswertes oder Förderliches beizutragen hat." (p.2).

part the fascination for such men as Theodore of Mopsuestia and the Antiochene school: they are more like us. Somehow there is always the tendency to assume that the only standard for judging the history of exegesis was what the text really meant; and what it really meant was known only to the present day interpreter. As a consequence those who would be thoroughly historical in their approach to Peter or Paul or Mark become radically unhistorical when they read Origen, or Ambrose, or Gregory of Nyssa. But perhaps we should not be too hard on the exegetes who have made the attempt, for the Church historians should never have allowed them to claim the history of exegesis as their domain in the first place.³

In recent years a fresh wind has been blowing and it is for this reason, I suppose, that the history of exegesis is considered at this meeting of Church historians as a "frontier" in Church historical research. The list of men who have contributed to this renewal is growing: Jean Daniélou, Henri deLubac, Robert Grant, Jaroslav Pelikan, to name only a few.⁴ But we are still very much on the edge of things and the work of these men has in large measure been directed toward phrasing new kinds of questions, and introducing new approaches to the field. Already we are beginning to see that many of the older generalizations cannot stand and must be discarded. Some think, for instance, that the old opposition between Alexandria and Antioch on the matter of historical and spiritual interpretation is more a case of misunderstanding than of genuine conflict of principles. Others have shown that the fathers of the so-called Alexandrian school cannot simply be thrown together under one roof somewhat contemptuously called "allegorical."⁵ But the change of wind has hardly begun to alter the writing of Church History or the history of theology, for the old clichés still keep us away from the commentaries and biblical writings of the fathers. Pelikan writes:

Entire histories have been written . . . which do not seriously consider the possibility that at least one of the decisive elements in the thought and action of a Christian man or group may have been the way they interpreted the Bible. . . Historians have sought to assess the influence of

3. The history of the writing of the history of exegesis would make a fascinating story. Even a brief foray into the first major and comprehensive work by Georg Rosenmüller, *Historia Interpretationis Librorum Sacrorum in Ecclesia Christiana* (Hildburghausae, 1795; 4 Vols), reveals a much more interesting approach to the field than was current in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. R. believes that the history of interpretation is part of Church History and has close ties with the history of theology. As proof he notes that the "condition of the Christian religion and Church in every time to be dependent on the fate of the interpretation of the sacred Scriptures," (p.5) For a useful bibliography see Martin Elze, "Schrittauslegung," *RGG*, V, 1526-28.
4. Robert M. Grant, *The Letter and the Spirit* (London: SPCK, 1957); *The Earliest Lives of Jesus* (New York: Harper, 1962). Jaroslav Pelikan, *op. cit.* Jean Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality* (Westminster: Newman Press, 1960); *Bible and Liturgy* (Notre Dame Press, 1956). Henri deLubac, *Histoire et Esprit: L'intelligence de l'Écriture d'après Origène* (Paris: Aubier, 1950).
5. See J. Guillet "Les exégèses d'Alexandrie et d'Antioche. Conflit ou malentendu?" *Recherches de science religieuse*, XXXIV (1947), 257-302, for a persuasive argument minimizing the differences between the Alexandrian and Antiochene schools; also the works of Daniélou and deLubac cited above.

everything from the theologian's vanity to the theologian's viscera upon the formulation of theological doctrines, meanwhile regarding as naïve and uninformed the suggestion that the Bible may be a source of these doctrines.⁶

I

Cyril of Alexandria is one of the less attractive figures in the ancient Church. Many protestant historians, offended by his churchmanship and intimidated by his orthodoxy, have joined in the condemnation voiced by one of his contemporaries on hearing of Cyril's death. "At last with a final struggle the villain has passed away. His departure delights the survivors, but possibly disheartens the dead; there is some fear that under the provocation of his company they may send him back again to us. Care must therefore be taken to order the guild of undertakers to place a very big and heavy stone on his grave to stop him coming back here." The late G. L. Prestige, in his intimitable fashion, took this as a tribute. "It affords," writes Prestige "striking testimony to Cyril's greatness. Small men do not earn such heartfelt obituaries, even from deeply indignant saints."⁷

The attacks have not been without foundation. Cyril has not yet been cleared—nor certainly implicated—of involvement in the Hypatia affair, his treatment of Jews in Alexandria is notorious, he was clever and almost ruthless in his dealing with Nestorius, he pampered the imperial crown with the wealth of the Alexandrian Church. For example, at the time of the council of Ephesus Cyril gave the court 1500 pounds of gold in presents and shortly after laid out another 1000 pounds for the same purpose.⁸ Historians of theology have claimed that he had no theological interest, and was motivated solely by political ends. Once Harnack made the proud boast that he need not cite passages from Cyril, since Cyril's theology was quite simple and would be recognized immediately by anyone familiar with the subject. In his view Cyril was an Apollinarian. After commenting on Cyril's Christology, Harnack remarked, "This either means nothing at all or it is Apollinarianism." (*History of Dogma*, IV, 176) On the positive side, scholars such as Aloys Grillmeier have tried to rescue Cyril from his critics, and while cautious not to say too much, have really said too little. As valuable as his work has been, it does not appear that we are yet in a position to assess Cyril's work and solve many of the older questions.⁹

In 1956, reviewing a work on Cyril's Christology by the Belgian scholar Jacques Liébaert, Jean Daniélou wrote:

The great gap of present studies of patristic theology is that they do not take seriously the fathers as exegetes and biblical theologians. Moreover it is necessary to recognize that this study has hardly begun. But it

6. Pelikan, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

7. G. L. Prestige, *Fathers and Heretics* (London: SPOK, 1958), p. 150.

8. On this subject see A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964), p. 905. He refers here to A.C.O., I, iv, 222-25.

9. Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (New York, 1965), pp. 400-412.

appears certain, in the case which occupies us here (Liébaert's work on Cyril), a study of the biblical theology of Cyril would lead us to modify in a notable fashion the interpretation of his theology of the Incarnation.¹⁰

In what follows I do not wish to attempt a solution to the central problems of Cyril's Christology, nor of his theology of the Incarnation, nor do I hope to show he was really not an Apollinarian. Rather I wish to take a central exegetical theme and show how it interrelates with Cyril's theology and illuminates his exegesis. In this way I hope to say something about the history of exegesis and why it should be considered a frontier in Church History.¹¹

In Cyril's writings a number of biblical themes appear continually. Of these one of the more important is the Pauline conception of Christ as the "second Adam."¹² Cyril is not the first of the fathers to speak of Christ as the second Adam. Many of the patristic writers employ this typology in passing, some, such as Methodius, seem to use it more extensively, and Irenaeus uses it as a central theological concept in his attack on the gnostics.¹³ For Cyril, however, the Adam-Christ typology plays an even more decisive role, for it is both a key theological concept and a versatile and plastic exegetical key.

Theologically, the Adam-Christ typology is rooted in Cyril's predilection to see redemption primarily in terms of creation-re-creation categories. In an early commentary on Genesis, the *Glaphyra*, Cyril writes: "Let us consider the state of things as they once were and perhaps we can say something of the restoration to a better state. For St. Paul said 'If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation,' and through the prophets God said, 'I will make all things new.' These passages mean that Christ's work is a recapitulation, (*anskephelaiōsis*), that is to say a restitution (*anaphoitēsis*) or a restoration (*epanorthōsis*) of all things to their original state (*eis hopēr ēn archē*)."¹⁴ As Walter

10. *Recherches de Science Religieuse* XXXVIII (1952), 272; also Jouassard, *ESR*, LXIV (1956), 235.
11. There is an extensive monograph on Cyril's exegesis of the Old Testament: Alexander Kerrigan, *St. Cyril of Alexandria. Interpreter of the Old Testament* (Roma, 1952); see also his article: "The Objects of the Literal and Spiritual Senses of the New Testament according to St. Cyril of Alexandria," *Studia Patristica*, Vol. I ("Texte und Untersuchungen," Vol. LXIII; Berlin, 1957), 354-74. See also F. M. Abel, "Parellélisme exégétique entre s. Jérôme et s. Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *Vivre et Penser*, I (1941), 94-119; 212-230; Augustine Dupre la Tour, "La Doxa du Christ dans les oeuvres exégétiques de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, LXVIII (1960), 521-543; (1961), 68-94; J.-C. Dhotel, "La 'sanctification' du Christ d'après Hebreux II, 11," *ESR*, XLVII (1959), 515-43; XLVIII (1960), 520-52; G. M. Durand, *Deux Dialogues Christologiques* ("Sources Chrétiennes," No. 97; Paris, 1964) is also valuable for Cyril's exegesis because of the many footnotes referring to his exegetical writings. See my review in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* LXXVII 1966.
12. The recent work of Egon Brandenburger, *Adam und Christus* ("Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament," Band VII; Neukirchen, 1962), argues that the "two Adams" entered Christianity through hellenistic Judaism. Cf. Philo, *Leg. Alleg.* I, 31.
13. In general, cf. J. Daniélou, *Shadows*, pp. 11-65; W. Staerk, "Anakephaliosis" in *RAC*, I, 411-414. For the relevant passages in Methodius, cf. his *Symposium*, III, 3-6. For Irenaeus see Gustaf Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation* (Philadelphia: Muhlenburg Press, 1959). Also Gerhart B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform. Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 79-81.
14. *Glaphyra in Genesis* i. PG LXIX, col. 17b.

Burghardt observed in his study of Cyril, "redemption is recapitulation and recapitulation means restoration to original state."¹⁵ Cyril's language abounds in words based on roots such as "make," "create," "make alive," "form,"—words which are used to describe creation. When he wishes to speak of the work of Christ he frequently makes compound verbs such as "reform" "re-create" "transform," etc.¹⁶

The corpus of Cyril's exegetical writings is as extensive as that of any of the major expositors of the ancient Church, except perhaps for Origen and Chrysostom. He wrote two major works on the Pentateuch, a complete commentary on Isaiah, another on the minor prophets, and he seems to have commented on most of the books of the New Testament. Of the New Testament commentaries we possess only an extensive work on John and a series of 150 homilies on the Gospel according to Luke. From the other works we have only fragments edited in the nineteenth century by P.E. Pusey.¹⁷

On the basis of his exegetical writings, the most obvious place to begin a study of the Adam-Christ typology would be the *Commentary on Romans*. Unfortunately we only possess fragments here; but a number are extant from Romans 5 and give some inkling of how he approaches the text. A typical passage reads as follows.

We have been condemned to death because of the transgression of Adam, the whole human nature suffering this in him. . . For he was first of the race, but in Christ we bloom again to life. Adam was a type of the coming one, i.e. of Christ. . . .¹⁸

Other fragments from Roman 5 express similar ideas. But there is little that is striking in statements of this sort, nor anything which would give a clue to the importance of this typology for his thought.

When we turn, however, to the *Commentary on John*, and in lesser measure, the *Commentary on Luke* the situation becomes more interesting. For, on examination, we discover that the *Commentary on John* is full of references to Christ as the second Adam, not simply

15. Walter Burghardt, *The Image of God in Man according to Cyril of Alexandria* (The Catholic University of America Press, 1957); for a more complete study of Cyril's understanding of redemption cf. Eduard Weigl, *Die Heilslehre des heiligen Cyril von Alexandrien* ("Forschungen zur christlichen Literatur-und Dogmengeschichte," Vol. V, Nos. 2 and 3; Mainz: Verlag von Kirchenheim & Co., 1905), particularly pp. 52-83 where he discusses the second Adam and pp. 344ff. for his summary of Cyril's understanding of recapitulation; cf. also J. Mahé, "La sanctification d'après saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, X (1909), 30-40, 469-92; L. Janssens, "Notre filiation divine d'après saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovaniensis*, XI (1938), 233-78.
16. Cf. the following examples: "In Christ we are reelemented (*anestoiicheiōmetha*) to that which was in the beginning," *Glaphyra in Genesis* i, PG, LXIX, col. 16; "Reforming (*anamorphoun*) into that which is better," *In Isaiam* iv. 2 (45:9), PG LXX, col. 96 lb; "Trans-elemented (*metastoiicheioun*) again into the ancient human image," *In Joannem* ii.1 (John 1:34), P. E. Pusey (ed.), *Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini in d. Joannis evangelium. Accedunt fragmenta varia necnon tractatus Ad Tiberium Diaconum duo, edidit post Aubertum* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1872), Vol. I, 183, 21-23. "Since he became man he had the whole human nature in himself that he might reestablish (*epanorthōsē*) human nature transforming it (*metaskeuusas*) into what it was in ancient times," *In Joannem* v. 2 (John 7:39), Pusey, I, 692 24ff.
17. For Cyril's writings consult Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (Westminster, 1960), III, 116 ff.
18. *Fragmenta in Epistolam ad Romanos* v. 15, Pusey, Vol. III, 184, 15-30.

