

THE CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THEOLOGY

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The answer to the question concerning the possibility, necessity and legitimation of a contextualization of theology, depends on the answer to the question regarding theology itself.

The answer to the question “What is theology?” is not an easy one, because different answers, which sometimes exclude each other, can lead to confusion.

Sometimes one speaks about the theology of the Old Testament or of the New Testament; a theology of Paul¹, John and of the other apostles. Even Jesus Christ has been called a theologian². Others speak about a theological approach to matters of politics, economics, culture, art and race, because their purpose is to approach Christianly the issues in these realms.

Karl Barth has written about theology as a function of the church. He distinguishes between theology as a testimony of faith and life, as worship, and as a science³. As a scholarly endeavour theology is distinct from other forms of scholarship, but not in principle — only in a practical sense — because theology does not have a basis of knowledge which is distinct from other forms of science, nor does it have a field of investigation different from other fields⁴. Theology exists because there is grace, which justifies. It exists because there is talk about God in the church⁵.

Barth gives theology a position over against philosophy, which, as philosophy, is not Christian, and if it is Christian is not philosophy any more. There is no philosophical basis for theology, because theology receives its own presuppositions from outside the realm of science, philosophy and human endeavours, i.e. from God who reveals himself in Jesus Christ⁶.

Augustine, following the Roman author Terentius Varro, defined theology as “de divinitate ratio sive sermo”, i.e. a rational discourse or a talk about divinity⁷. In this definition a theoretical and a non-theoretical element are connected with each other. It is “ratio”, i.e. theoretical, systematic, scientific knowledge. As a talk it is a practical explanation, which should be believed. The subject matter of investigation is “divinitas” or divinity. This implies a discourse about the structure of the divine, of God, his possibilities in the difference, coherence and unity of his attributes.

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This idea of theology is based on the one hand upon revelation in Scripture, and on the other hand upon the rationality of the divine Being, who is open to rational investigation by theoretical thought or reason. This idea has its source in Greek philosophy: in Parmenides, Plato and Aristotle⁴.

Under the influence of Philippus Melancthon and Theodoor Beza a form of Protestant Scholasticism was developed, which has been influential in orthodox Protestant Christianity up to the present day⁵. Theologians have drawn a line from God as a supreme, intellectual or rational being, to Scripture, which is seen as a divine revelation of a system of truths or propositions, and from there to the confessions of the church as ecclesiastical reflections on the truth of Scripture. Finally, theology has been seen as a rational account of the content of the confessions and of Scripture. God is rational, his creation is rational and his Word in Scripture is rational¹⁰.

The above-mentioned positions make it clear to us that the character and content of contextualization of theology depends on the idea of theology that undergirds the scholarly activity of a theologian. Besides, several issues come to the fore; the term "theology" is used for non-theoretical and for theoretical activities and their results.

In a non-theoretical sense it involves the act of faith, and the whole life of faith in its ramifications regarding the aspects of Christian life. It is belief in God, trusting him upon his Word in Scripture and living Christianly.

In a theoretical sense it means, according to Karl Barth, an account of the content of the proclamation of the church in an attempt at comprehension and exposition, at investigation and instruction. The "Subject" is the Christian church as a community¹¹. Augustine and Protestant Scholasticism in all its shades assume that God is the object of theological thought via Scripture, because God is a rational Being, whose divinity can be analysed in a theoretical mode of thinking¹². This assumption brings God under the sovereignty of human theoretical thinking and places him in fact in the same framework as his creation, of which the structures can be investigated, and its empirical reality clarified. It is tantamount to shaping a god in man's own image, instead of subjecting oneself to God - in awe and astonishment. One does not understand that the formula "fides quaerens intellectum" should be replaced by the expression "fides quaerens deum".

We should go in another direction. Our thesis is that theology is a scholarly discipline concerning the aspect of faith as of the aspects of created reality, within the whole order of creation and of societal forms. It is based on a God - and worldview, and rooted in religion. Its origin and direction are determined by religion and man's worldview.

Its activity is a theoretical-logical one, i.e. a critical investigation of the life of faith in communal relationships, its content, object and norm. As a theoretical reflection it tries to comprehend and to clarify the structure of faith in a logical-analytical

way¹³.

We can formulate it in another way, too. Theologizing presupposes a subject who theologizes, a norm according to which one theologizes, the theologizing activity, its field of investigation and its results. As a theoretical reflection it presupposes man who believes, the content of faith, its origin and direction. The subject of faith and of theology is man who stands before the face of God, who believes in God, and subjects himself to God in accepting the Word of God as it has been documented in the Old and New Testament as it has been revealed in God's creation, and as it is incarnate in Jesus Christ.

This should not be understood in an individualistic sense. Man who theologizes stands in a community of scholars, who form a part of the community of believers and who participate in the same God -, world - and life - view, rooted in Jesus Christ, going in the direction of the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God in the struggle between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Darkness.

Although man's religion, world- and life-view, life of faith and theology form a coherent totality, they are nevertheless distinct from each other. One is not allowed to elevate a theological statement to the status of an article of a confession of faith, or relegate a faithful surrender to God to the status of a theoretical concept which can be disputed, accepted or rejected in a theoretical way.