in relation to parallels between John and Paul, but as an exegetical tool to give meaning and significance to the Gospel record. We meet it first at John 1:14, for, writes Cyril, "with these words John enters openly on the discussion of the Incarnation."¹⁹ To this point the commentary has been an extended discussion of trinitarian questions using the opening verses of the prologue as text. For example, the section on verse 4a, "that which was made, in him was life," is prefaced with the dogmatic proposition: "That the Son is by nature Life and therefore not originate, but of the essence of God the Father." Verse by verse through the prologue Cyril dealt with questions about the divinity of the Son, the relation of the Son to the Father, the unity of the Godhead, etc. Except for one or two mentions of Adam and citations of Rom. 5, he does not use the Adam-Christ typology to interpret the text.²⁰ But as soon as the narrative comes to the Incarnation he begins to speak of Christ as the second Adam. From the discussion here and elsewhere, it is clear that for Cyril the typology is a way of speaking of the Son as man.

The first part of the verse speaks of the Incarnation, that "in truth he became "flesh," that is, man. In passing he notes that "flesh" here refers to body and soul. But the evangelist adds: "He dwelt among us." This adds something new, for it teaches that he dwelt among men, and because he did, the destiny of all men is somehow bound up with the destiny of Christ.

For in him the community of human nature rises up to his person; for this reason he was named the last Adam giving richly to the common nature of all things that belong to joy, and glory, even as the first Adam (gave) what belongs to corruption and dejection.²¹

Commentators have always had a bit of difficulty with the two parts of the verse; does the Evangelist intend to say two things, or only one? Cyril takes the latter position. But what is interesting is the way he arrives at it. One could argue that Christ did not really become man if he did not dwell among men, and the Apollinarian exegesis could claim that he only assumed "flesh" without body and soul. Cyril wants to say he really lived as a man, so he says he was like Adam. There is no question that Adam was a real man. But he was more

19. *In Joannem* i. 9 (John 1:14), Pusey, I, 138, 4.

20. *In Joannem* 1.9, Pusey, I, 123, 14 ff. For verse 4a, see pp. 74ff.

21. *Ibid.* p. 141, 6-11. The rigor of Cyril's parallelism between Christ and Adam is worth noting. He writes elsewhere: "We therefore became diseased (*nenosekanen*) through the disobedience of the first Adam and his curse, but we have become rich (*peploutēkamen*) through the obedience of the second and his blessing." (*In Joannem* xii [John 19:4] Pusey, III, 63, 3-17) Cf. also passages such as the following: "our forefather Adam . . . did not preserve (*diasōse*) the grace of the Spirit. . . it was necessary that God the Word. . . become man, in order that. . . he might preserve (*diasōsē*) the good permanently to our nature." (*In Joannem* v.2 [John 7: 39], Pusey, I, 693, 13-19); similar construction with the verb *parapempō*: the first man "transmits (*parapempēi*) the penalty to his whole race (*In Joannem* ii 1 [John 1:32,33], Pusey, I, 184, 4). The heavenly man came to earth that he might "transmit (*parapempēsē*) through himself good gifts to the whole race." (*In Joannem* xi, 1 [John 17: 18, 19], Pusey, II, 725, 11-12).

than any other man, for he was primal man and his actions had universal consequences. So was it with Christ; he was truly a man, who lived among men, but he was more, for all men were linked to his fate.

Exegetically, of course, there is no word of Adam in the text. At the same time John does begin his Gospel with the creation, and the Word became man to restore and heal creation. We, writes Cyril, "bore the image of the earthly," i.e. of Adam and could not escape corruption "unless the beauty of the heavenly were impressed upon us. When we became sharers in him we were sealed in his likeness and rise up to the original character of the image after which, according to the Scriptures, we were made."²² Though the text says nothing of Adam, it does speak of creation, and Adam was the first man. For Cyril there are good reasons then to speak here of Christ as the second Adam for he has a similar relation to mankind as did the first Adam.

The direction Cyril's interpretation will take is set at the beginning of the commentary on the verse, "And the Word became flesh." This is not to suggest that every event in the Gospel will be seen in this setting, but it does establish pattern. In chapter 16 of the Gospel Jesus says, "I have overcome the world." These words, says Cyril, mean that Christ appeared "superior to and stronger than" every sin and every obstacle in the world. He did not fall subject to sin, but conquered it as man, as one who dwelled among us. "He became alive once again for us and for our sakes as man

making his own Resurrection the beginning of the conquest over death. . . He conquered as one from us and for us. For if he conquered as God, to us it is nothing, but if as man we are herein conquerors. For he is to us the Second Adam come from heaven, according to the Scripture."²³

In chapter 19 Jesus appears before Pilate. Pilate can find no charge against him. This reminds Cyril of a passage in John 14 which he paraphrases, "The prince of this world comes and he will find nothing in me." Here is certain proof of the great difference between Christ and Adam, for Satan subdued Adam and by his fall led men into sin. If the first Adam had stood before Pilate he could have brought charges against him, but this is not so with Christ.