Theology does not give faith, or provide the norms for faith. The norms for faith can only be known via Scripture. The activity of faith itself is a positive answer to the Word of God in Scripture. It is obedience to the norms given by God, and finding certainty concerning man's life, the creation in which he lives, the history in which he participates and the future which is promised to him by God. The basis is self-surrender to God. Theology as a theoretical reflection upon the norms of faith, the faith-response of the believing community and the interaction between these two, should be qualified as pistology. There is no "logos", and no theoretical reflection possible upon the Being of God or upon the divinity of God. Only within a pagan framework is theology, as theo-ontology, possible. However this idea should be rejected because it includes the idea of the rationality of being and the legitimation of theology as a science concerning being as being.

The whole idea of being is a mythical idea, created by man, who has made reason the sovereign ruler of the universe. This does not mean that the idea of being as we find it in the philosophy of Martin Heidegger and, following him, in the theology of Rudolf Bultmann is a legitimate alternative, because both scholars to a certain extent accept the presuppositions of rationalism. To it they add a higher and more profound level, which is only accessible by participating in it in an existential experience; of this an existentialistic interpretation gives a preliminary insight via an existentialistic philosophy or theology, which clarifies the predicament of man in his freedom¹⁴.

Faith, as an attitude of certainty directed towards God, who transcends the boundaries of createdness, is only possible because man is created with a function of faith, according to which he responds to God and his will as documented in Scripture. Man can refuse, too. In this case he tries to find other gods, norms and ways of life. He seeks the basic certainty for his life somewhere else. He forms another world-view by surrendering himself to other powers. The bible calls it unbelief, or belief in other gods. Man can reflect upon that kind of faith, too, in a theoretical — logical attitude. The result is that in distinction from, and over against, Christian theology, stands non-Christian theology, as in Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and tribal religions. Even the theoretical reflection of Ludwig Feuerbach upon human faith, in which he comes to the conclusion that theology is anthropology, is a form of negative theology, or better, a form of pistology in a non-Christian sense. These forms of theology are also rooted in a world-view and a religious orientation. One cannot deny the theological character of the scholarly activities in the realms of “kalam”, “fiqh” and “tasawwuf” in Islam. The development in Mahayana Buddhism, where a shift took place from the belief in Buddha as the Enlightened One, to Buddhahood, is a development of faith with a theology as a theoretical reflection upon it.

The acknowledgment of these facts makes contextualization even more complex, because it is not only contextualization of Christian theology but also of every non-Christian theology, and a contextualization between theologies in dialogue with a missionary perspective from any possible religious conviction.

It has a religious starting point — because man finds his foundations in the religious surrender to the living God, or to other Gods. It exists within the framework of a world- and life-view which is rooted in man's religion. It finds its expression in the attitude of faith via which man directs himself in certainty to God, or to his own gods. It is guided by the God-given norms for faith rooted in the central commandment of love, or by man-made norms. It is the way in which the theoretical reflection upon the aspect of faith, as a mode of created reality, takes place. Keeping the above-mentioned aspects in mind, we come to the following characteristics of the contextualization of theology, and of contextual theology.

Firstly, it is a time-bound human activity with its limitations within the boundaries of the God-given order for creation. It is not a divine activity, nor a participation in divine life, nor a formulation of a set of eternal truths.

Secondly, it has a historical character. I take history in its broadest and deepest sense: the development of the covenant of God with mankind in the context of the development of the Kingdom of God, which embraces heaven and earth, according to God's plan for his creation. The turningpoints in this history are Adam's fall into sin, and the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and elevation of Jesus Christ. Both events are decisive for the whole course of history; also for theology.

Orienting ourselves to the root of our existence, and to God as the origin of our existence (and of the existence of the cosmos) we can live with the certainty in our

hearts that contextualization of theology is possible, because God has previously oriented himself to mankind and to this world. He still penetrates this world with the power of his Word of grace in Jesus Christ. It is important to maintain and to stress this reality. After the realities of Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen and Mathausen, and in today's realities of torture, oppression, famine and ABC weapons, life with God and theology with God is not only a possibility, but also a reality, because God is not the self-concealing God, or a hidden God. This makes contextual theology also a theology of hope in the context of racial oppression, the poverty of nations and a secular way of life.

Thirdly, contextual theology is characterized by a specific culture or civilization. Theology in the European-American civilization cannot be repeated in the civilizations of Asia, Africa and Southern America. There is a difference in history, social life, religious convictions, political realities and ecclesiastical developments.

Lastly, contextualization of theology always has a communal character, as it develops in a community with ecclesiastical, confessional, economic, social, ethnic and other aspects.

The Context of Theology in History

For practical reasons I want to limit myself to the development of theology in Western civilization. Keeping in mind that theology cannot be identified with Christian theology, we discover that the beginning of theology did not take place in the Christian era, but in the Greek world before Christ. Even the term and the concept are not part of a Christian heritage. They are derived from the Greek philosophical world, which existed in its own context outside the realm of God's revelation in the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. Its content is determined by the intertwining of pagan religions, rational philosophy and political-religious guidance and expectation. It gave birth to a triple concept of theology: the mythological theology of pagan polytheism; the physical theology of the philosophers, who gave a rational doctrine about the nature of the gods- and the political theology of the state, which gave the Greek states — and, later on — the Roman empire — their religious basis. In the context of antagonism between physical or philosophical theology and mythical theology, the idea of theology as a scientific discourse about being as being has been developed. In this sense Aristotle understood theology as the highest branch of philosophy, working according to logical laws and giving scientific evidence about the archè, or principle of all beings. In this sense theology was a divine activity and a part of the divine life of man. It was rooted in the nature of the perfect, immobile and intellectual being. It was a logos about the being of the divine. This logos is a divine logos and gives man a divine way of life¹⁵.

This philosophical theology had a redemptive function: to lead man out of the bondage of the world of the gods — the world of illusion — and out of the uncertainty and anxiety of daily life, in the direction of true human life, which is theoretical life as divine life. It found its expression in education and in the idea

of “encyclopedia”, which had an enormous influence in the world of the educated leaders¹⁶.

This idea of theology has been contextualized in the Christian era. On the one hand, it stood in the context of the hellenistic-Roman culture against all forms of mythological thinking and polytheistic belief in the gods of the ancient world. On the other hand, it stood in the context of the biblical message. A transformation took place. However this transformation was a synthesis between the gospel and ancient philosophical thinking. Hence, it was a blend of pagan philosophy and Christian belief via the theory of the Logos under Stoic influence, allegorical exegesis under influence of Philo Alexandrinus, the idea of revelation and universal education by God and the idea of nature and the supernatural. The basic idea which undergirded these forms of synthesis was the idea that God had brought himself into a multiform context with man, which opened the door for human contextualization both in practical life and in theoretical discourses. The identification of the Stoic idea of the divine Logos with the biblical notion of the Logos (in John 1) led to the conception of the revelation of the Logos in the history of Greek philosophy. In this way Christians defended the unity of truth between pagan philosophy and biblical revelation¹⁷; however, in a critical sense, because not every philosophy or philosophical idea was acceptable. Materialism and skepticism were excluded. With this approach the Apologists tried to create a place for the Christian believer and the Christian faith in the ancient world.

As for the church of that period, an unacceptable form of contextualization took place, where Christians were absorbed by the gnostic movement with its syncretistic theology, world-view and religion; this movement was based upon a dualistic theology in which the way of salvation was the way of “gnosis”, via which the divine spark of the human soul returned to its heavenly dwelling-place in the “pleroma” as the divine reality under the highest and hidden God. The person and work of Jesus Christ was understood in the context of gnostic mythology.

Here again we discover the idea of mythical theology.

The Catechetical school of Alexandria stressed the idea of God as the educator of mankind¹⁸. This school came to another form of contextualization: God educated the Greeks via philosophy, the Jews via the Old Testament and the Christians via the whole Bible.

Philosophical reason and scriptural authority were the two sources of truth. Clemens and his school aimed at a theoretical understanding of the content of the Bible with the help of philosophical categories borrowed from the Greeks; to justify this concept he used an allegorical exegesis of the Bible. In this school the leaders made a distinction between three kinds of people: the “hylici”, or materialistic people, who accepted mythical theology, the “psychici”, or common believers, who accepted the Bible in faith; and the “pneumatici”, or theologians, who understood that we have to reason and to justify our faith with the help of reason, so that we achieve gnosis as theoretical insight in the content of revelation¹⁹.

From this we could conclude that theoretical reflection gives us a deeper insight into God and his dealings with this world, than does a faithful surrender to the living God; All aristocratic and elitist group should give guidance to the Christian community. The pre-Christian idea that theoretical knowledge makes man truly human gave Christianity a feature which it has almost never lost.

“Fides quaerens intellectum”, instead of “fides quaerens Deum”, became a basic concept.

A last and most influential form of contextualization was developed with the basic motive of nature and the supernatural. It found its mature and well balanced formulation in the thought of Thomas Aquinas. In his “Summa Theologica” and his “Summa contra Gentiles” he investigates the problem of salvation and destination. Both aspects, according to Thomas, depend on knowledge of the truth concerning God. We need a holy doctrine based upon revelation. For this reason man has received the light of natural reason which has its climax in philosophy.

The highest branch of philosophy is natural theology. Man has also received the light of divine revelation in Scripture. Supernatural theology investigates the content of Scripture and the doctrine of the church. Both are accepted by faith. The idea of salvation for man determines the idea of revelation and the idea of rational knowledge. Its context is the situation of the whole of mankind. Muslims and pagans who do not have Holy Scripture have the possibility of using the means of natural reason; Jews have the Old Testament and Christians both Old and New Testament. Although natural reason and supernatural faith are distinct from each other, both are coherent and serve the divine purpose of the salvation of mankind. In the context of “nature and the supernatural”, the church can bring the Gospel of salvation to man²⁰.

The basic motive of “nature and the supernatural” is not a theoretical one, but a religious motive which embraces the horizon of human experience and pervades the whole of life. Its purpose is to create a unity of religious life, world-view and theoretical endeavours for all who stand in the same faith. It also opens the door for a dialogue with the world outside the church.

However, what in fact happened is the formation of a synthesis between Greek philosophy and the content of Scripture, so that Scripture is interpreted in the light of Greek philosophy and Greek philosophy in the light of Scripture. It gave birth to the problem of reason and faith, philosophy and supernatural theology. It opened the door for a rationalisation of faith, because God as Intellect is a rational being, the order for this world is a rational order and Scripture can only be understood in its deepest sense via speculative theology. Because of the relative autonomy and neutrality of the realm of nature and reason it was possible to accept other forms of philosophy besides the Aristotelian philosophy. For this reason Maurice Blondel could give a modern form of apologetics in his philosophy of action, and Gabriel Marcel, Michael Marlet and others could use a form of existentialistic philosophy as a basis and preparation for Christian faith and Christian theology²¹.

At the end of the Middle Ages this form of contextualization became more and more questionable. It resulted in a new development, which made clear that reason and faith, as two authorities in connection with each other, could not be maintained. On the one hand, modern man with his belief in reason came into existence and determined the development in Western civilization; on the other hand, the movement of the Reformation developed in the context of the decline of Medieval culture and the coming into being of a new culture. Its context was a double one. In the line of pedagogical Humanism it went back to the sources: Scripture written in the original languages, from which translations were made into the native languages of Europe. Regarding Scripture itself, it went back to the Jewish Canon and rejected the Apocrypha. A new understanding of Scripture brought not only theology in another context, but shaped other contextual societal forms in which theological activity took place: the churches of the Reformation.