Just as, then, in Adam he (Satan) conquered the nature of man, showing it to be subject unto sin, so now was he conquered by human nature. For he that was truly God and had no sin in Him was yet man. . . And just as the sentence of condemnation for transgressions went forth over all mankind through one man, the first Adam, so likewise, also the blessing of justification by Christ is extended to all through one man, the second Adam, . . .²⁴

Cyril argues in a similar vein in his dogmatic work *Quod Unus Christus Sit* with reference to the words of Jesus, "My God, my God, why have

22. *In Joannem* i.9 (John 1:12), Pusey, I, 133, 15-19.

23. *Ibid.* xi.2 (John 16:33), Pusey, II, 657, 6-14.

24. *Ibid.* xii (John 19:4), Pusey, III, 63, 3-17.

you forsaken me.”²⁵ Adam could not cry out to the Father, because he was not innocent; but Christ, who is pure and holy brings about a second beginning (*archē*) and is therefore called the second Adam. “I conquered the one who conquered of old, Satan.”

In this same chapter 19 of John, Cyril comments on the title placed on the cross: “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.” Again he returns to the familiar refrain. “Through Adam’s transgression we were all condemned,

but the Savior wiped out the handwriting against us by nailing the title to his cross which very clearly pointed to the death upon the cross which he underwent for the salvation of man.”²⁶

Finally a similar scheme is brought to bear on the death of Christ.

In ancient times the dread presence of death held our human nature in awe. For death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who have not sinned after the likeness of Adam’s transgressions; and we bore the image of the earthly in his likeness, and underwent the death that was fulfilled by the Divine curse. But when the Second Adam appeared among us, the Divine man from heaven, and, contending for all life, won by the death of his own flesh life for all and destroyed the power of corruption, and rose again to life, we were transformed into his image . . . the likeness of him who has made this new path for us that is Christ.²⁷

For Cyril Christ’s death is really the beginning of life, for just as all men died in Adam, so in Christ they are all transformed into life.

These passages give some impression of the way Cyril uses the Adam-Christ typology in his exegesis. Let us now turn to one passage in greater detail.

II

It is perhaps a truism to say that the fathers bound theological and exegetical problems in one bundle. But it is something again to discover which theological problems were wrapped into which exegetical bundles. In matters of Christology, the gospels frequently occasioned controversy, since the picture of Christ presented there did not always harmonize with the Church’s growing theological understanding of Christ.²⁸ A good example of how exegesis and theology are related is the interpretation of the Baptism of Jesus. This narrative posed major difficulties for the ancient Church and offered imposing challenge to the ingenuity and imagination of the expositor. What makes the account of the Baptism of Jesus so interesting for

25. *Chr. Un.*, 756e (Durand, *Deux Dialogues*, 474); see also *Recta Fide Ad Augustas*, 18 (PG 76, 1356c). Frequently Cyril refers to Christ as the second Adam in dogmatic or polemical writings. See *Against Nestorius* III “Human nature was condemned in Adam, but it appeared most righteous and worthy in Christ. One was of the earth, the other of heaven. The first brought disobedience and sin; in the second the first fruit of our race appeared invulnerable to sin and superior to curse, death, judgment and corruption” (A.C.O. I, 1,6, 74, 11-16).

26. *In Joannem* xii (John 19:19), Pusey, III, 84, 25ff.

27. *Ibid.* (John 19:40,41), Pusey, III, 106, 11-25.

28. For statements on the gospels, especially the difference between the synoptics and John see *In Joannem* i (Preface), Pusey, I, 12, 13ff. Cf. Maurice Wiles, *The Spiritual Gospel* (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 13ff and Oscar Cullman, “The Plurality of the Gospels as a Theological Problem in Antiquity,” *The Early Church* (Philadelphia, 1956), 39-54.

the history of exegesis is the way certain motifs persists from earliest times and nevertheless undergo radical re-interpretation as new controversies arise. Indeed the primary question "why does Jesus need to be baptized" arises in the Christian tradition long before the gospels were placed in the canon and the fathers began writing commentaries.²⁹ But though this question arises early, it takes different shape in the hands of Ignatius, Origen, Chrysostom, Augustine, Theodore, or Cyril, for each reads the account of Jesus' Baptism in light of the controversies of the age in which he lived and worked. The Baptism of Jesus is one case where a clear and well defined continuity exists between the development of the gospel tradition and the resulting exegesis which is based on the canonical texts of the gospels.

Mark gives a simple and straightforward account of the Baptism. "It happened at this time that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John." But in Matthew we read that Jesus came to John and "John tried to dissuade him." "Do you come to me?" he said: "I need rather to be baptized by you!" And Jesus replies, "Let it be so for the present; we do well to conform in this way with all that God requires."³⁰ Whatever the precise form of the earliest traditions, it does seem that some Christians were already having difficulty accounting for Jesus' Baptism. Consequently at an early date we begin to discover various kinds of attempts to give a reason for his Baptism, as in the passage from Matthew, or some statement of purpose following the account of Baptism. In Ignatius (*Ephes.* 18:2) we read: "he was baptized, in order that (*hina*) he might cleanse the water by his suffering." Similarly Justin writes that Jesus was not baptized because he needed Baptism, but he was baptized for the sake of mankind.³¹ Most writers in the ancient church saw this problem and tried to cope with it: some said he was baptized to sanctify the water, others said he wished to give us an example of humility, others said he wanted to encourage men to be baptized. The most striking exceptions to the view that Christ did not need Baptism came from Jewish Christians, some gnostics, and a passage in the Manichean *Acta Archelai*. Here Mani draws the obvious conclusion. Questioning his opponent the bishop Archelaus Mani asks: "Is Baptism given for the remission of sins?" Archelaus answers. "Of course."

29. See Herbert Braun, "Entscheidende Motive in den Berichten über die Taufe Jesus von Markus bis Justin," *ZTHK* 50 (1953), 39-43. Braun overstates his case, but his point is well taken. On interpretation of Baptism of Jesus in the second century, especially among gnostics and Jewish Christians, see Walter Bauer, *Das Leben Jesu im Zeitalter der neutestamentlichen Apokryphen* (1909), 114ff; also G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit* (London, 1951).