However, during the period of the Reformation and afterwards, especially in the 17th century, theology moved out of context. Theologians went back to the old idea of synthesis. Clear examples are Olevianus' commentary on the Catechism of Heidelberg²², Melancthon's *Loci Communes*²³ and Theodoor Beza's theological publications. Also the organization and curricula of theological seminaries and faculties show us the scholastic mind of the theologians in the second half of the 16th and in the 17th century²⁴. This way of thinking found its ecclesiastical expression in the Canons of Dort and the Westminster Confession, which are in fact not confessions of faith but a mixture of confessional statements and theoretical expositions of a theological-philosophical character²⁵. The result was that theology stood in the context of Platonic-Aristotelian philosophy. With the weapons of Plato and Aristotle, theologians confronted modern Western philosophy. It is well known that Gisbertus Voetius using the philosophy of Aristotle²⁶, tried to prove that Descartes' ideas about soul and body were in conflict with Scripture. Behind this mode of theologizing is hidden a world-view which is in fact unbiblical, because these theologians thought that they could face the problems of their age with a theoretical-logical approach, which was conservative, too. They did not see that Scripture is not a theoretical treatise in which the Word of God is framed. Their contextualization distorted the Word of God and gave no answer to the religious problems of their age.

The Context of Theology in our Age

Theologizing does not merely take place in the context of theological schools and faculties with their communities of scholars. Theology does not exist in an esoteric community which lives detached from man in society. Theology and theologizing are part and parcel of human society. This context is characterized by several features. The first one is that of secularization, which, after a period of preparation during the 17th century — in which natural religion rooted in nature and reason come into existence²⁷, via the critique on religion of Kant, Hegel and Feuerbach — manifested itself in the critique of Karl Marx as a critique of heaven, and a critique of earth²⁸.

From it has developed, in the 19th and 20th centuries a critique on religion which spread amongst millions of people in all the realms of Western civilization. Its religious roots and its world-view had developed in the course of several centuries. Philosophers have expressed it in a systematic and all-embracing way. It colours Western science, technology, economics, organizations, politics, art and literature.

It is not a theological problem, which can be solved via theological reflection, but a religious problem and a question of world-view; this needs to be answered in such a way that it is clear that it concerns the roots of human existence. Man's heart is at stake. Another aspect of our society is the meeting of civilizations during the last 150 years. It has happened to such an extent that Western society is shaken. Western society became involved in other civilizations, other religions, and other political entities via the process of colonialisation and imperialism and its subsequent destruction in the 20th century; also in the mission enterprise of churches and missionary societies of private Christians, and further, in international political coherence and interdependence as it is realized in the UNO and its organizations, and the migration of millions of people — especially during the last 35 years — bringing millions of guest labourers from Africa and Asia to Europe. Isolationism is an impossibility.

There has not only been an encounter of civilizations, but also a meeting of the churches, during our century.

Ecumenical movements of confessional, regional and world-character in and outside the W.C.C. have influenced the attitude of many church people. They have changed confessional and theological convictions, and given the churches a new view of their calling and task in this world. They have also caused changes in the Roman Catholic Church. Australia, as a part of Western civilization, participates in this development. However its character is influenced by several factors which make this continent different from other continents. I mention just a few.

- * Destruction of the aboriginal society has taken place, which puts the Aborigines in the position of foreigners in their own country. It gives some (or many) white Australians a feeling of guilt.
- * Further, Australian society, both in its Christian and non-Christian aspects, cannot be understood apart from its Anglo-Saxon heritage. This affects the ecclesiastical and theological scene in Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism, Presbyterianism, methodism and Congregationalism.
- * A third factor is the non-Anglo-Saxon migration after the second World War. People from European countries with their own culture, language and church-life came to Australia. They formed their own communities or blended with the Anglo-Saxon community. Eastern orthodox Christianity and theology form a part of Australia today, although it is limited to ethnic groups.
- * Lastly, there is the continuation of Humanistic secularization in a Liberal, Socialistic and Marxist setting. This is the guiding force in today's society.

The contextual task of Theology today

I want to sketch the contextualization of theology today in a few statements.

A Christian theologian has to take into account that he stands in the context of the 20th century as a *human being*. His theological existence is only one of the many aspects of his humanness. It includes the context of the communication and confrontation of his own civilization with other civilizations.

As a *theologian* he stands in the context of a scholarly world with a specific character, and with specific limitations. His activity is characterized by a theoretical approach. Only a scholarly task has been given him by God. This scholarly task is of a specific nature: it is a theological one. This implies that a theologian does not possess the answers to all the questions of life, and that he is not the source of all knowledge and wisdom. Besides, he does not have the calling to justify his taking this position. There are other approaches and answers, too — both theoretical and non-theoretical; political, socio-economical, ethical, artistic, journalistic and other endeavours. A theologian can only fulfil his task in co-operation with others who work in different fields. He has to acknowledge, and to use, the expertise and experience of others, because both theologians and non-theologians are members of the Body of Christ — members who have received different gifts.

As a *Christian* theologian he stands in the context of the authority of the Word of God recorded in Scripture. In this context he is neither higher qualified nor less rewarded than his fellow Christians, who stand in the same context and under the same authority. As members of the community which forms the Body of Christ, we are all called out of the darkness of rebellion, unrighteousness, slavery of sin, and corruptness of mind to the freedom of the children of God in Christ. Our common purpose is to serve God with our whole heart, and to express love to our fellowman in all our activities within the societal forms in which God has placed us. The whole of life is religion.

Further, we have to keep in mind that Scripture itself stands in the context of a Semitic culture and of the history of the Middle East in a period of 2000 to 3000 years ago. The Word of God received its inscripturation in a specific historical context. This should be recognized. Because the Word of God is normative for our life it should receive its concretization in a cultural context, where people listen with other ears, speak a different language and have a different history. There is identity with, and difference from, the past: identity, insofar as it is the same Word of God with the same message for mankind in the past and today; difference, because circumstances, culture, society and position in history are different.

This does not imply a programme of demythologizing, as Bultmann and his school try to insist. Scripture should not be geared to modern rationalist or irrationalist Humanism. For Bultmann, following Heidegger, the central question is the human predicament in an existentialist pattern of life and thought²⁹. If one accepts this way of thinking, one is not different from those Christian theologians in the past, who

read Scripture in the framework of Platonic or Aristotelian philosophy, instead of judging contemporary thought in the light of Scripture. If this way of thinking is acceptable Ariarajah's criticism is correct, in that he rejects the critical remarks of those missionaries who refuse to accept that Hindu and Buddhist cultural ideas can be used to express the context of the Gospel, but at the same time have no problems with the Greek-Hellenistic framework in which a great part of Western theology has been moulded³⁰.

This approach has practical implications for theologizing activity in Western civilization. It means that theology has to be *biblical*. A systematic theologian has to work in the community of believers, who respond in faith to the Word of God given in Scripture. He has to wholeheartedly accept the support of biblical scholarship, which assists in helping to understand Scripture with all the means available today. He can no longer find support in Scripture for the idea that God is the "Supreme Being" and the "Highest Intellect"³¹. Ex. 3:14 has a total different meaning; it speaks of the God of the Covenant, who can be trusted because he is the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He works in history according to his covenant with his people. A theologian today cannot maintain the opinion that Paul (in Romans 9-11) deals with the doctrine of double predestination: in his letter to the Romans Paul puts God's work of salvation in a redemptive-historical perspective in which the people of Israel also finds its place³².

A further implication is that a theologian should recognize that the last theoretical answers concerning theology are not given by theology itself. They are of a philosophical nature. Theology or pistology reflects, in a theoretical sense, on the faith aspect of reality. It is one of the tasks of a philosopher to reflect theoretically on the nature of theology and all its branches. Philosophical answers influence theology, as the history of theology shows us. If we are not aware of this state of affairs or deny it, as Karl Barth has done, we will encounter great difficulties. Hence, we should see the necessity of a critical attitude towards Western philosophy, which never had an integral and radical Christian character. This philosophy claimed to function as a way of salvation for Western man.

Mutual understanding and co-operation between philosophers and theologians, who both christianly try to fulfil their task, is a necessary condition. Both philosophers and theologians have to listen to the Word of God.

Further, biblical orientation of theology makes it impossible to automatically refer to the confessional standards, which have an ecclesiastical background and character. These confessions have to be reconsidered and valued anew in the light of Scripture. They do not repeat the content of Scripture, but are the result of a struggle in which philosophical, theological, ecclesiastical, political and biblical motives played their part. If we are not aware of this situation we have frozen the dogmatic development, put Scripture in the straightjacket of human formulations and have eternalized the confessional answers of imperfect and sinful human beings.

We also have to keep in mind that theology cannot be an ecclesiastically limited endeavour, in which only a small part of a church or of a group of churches is involved. Theology should be ecumenical, practised together with all the believers who have a theological calling. The playground of theology is the world and not the fenced background of only one church.

There has to be a critical evaluation of our theological and ecclesiastical tradition, in terms of continuity and discontinuity. In continuity, in so far as we stand on the shoulders of our ancestors — we ought to theologize biblically together with them. In discontinuity, where they did not theologize biblically but were wrongly guided by ideas and conceptions which are foreign to the Word of God. We also have to be critical regarding ourselves, because we are no better than previous generations.

Theology should not be open only to the Word of God in Scripture as its norm, but also to the communities of believers who have understood this Word both in theological issues and in other matters regarding God's revelation to man in the totality of God's creation. There is no such thing as "pure" theology. Nothing in creation is "pure"; all things are related to each other. There is a coherence and interdependence which should be recognized.

This brings us to the next issue. Theology not only has to function in the context of the Christian community with its broad variety, disagreements, conflicts and antagonisms, but also in the context of Western society at large. The fulfilling of its task is only possible in interaction with this society. A few examples may clarify this. Theology, as a theoretical reflection on the aspect of faith in our temporal reality, has to execute its mandate in conversation and confrontation with Marxism. If theologians desire to speak about the structure of human faith and its content directed toward God in Jesus Christ, they have to render an account of their endeavour in an encounter with the Marxist critique of heaven and of earth, and do so without any hesitation. This is not possible without a dialogue with Ludwig Feuerbach, whose thesis that theology is anthropology should be subjected to a serious discussion, centering on the predicament of man. Theologians — and not only they — should become more and more aware of the antithetical alternative which the Marxist movement offers, and realized, all over the world. They have to come to grips with this Humanistic gospel in confrontation with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A dogmatic study which does not deal with this ideology is no longer contextual³³.