30. This is not the place to enter on an exegesis of the synoptic and Johannine accounts of the Baptism of Jesus. I have consulted the work of E. Lohmeyer on Matthew and Mark, and W. C. Allen on Matthew in the *ICC*. The difference between Matthew and Mark may perhaps be accounted for by the addition of the birth narratives. How could one who was begotten of the Holy Spirit receive the Spirit at Baptism? (Allen, p. 28); see also Ferdinand Hahn, *Christologische Hoheitstitel* (Göttingen, 1963), 340-346.

31. *Dialogue with Trypho*, 88,4.

Mani: "Then Christ sinned, because he has been baptized?"³² To avoid this implication, the fathers devised elaborate exegetical schemes demonstrating that Jesus' Baptism was necessary even though he had not sinned. With the rise of the Arian controversy the question became acute, because the Baptism of Jesus appeared to be certain evidence that Jesus was not truly God. For if he was God, why did he need Baptism and why did the Spirit have to descend on him. Does not God possess the Spirit by nature?

For Athanasius the Baptism of Jesus is one of a host of problems raised by the Gospels and he does not devote any particular attention to it. But from his exegesis of other sections of the Gospels we could anticipate his approach to the problem. This is confirmed by the one place he touches on the matter, i.e. in connection with the exegesis of Psalm 45:7-8. For here the psalmist speaks of anointing which means sanctification by the Spirit, and this is one aspect of Baptism. Athanasius gives his stock answer: He "is said to be sanctified because now he has become man, and the body that is sanctified is his." But then he goes on: "For when He is now said to be anointed humanly it is we who are anointed in him; since when he is baptized, it is we who are baptized in him."³³ His exegesis, then, includes two elements: his familiar "two scope" exposition which says that certain things in the Gospels are said of Jesus in so far as he is man and others in so far as he is God. Baptism falls in the first category. But his exegesis also accents the importance of the Baptism of Jesus, not for Jesus, but for mankind, for in him we are sanctified and in him we are baptized.

In a sermon preached on the Baptism of Christ Gregory of Nyssa picks up this latter motif. "Today," writes Gregory, "he is baptized by John that (*hina*) he might cleanse him who is defiled, that he might bring the Spirit from above, and exalt man to heaven, that he who had fallen might be raised up . . ."³⁴ Again we note the appearance of the *hina*, i.e. some way accounting for the baptism of Jesus, a reason, why, etc. Similar types of exegesis can be found in Ambrose, Chrysostom, Augustine, to mention a few other commentators on the passage.³⁵

Cyril was well acquainted with the Athanasian solution to the exegetical problems of the Gospels. In his exposition of the Baptism of Jesus he applies this "twofold exegesis" at most points. The Baptism of Jesus, says Cyril, took place after the Incarnation, i.e. after the Logos had become man:

When then before the Incarnation he was in the form and equality of

32. *Hegemonius Acta Archelai*, 60 (Ed. by Charles H. Beeson, GCS, Bd. 16 [Leipzig, 1906], pp. 88-9.

33. *Oratio Contra Arianos I*, 47ff. On general problem, cf. Wiles, *op. cit.*, 112-147.

34. *In Baptismum Christi* (PG 46, 580e).

35. Ambrose, *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam*, II, 83ff. Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew*, xii (PG 47, 201ff.). Augustine, *Homilies on John*, IV, 13.

the Father, but in the time of the Incarnation he received the Spirit from heaven and was sanctified as others.³⁶

Prior to the Incarnation it would have been improper to speak of the descent of the Spirit, but after He has become man such attributions are appropriate. But Cyril does not simply follow the traditional exegesis in his treatment of the Baptism. It is as though he sets forth the traditional Alexandrian approach in an attempt to demonstrate his orthodoxy. However, having done this, he then sets out on a course of his own, an approach shaped by his view of Christ as the second Adam. "In the Holy Scriptures, we read," says Cyril, "that man was made in the image and likeness of God." Through the descent of the Holy Spirit man was "sealed with the Divine Image." The Spirit gives life and impresses God's image on man. Man, however, did not live according to God's commandment, but, perverted by the wiles of Satan, disregarded God's law. When this happened God "recalled the grace given him" (*anaprattō*) and declared "you are dust and you shall return to dust." But the Spirit did not yet depart from man, even though the likeness was defaced, though the divine "stamp" had grown fainter and fainter. Corruption increased until mankind reached a day when the Spirit could no longer bear to dwell among men.

But when the human race had reached to an innumerable multitude, and sin had power over all men, plundering each man's soul in numerous ways, his nature was stripped of the ancient gift; the Spirit departed altogether, and the reasonable creature fell into most extreme folly, ignorant even of its Creator.³⁷

Now Cyril proceeds immediately to the text. He first notes that the "demiurge" after enduring man's folly for a long time, had mercy on the corrupted world and determined "to transform (*metastoiceioun*) humanity to its ancient image through the Spirit. For in no other fashion was it possible that the Divine stamps should again shine forth in it (human nature) as it did at first."³⁸ For a genuine transformation to take place something more was needed than an Adam, but at the same time the original conditions had to be met. The first man was of the earth and, possessing the power to choose good or evil, chose evil. He falls to earth, conquered by corruption and death, and transmits

his loss to the whole race. Therefore since the first Adam did not preserve the gift given to him by God, God the Father was minded to send us from heaven the second Adam.³⁹

It would seem that this fulfills the conditions required by the sin of Adam, for now God sends a second man who stands in a similar relation to the whole human race as did the first Adam. But what is to certify that the second Adam will not choose disobedience as did

36. *In Joannem* ii.1 (John 1: 32,33), Pusey I, 179 (20-23).

37. *Ibid.*, Pusey, I, 183, 12ff.

38. *Ibid.*, *lms.* 18ff.

39. *Ibid.*, 184, 10-12.

the first; what assurance is there that another fall will not take place; and why should the Spirit return to mankind if he may soon be chased away again?