Theological thinking in Western society, and in Australia especially, should also take notice of the faiths of minority groups, and not only those within the Christian community. A theoretical reflection on the religions of the Aborigines, with all its implications, is a necessary part of theology today; not for the sake of the white man's curiosity, but for the understanding of and communication with our neighbours, who live with us in this society.

In the society of our age we speak about contact between continents, encounter of cultures, dialogue and the growth of a world culture. Basic powers in these cultures

are the religions of mankind. They reveal man's origin, tell him about his history, clarify the character of the world in which he lives and give him hope for the future. As Christians we are confronted with these religions, especially during the last 200 years. The adherents of these religions make an appeal to us to listen to them, and to follow them. After their awakening and liberation from Western supremacy, they have become more and more assured of their own position. Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism have an enormous cultural, political and religious heritage. Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists challenge us because they are aware of their own rich history and power, which are no less important than that which the Western world, including Christianity, has contributed³⁴. Adherents of these religions live amongst us. In many countries Muslims live as guest labourers, and ask for a recognized position with all the rights that go with it.

- On the other hand, Australia's place is in the South East Asian world. There are contacts with China and Japan. The nearest neighbour, Indonesia, has a population of which the majority is Muslim. Great minority groups in Indonesia are Hindu-believers or followers of tribal religions. Buddhism and Confucianism are a part of the Indonesian scene too.

If theology in Australia is to be contextual, it cannot ignore these religions or avoid a dialogue with the adherents of these living faiths³⁵.

However, apart from some specialists in the field of missions, students of non-Christian religions and those who are already involved in a dialogue with men of other faiths, Western theologians ignore the existence of the living power of these religions, and are not concerned about the faith and theology of others. The theological treatises and handbooks of Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Gerrit Berkouwer, Louis Berkhof, Otto Weber and Hendrik Berkhof have not lead to a conversation with the theological and religious world outside the Christian faith; they do not give an answer to the challenge of these religions. There is a need for communication and confrontation. The content of the Christian faith, and the dogmatic reflection on this content, are challenged by Islam. Over against Scripture, which according to Muslims has been falsified by Jews and Christians, stands the Qur'an, the true and last word of God, which reveals God's goodness and God's will to man. In distinction from what has been written in Scripture about the history of God's covenant with man, Islam proclaims the history of God's revelation via a continuous line of prophets from Adam to the prophet Muhammed.

In this history Jesus finds his place as the nabi Isa, a prophet on the same level as other prophets, a man who escaped the suffering of the cross, a man of God who could not suffer and die, for this would mean that God was not with him. Any Christian dogmatic reflection on the person and work of Jesus Christ, in the history of God's redemption, has to confront this biblical message with the teachings of the Qur'an.

Concerning other religions, we can make the same remarks. What have God's commandments, laws and ordinances for the whole of creation to do with Tao, or world order in Taoism?

Buddhism, as a way of life, is a way of salvation connected with the person of the Buddha. It developed into a theology of Buddhahood in Mahayana Buddhism. It is concerned about life with its misery, suffering and sin. How is it possible to come to grips with this faith and theology in the light of Scripture? Thousands of tourists from the Western world each year visit Borobudur on the island of Java. Many of them are Christians. Shouldn't it also be necessary to engage in a religious and theological reflection on the teaching and doctrine of Buddhism, as we see it expressed in this old Javanese monument of art?

We have to understand man in his religious life in Africa and Asia. Although it is true that Christians in Africa and Asia are responsible for their task in the field of theology in their continents, it is also true that the Body of Christ is one. Christians such as Kosuke Koyama, Kitamori, M.M. Thomas, Abineno, Fridolin Ukur, Harun Hadiwiyono and many others have to find the open ears and open hearts of their fellow brethren in Christ in order to fulfil their task in the world of the living faiths of men.

Theological Education in Australia

Our exposition concerning the contextualization of theology is a programme which has consequences for theological education too. Apart from the Bible Colleges, there are now more than 50 theological colleges, seminars and faculties in Australia. This is partly because of the geographical situation. However, if contextualization is to have an ecumenical character, we may well ask if the existence of such a large number of theological institutions is justified. One gets the idea that this situation is also the expression of an attitude of separatism and isolationism; if this is the case, a theology of separation would be the result. A survey of the whole field of theological education is needed to achieve insight into the diversity of theological institutions, and to assess the possibilities of co-operation and amalgamation. It is one of the things that will strengthen the study of theology; combination of resources will give better opportunities for the development of theology. Another factor of importance is a reflection on the philosophical foundations of theology. This does not involve the composition of a list of theological subjects. It is concerned with an investigation about the nature of theology, and its distinction from and its coherence with other forms of theoretical investigation. This involves the renewal of the old idea of Encyclopedia, in casu the Encyclopedia of theology, or a philosophy concerning theology. This study is needed for achieving a proper insight into the nature of theology and the character of its contextualization. The relationship of theology to the Bible, the church, the confession of a church and the life of faith of the Christ believers will come more clearly into focus. Neglect of this scholarly endeavour not only leads to vague concepts and misunderstandings, but it also creates a situation in which theology and theologians receive an authority which cannot be indicated in the light of the

nature of theology. A further aspect is the acknowledgement that theological education has a dual purpose: training people for the scholarly world of theology, and preparation for the ministry. Ministerial work is not a theoretical activity. It is a practical form of activity in the church, which is an institution qualified by faith and regulated by the authority of Scripture. In this community man stands in the light of faith in his relationship with God and with his fellowman. This implies an understanding of man's religion, his world-view, his philosophies, his ideologies and ways of life in today's world in continuity with the past. An understanding of the Australian society with its ideologies, religions, churches and social life is needed; not only for people who go into the ministry of one of the churches, but also for theologians. Theology cannot be developed in an ivory tower. It has to be developed in the fulness of life.