At this point the real power of the Alexandrian theology enters the picture, for Cyril argues that the second Adam comes from heaven. He continues: "He (God) sends in our likeness his own son who is by nature without change or variation, who does not know sin, that as by the disobedience of the first we became subject to divine wrath, so through the obedience of the second, we might both escape the curse and the evils from it might come to nothing."⁴⁰ This passage is interesting, for Cyril here juxtaposes the phrase "second Adam" with "Son of God." Up to this point the imagery of Adam and the logic of his argument demanded that the second Adam be a man like Adam, made in the likeness of God; but suddenly we discover that "second Adam" is a way of talking about Christ as God, not simply about him as man. By translating "second Adam" into son of God Cyril seems to say that Christ is indeed a man, but at the same time he is more than man for he is God's Son. He is man in the same way that Adam is man and for this reason receives the Spirit as "one of us" (*heis ex hēmōn*), that by "receiving it (the Spirit) as man he might preserve it (the Spirit) in our nature and might once again root in us the grace which departed from us."⁴¹ To effectively restore the image of God a man must come forth like Adam, "one of us," but this man cannot be an ordinary man for this would not be an advance beyond the first Adam. He must be God's son.

Since our forefather Adam, who was turned aside by deceit to disobedience and sin did not preserve (*diēsōse*) the grace of the Spirit, and thus in him the whole nature eventually lost the good given it by God, it was necessary that God the Word, who does not change, become man, in order that by receiving as man he might preserve the good permanently to our nature.⁴²

The problem Cyril faced here is really the problem of ancient Christology. How can one who is truly God, and one with the Father, truly be man. By the use of the Adam Christ typology Cyril found an image which could give expression to this conviction. For by calling Christ the second Adam he said that he is both man and God. Hence he can be baptized and the Spirit can descend on him as a man. But he is more than Adam, for he is the "heavenly man," which is to say he is God's son. No doubt this language of image and symbol would not satisfy the quest of the ancient Church for other categories, but it did give to Cyril a way of talking about the mystery of the Incarnation. It allowed him to speak in apparently contradictory fashion as, for instance, the phrase "Christ suffered impassibly" or the follow-

40. *Ibid.*, lns. 13ff.

41. *Ibid.*, lns. 21ff.

42. *Ibid.*, Pusey I, 693, 13-19.

ing passage where he says that the Son who is the Life actually dies.

Therefore through himself he receives the Spirit for us and renews to our nature the ancient Good. . . . Therefore, being Life by nature, he died in the flesh for our sakes, that he might conquer death for us and raise up our whole nature with himself; for we were all in him since he was made man. So does he also receive the Spirit for our sakes, that he may sanctify our whole nature. For he did not come to profit himself but to be to all of us the beginning and the way and the door of the good things of heaven.⁴³

In Cyril's hands the Baptism of Jesus becomes the descent of the Spirit to the second primal man who is the beginning of a new race of man.⁴⁴ In the first creation the Spirit descended on Adam and imprinted the divine image on him; now he comes to another man, more perfect than the first, without spot or blemish, and the Spirit again dwells in mankind. In Christ mankind has a new beginning, but this beginning is not a simple return to the first creation, for the second Adam far surpasses the first and opens to men a new way which was not known before.

III

The Baptism of Jesus was an exegetical problem for the fathers, but as we have noted, this does not mean that it was solely an exegetical problem. In fact what gave the exegetical question particular poignancy was that it was cast within the frame of the theological questions of the ancient Church. Similarly the typology of Adam-Christ was based on the exegesis of Romans 5 and I Cor. 15, but at least as early as Irenaeus, and perhaps earlier, this exegetical motif was put to work solving a theological and ecclesiastical problem.⁴⁵ In Cyril the Adam-Christ typology was a remarkable instrument to weld together his theological and exegetical concerns. Cyril was writing at the beginning of the fifth century and his episcopate was troubled by difficulties between Christians and Jews. Socrates, the church historian, reports a conflict between Christians and Jews under Cyril and his account breathes something of the animosity which must have existed at the time.⁴⁶ Several scholars such as Jouassard and Kerrigan have suggested that Cyril's involvement with the Jews may have played a formative role in shaping his exegesis.⁴⁷

It is well known that Alexandria, in the first century A.D., had had a massive Jewish population, so large in fact that Philo reported

43. *Ibid.*, Pusey I, 184, 30-185,11.

44. Earlier I noted some examples from the history of the interpretation of the Baptism of Jesus. Space does not allow a fuller discussion of this tradition but the exegesis of Theodore of Mopsuestia should be noted. See J.-M. Vosté, (ed.) *Theodori Mopsuesteni Commentarius in Evangelium Johannis Apostoli*, p. 47; *Versio*, p. 33.

45. On the exegesis of Romans 5 see Karl H. Schelkle, *Paulus Lehrer der Väter*, 162ff. Schelkle is, however, interested primarily in questions of original sin.

46. H. E., vii, 13.

47. Kerrigan, *op. cit.*, 385-387; Jouassard, "Cyril von Alexandrien," *EAC*, III, 506-508.

that Jews occupied two of the five districts of the city.⁴⁸ Estimates vary, but many feel that a million Jews must have resided in Alexandria at that time. For the later history of Alexandria, as well as Judaism in the Roman Empire, we are not so well informed. As a result of Jewish uprisings and wars with the Romans there can be no question that their numbers diminished and their influence waned. But it is unlikely that they ceased to play any role in the Empire or failed to exert any influence on the Church. If nothing else the frequent polemical barbs against Jews in exegetical and sermonic literature, as well as treatises written against them, indicate that the Jews may have played a more important role—at least negatively—in the life and thought of the ancient Church.⁴⁹ The growing interest in Hellenistic Judaism, best represented in the monumental work of Erwin Goodenough, continues to remind us that Jews did not simply vanish after the fall of Jerusalem. Only three years ago another synagogue was discovered at Sardis, and it is reportedly as large as a football field.⁵⁰

In this light it is hardly surprising to find frequent references to the Jews in Cyril's Paschal Homilies⁵¹ as well as a persistent interest in his exegetical works of the relation between Christ and the Law, or the New Testament to the Old.

On the very first page of Cyril's work, *De Adoratione*, a dialogue between Cyril and Palladius, Cyril has Palladius approach holding the gospels of Matthew and John. Palladius says that he has labored hard and long but he is still not able to determine what Jesus means in Matthew when he says: "Do not suppose that I have come to abolish the Law and the prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to complete." (Matthew 5:17). Similarly he cannot understand the words recorded in John: "But the time approaches when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem . . . when those who are real worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth." (John 4:21-24). What difficulty do you see here, asks Cyril. It would seem, replies Palladius, that we should dispense with the old covenant, for in Hebrews we read that the "day will come when I will establish a

48. Philo, *In Flaccum* 8; on Alexandria see H. I. Bell, "Alexandria" *JEA* 13(1927), 171ff.; Schubart, "Alexandria," *EAC* I, 271-283; on Jews in Roman Empire, E. Schuerer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ* (New York; 1891); Jean Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire Romain* (Paris, 1914); for Alexandria, Vol. II, 226-230 of Schuerer, and Vol. I, 209ff. of Juster; for a more recent study, see Michael Avi-Yonah, *Geschichte der Juden im Zeitalter des Talmud in den Tagen von Rom und Byzanz* (Berlin, 1962).

49. For example: Eusebius' *Demonstration*; Chrysostom's *Homilies against the Jews*. In this connection see Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel* ("Bibliothèque des Ecoles Française D'Athènes et de Rome," no. 166; Paris, 1948), 166ff.; Leipoldt, "Antisemitismus," *EAC*, I, 473-476.

50. Erwin Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York, 1953ff.); on the synagogue at Sardis see *American Schools of Oriental Research Bulletin*, No. 170 (April, 1963), 38ff; also the newsletter from Sardis by the ASOR, August 10, 1965 which dates the building of the synagogue between 175-210 A.D.; it was later rebuilt between 350-400 A.D.

51. *Hom. pasch.* I, (PG 77, 420aff.); *Hom. pasch.* 6, 6-12 (PG 77, 513dff.), *Hom. pasch.* 20, 4 (PG 77, 848bff.).

new covenant." How, asks Palladius, can these statements be reconciled? Should we not dispense wholly with the ancient customs? Cyril replies: "What a vast question you raise." Cyril then suggests that the things of the old covenant are not valueless, especially when they lead to *theoria*, i.e. spiritual contemplation. For they are types of the new. But, asks Palladius, why not continue to offer bulls if the old law is not destroyed but only fulfilled. Cyril cites Jesus: "If you believed in Moses, believe in me." He came to fulfil the old and to transform the type into the truth. It is like a painter or sculptor who first makes a model in wax or on paper, but the work itself comes after the model. The model is not useless, for by preparing the model the artist insures that he will have a better finished product.⁵²

Cyril was forced by circumstance to answer the question of the relation between the Old and the New Testaments. He had to demonstrate that Christians had a right to use the Old Testament, and that it properly belonged to them; but he also had to show why it was not sufficient and how it had been surpassed by the revelation in Christ. For in Christ "all things became new." Recently a monograph by the Spanish Jesuit Armendariz, entitled *El Nuevo Moises*, has thoroughly examined the relation between Christ and Moses.⁵³ Armendariz shows that Cyril interprets Christ in terms of Moses by contrasting and comparing the two and outlines the elaborate typology which Cyril constructed in order to do this. Many of the same considerations we observed in the Adam-Christ typology emerge here, especially Cyril's attempt to see Christ as a second Moses, but he recognizes also that Christ is qualitatively different since he is divine. Armendariz interprets the specific matter of Moses in terms of the larger question of the relation of the Old and New Testament in Cyril's thought and the importance of this question vis-a-vis the Jews.

In this passage from the *Glaphyra on Genesis* and in Cyril's view of Christ as the New Moses the question of "newness" comes to the fore. This is also one of the leading motifs within the Adam-Christ typology. Though the element of return, restoration, re-formation may seem to predominate in the logic of the type, it is this accent on "newness" which frequently catches Cyril's attention. "He (Christ) has been made our first fruits, and first born, and second Adam; for which reason it is said 'In Him all things have become new'; for having put off the oldness that was in Adam, we have gained the newness that is in Christ." He speaks frequently of Christ as "the beginner of a new race of men," for in him mankind has a new head. Commenting on John 13:36, "Whither I go you cannot follow me now, but you shall follow afterwards," he says that Jesus is speaking of

52. PG 68, 133ff.

53. Luis M. Armendariz, *El Nuevo Moises, Dinamica Cristocentrica en la Tipologia de Cirilo Alejandro* ("Estudios Onienses," Series III. Vol. 5; Madrid, 1962).

his return to the father, for there he was to present himself as "the first fruits of humanity . . . for he renewed for us a way of which the human race knew nothing before." This new way is the Resurrection from the dead.

The Saving Passion of Christ is the first means that ever brought release from death, and the Resurrection of Christ has become to the saints the beginning of their good courage in meeting it. As therefore our natural life had failed as yet to crush the power of death, and had not even destroyed the terror it casts over our souls, the disciples were still somewhat feeble in the presence of dangers.⁵⁴

Cyril discovers this same motif in the burial of Jesus, for John says of the tomb: "in the garden (there was) a new tomb where a man has never been laid." Cyril immediately latches on to the word "new": "The writer of the Gospel says that this sepulchre in the garden was new; as if to signify to us by a

type and figure of the fact that Christ's death is the harbinger and beginning of our entry into paradise. For he himself entered as a forerunner for us. . . . And by the newness of the sepulchre is meant the untrodden and strange pathway of the restoration from death to life and the intended innovation again corruption signified by Christ."⁵⁵

Finally, Cyril's Easter homilies, mentioned above in connection with his anti-Jewish polemic, give another testimony to this aspect of Cyril's thought. He writes: "Once again it is springtime." In a lyrical passage he describes the burst of new life in spring. The gloom of winter is gone, bright rays of sun break forth lighting up mountains and forest, woods and glades. Fields are crowned with blooms. The shepherd rejoices, blowing his flute, as he leads his flock to freshly sprouting grass. The grapevines shoot forth new sprouts, reaching for the sky like tiny fingers for the sun. The meadows are resplendent with color which gladdens the husbandman. "However," he continues,

it would be nothing to praise spring for these things alone, for what makes spring more worthwhile than any other season is this: along with nature, the nature of the one who rules over all things, I mean man, is raised up. For springtime brings to us the Resurrection of our Savior, through whom all are re-formed to newness of life, fleeing the alien corruption of death. . . . In this time of his love for us, i.e., when he became man on account of us, he reformed the whole nature in himself to newness of life, and transformed it to what it was from the beginning.⁵⁶

Perhaps this passage from Cyril's *Paschal Homilies* carries us

54. *Homilies on Luke*, 11 (ed. R. Payne Smith; Oxford, 1859), pp. 47-8.

55. For the passage on John 13:36, see Pusey II, 392, 12-17. On the Resurrection, *In Joannem* xii (John 19:40,41), Pusey, III, 105, 27-106,7. It may be that this accent on newness is more characteristic of Cyril's view of recapitulation than that of Irenaeus. As Wingren observes (*Man and the Incarnation*, p. 152, "Irenaeus fights shy of such passages as II Cor. 5:17 and Gal. 6:15 (which speak of new creation) and hardly even uses them." But he goes on to say that Irenaeus had other ways of working these ideas into his thought.

56. PG, 77, 581a-d. See Hugo Rahner, "Osterliche Frühlingslyrik bei Kyrillos von Alexandria," *Paschatis Sollemnia* ed. by Balthasar Fischer & Johannes Wagner (Basel, 1959), 68-75.

far afield from a discussion of the Adam-Christ typology and Cyril's exegesis. But here Cyril uses three highly characteristic words (*anakainizō*, *anamorphoō*, *anastoicheioō*)⁵⁷ which are intimately linked with the view of Christ sketched above. There is greater unity here than first appears, for certain motifs persist through the Adam-Christ typology, Christ as the New Moses, springtime as restoration to newness of life through the Resurrection, an anti-Jewish polemic, and a preoccupation with the relation between the Old and New Testaments. We have only cited a few instances and suggested some implications. However, if there be unity here, it can hardly be peripheral to Cyril's thought, for such grand themes do not spring forth by chance. How this emphasis on the "new creation" shapes Cyril's total view of Christ has only been suggested here; the task of working this out in greater detail still has to be done. But our study has shown that there is an intimate relation between Cyril's exegesis and his theology.

IV

Cyril does not stand alone in interrelating exegesis and theology. What we see in his use of a biblical symbol to deal with theological problems is not the exception among the fathers; it is more like the rule. For Cyril lived and wrote in an age which saw theology exegetically and exegesis theologically. Perhaps this is the only kind of exegesis practised by the fathers. Their work moved across a broad and richly colored canvas with many hues and shades, and it cannot be reduced to the catch phrases of the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. But amidst the diversity and variety one thing does persist, and this is the conviction that the Bible was a book of faith, not a textbook of history; that it emerged in the Church and found its continuing existence in the life of Christians, in Christian worship, in preaching. For these and other reasons Cyril and other fathers believed that the Bible had to be interpreted in terms of the Church's faith and life. That is to say it had to be interpreted spiritually or theologically. Its great themes are God, Christ, the Spirit, the Church, the spiritual life.

What distinguishes the fathers, with some rare exceptions, is not whether they interpret the Scriptures in these terms or in literal-historical terms, though all to some degree began here; what distinguishes them from one another is the particular emphasis they made within this general understanding. For some the Scriptures set forth the inner workings of the spiritual life, for others they outlined the shape of the moral imperative of Christian faith, others saw in the Bible the great types of the Church and sacraments, and others read it theologically. Cyril falls somewhere within the scope of these

57. PG, 77, 581c-d.

latter emphases. After comparing a number of passages from Origen and Cyril on the pentateuch Kerrigan remarks. "The chief difference between them resides in their leanings; Origen prefers moralizing explanations, whereas Cyril revels in theological speculations." (427) And more recently Doutreleau, the editor of a *Commentary on Zachariah* by Didymus the Blind, observed of Cyril, "Though not as balanced as S. Ephraim, he nevertheless uses, as Ephraim, a stricter typology to mark the relations between the old and the new Testaments. He is more theologian than mystic, and more an exegete than an allegorist."⁵⁸

As historians we have only begun to discover the kinds of categories which are appropriate to the exegetical writings of the fathers. Certainly it has taken us too long to realize that the *loci* or *tracts* of western dogmatic theology are not appropriate to a fourth century Anatolian or a fifth century Alexandrian. The sheer quantity of writings on non-dogmatic subjects should have alerted us that there is more to patristic thought than the histories of dogma have led us to believe. We have come to the fathers with un-believable narrowness. We are dealing here with writings which arise out of a religious community with a living tradition, liturgy, sacred writings, sacred seasons, etc. As Mircea Eliade reminds us: "A religious phenomenon will only be recognized as such if it is grasped at its own level, that is to say, if it is studied as something religious. To try to grasp the essence of such phenomenon by means of physiology, psychology, economics, linguistics, art or any other study is false; it misses the one unique and irreducible element in it—the element of the sacred."⁵⁹ This may say a bit too much for our purposes, but it calls our attention to the kind of milieu in which the fathers lived.

Eliade's comments are very much to the point when we look at the fathers. For here we find the language of religious symbolism, the rich and varied range of metaphor, imagery, which crowd the pages of the Bible: Good Shepherd, Light, Way, Vine, Bread, Father, Morning Star, Paschal Lamb, Root of Jesse, Key of David, and second Adam. These same symbols crowd the pages of the commentaries and permeate the mystical and ascetical writings. It may be that this web of language and symbol, beautiful and intricate as it is, is as much a vehicle of the thought of the ancient Church as the more familiar language of theology and dogmatics. In any case we can never find out until we explore the exegetical writings; and for this reason the exegesis of the fathers is rightly called a frontier in Church History.

58. Louis Doutreleau (ed.) *Didyme L'Aveugle, Sur Zacharie* ("Sources Chrétiennes," No. 83; Paris, 1962), p. 38.

59. Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1958), p. xi.