This has consequences for a subject such as ethics, too. Ethics, as a theoretical reflection on the understanding of the will of God according to Scripture, forms a part of dogmatics. In this sense it is a theological subject. However, ethics is also understood in a broader sense as a scholarly reflection on the structure of human normative life, its norms and the subjective realization of these norms. We can give this subject the name praxeology. It deals with marriage and family life, socio-economic problems, political ethics, race and nation and technological, scientific and organizational responsibilities. This goes far beyond theology. It is important for every Christian who will be in a position of leadership.

This brings us to the last question. If what has been mentioned here is viewed as a necessity, is there then not a need for a multipurpose and multiform institute for Christian scholarly activities and practical reflections and endeavours on behalf of the Australian society? Theology would form only a part of it. In such an institute we could perhaps better serve the whole Christian community, and our continent.

NOTES

1. Cf. Herman Ridderbos, *Paul, An Outline of his Theology*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1975.
2. S. Bonaventura, *Sermo IV Christus unus omnium magister*, in S. Bonaventurae Opera Omnia, Thomus V, Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi, Italia) 1891 p. 567-574, esp. p. 572-19.
3. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* I, 1 3d ed. T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh 1952, p. 2.
4. Karl, Barth, Op. cit. p. 3-4.
5. Karl Barth, Op. cit. p. 2.
6. Karl Barth, Op. cit. p. 5 "In practice *philosophia christiana* has never yet taken shape; if it was *philosophia*, it was not *christiana*; if it was *christiana*, it was not *philosophia*".
7. S. Aurelii Augustini *De Civitate Dei*, in Corpus Chirstianorum, Series Latina XLVII, ed. B. Dombart et A. Kalb, Brepols, Turnhout, Book VI, ch. V.
Here Augustine mentions three kinds of theology: mythical, physical and political theology. He follows Terentius Varro. The first form of theology is the theology of the poets, the second is the one of the philosophers, and the third, is the one of the people. The definition is given in Book VIII, ch. I.

8. The concept of rational theology, based upon the idea of the rationality of the divine being, goes back to the beginning of Western theology and philosophy. The first aspects of this theology were developed by Xenophanes (about 565–470), who criticized the anthropomorphic mythical theology. He advocated the statement that there is one god who always remains in the same place, does not move, but shakes all things by the thought of his mind. cf. H. Diels and W. Kranz, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 6th ed. Weidmannsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Berlin 1951, vol. I fragment 23, 24, 25, p. 135. See also G.S. Kirk and J.E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, C.U.P., Cambridge 1975, p. 168–170. See also C.J. De Vogel, *Greek Philosophy I Thales to Plato*, a collection of texts, 3rd ed. E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1963, p. 33. See also W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, I, C.U.P., Cambridge, 1967, p. 373 sqq. Parmenides (540 — after 451) worked this idea out in his poem *Peri Physeos*. He presented this poem as a revelation, in which he declared that the god is both thinking and being. cf. H. Diels and W. Kranz. Op. cit. vol. I fragments 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 p. 231–240. cf. G.S. Kirk and J.E. Raven Op. cit. p. 269–278. cf. C.J. De Vogel, Op. cit. p. 36–40. W.K.C. Guthrie Op. cit. vol. II p. 26 sqq. cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* E ch. I p.102a18–32: Theoretical philosophy is divided into mathematical, physical and theological philosophy. Theology, as the highest of the theoretical or speculative sciences, deals with Being qua Being.
9. Philippus Melancton (1497–1560) was a friend of Luther, but he went his own way. He tried to create a synthesis between the ideals of the Reformation and his humanistic ideals. He held Aristotle in great esteem. His philosophy and theology have an Aristotelian character. In his *Loci Communes* of 1522 and in his commentary on Romans of 1532 he gives 9 proofs of the existence of God, based upon Plato, Aristotle, Stoa, Rom. 1:20, Acts 17:28. Theodoor Beza (1519–1605) succeeded Calvin at the Theological Academy in Geneva, where he held the chair of systematic theology. He wanted to justify theology by way of reason. he made the content of Scripture a system in a textbook of rational character. The purpose is the certainty of theology as a science. Between the revelation in Scripture and faith stands theology as a science. The certainty of faith depends on the certainty of theology. Beza uses the Aristotelian-Scholastic philosophy for the following reasons: firstly, Aristotle makes possible a clearly philosophical propedeutics for theology; secondly, Aristotle's ethics, psychology and political theory are not in great contradiction with Christianity; thirdly the Aristotelian cosmology and explanation of nature can be brought into agreement with the biblical one. The term Scholasticism is used here in the sense of a synthesis between biblical motives and non-Christian philosophy; it uses the method of nature and grace; it makes a typical distinction between faith and science, theology and philosophy. Theology uses philosophy as a servant. Cf. B.J. van der Walt, *Die natuurlike Teologie*, Potchefstroom 1974, vol. II p. 532 (transl. "Natural Theology").
10. This idea is developed in the *Synopsis Purioris Theologiae*, the dogmatic handbook of the 17th century, written by Antoinius Walaeus, Antoinius Thysius, Johannes Polyander and Andreas Rivetus in 1625. The authors were all professors at the Theological Faculty of the University of Leiden. It is the classical Reformed handbook for systematic theology in the 17th century. Its basic distinction is between archetypical theology, which is God's selfknowledge in a theoretical way, and ectypical theology, which is the knowledge creatures (both angels and human beings) have about God and the divine things. In a modern form we meet this idea of theology in the writings of Cornelius Van Til. The basis of his theology is God as the absolute, selfconscious Being who is completely

selfcomprehensive, absolute rationality. Scripture is a system of truth in which God has revealed Himself. In its confessions the church gives a reworking of the system of truth in Scriptures. cf. C. Van til, *In Defense of the Faith vol. V. An Introduction to Systematic Theology*. Presbyterian and Reformed Publ. Co., Philadelphia, Pa. 1974, p. 9-10.
Cf. C. Van Til. 1969. *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*. Baker Bookhouse, Grand Rapids, Mich., p. 26, 28, 33, 38.

11. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics I*, 1, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 2d ed. 1955, p. 3. Here he distinguishes between theology as a science, theology as the simple testimony of faith and life, and the theology of public worship.
Cf. Karl Barth. 1959. *Dogmatics in Outline*. Harper Torchbook, Harper and Row Publ., New York, p. 1.
12. *Synopsis Purioris Theologiae*. editio sexta, curavit et praefatus est H. Bavinck, D. Donner Publ. Leiden, 1881, disputatio I, x11: "Obiectum theologiae cum res divinas esse asserimus, sub hac applicatione complectimur: 1. Deum ipsum. 2. Dogmata et beneficia divina ad salutarem Dei cognitionem, communionem, et fruitionem necessaria. 3. quaecumque sunt in rerum natura a Deo creata et ordinata, quatenus ad Deum tamquam ad suum principium et finem sunt referenda".
Translation: Because we declare that the divine matters are the object of theology, we comprehend under this heading: 1. God himself. 2. the dogmas and divine benefits necessary for a salutary knowledge of God, communion and enjoyment. 3. whatever in the universe is created and ordained by God, insofar as it refers to God as its principle and goal.
13. Herman Dooyeweerd has tried to explain the nature of theology in these terms. Cf. H. Dooyeweerd, *A new Critique of theoretical Thought*, H.J. Paris Publ., Amsterdam — Th Presbyterian and Reformed Publ. Philadelphia U.S.A., 1955 vol. II, p. 298-330.
See also his *In the Twilight of Western Thought*, The Craig Press, Nutley, New Jersey, 1965, the chapters about Philosophy and Theology p. 113-172.
14. The school of Bultmann clarifies the humanness of man with the help of Martin Heidegger's philosophy. Rudolf Bultmann himself explains Scripture, man's position on earth and his relationship with God, using the categories and the framework of Heidegger's publication *Sein und Zeit* 1927 (Being and Time). His theme is "Die Fraglichkeit des Seins" — The Questionability of Being. Ernst Fuchs, a student of Bultmann, follows Heidegger according to his publication *Holzwege* 1950 (Woodpaths). The central theme in this publication is "Die Sprachlichkeit des Seins" — The Linguisticness of Being. Man dwells in Being and has to be the shepherd, of Being. The human predicament is determined by the relationship between origin, existential experience and existentialistic interpretation. Our existential experience, or historicness, reveals God's historicness.
Cf. Ernst Fuchs, *Zum hermeneutischen Problem in der Theologie* (About the hermeneutic problem in theology) J.C.B. Mohr. (Paul Siebeck), Tuebingen, 1959. Hermeneutik (Hermeneutics) R. Muellerschoen Verlag, Bad Cannstatt, 3d ed. 1963.
For the basic motive of Bultmann's theology see Hans Jonas, *Im Kampf um die Moeglichkeit des Glaubens* (The Struggle about the possibility of Faith), in *Gedenken an Rudolf Bultmann*, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tuebingen, 1977, p. 41-70.
15. See note. 8.
16. The idea of "encyclopedia" is largely no longer understood in our present age. Today "encyclopedia" means a book, or a series of books, in which human knowledge (scientific and non-scientific) has been arranged in the order of the alphabet.
"Encyclopedia" as a branch of philosophy which investigates the nature, coherence and unity of each science and its place in the order of scholarly investigations with its results, achieved in the course of scientific development, is no longer highly regarded.
In the Greek and Hellenistic world "encyclopedia" meant a systematic, coherent body of knowledge needed for a free man to be free, and to participate in the ancient culture in

theoretical and in practical life aiming at a higher level of human existence.

The Greeks and Romans tried to achieve the fullness of life via the study of philosophy as the way to wisdom on the basis of "encyclopedic" education.

17. Cf. Justinus Martyr, *Apologia I*, 2, 3 and 46.
18. Clemens of Alexandria used the Greek idea of "paideia" for the explanation of Christianity.
19. Gnosis, as faith which came to age via a process of theoretical development, is one of the ways to Christian perfection, according to Clemens. Other ways are that of a pious man, a virtuous man and of a martyr. Only Christ is perfect in every respect.
20. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, 1, 2 (editio leonina).
Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1 q. 1a. 1 (editio leonina).
21. Maurice Blondel. 1963. *L'Être et les êtres, essai d'ontologie concrète et intégrale*. Presses Universitaires de Franc, Paris.
Maurice Blondel. 1950. *La philosophie et l'esprit chrétien I autonomie essentielle et connexion indéclinable* P.U.F. Paris.
II Conditions de la symbiose seule logique et salutaire, P.U.F. Paris 1946.
Maurice Blondel. 1950. *Exigences philosophiques du Christianisme*, P.U.F. Paris.
Gabriel Marcel. 1949. *Being and Having*, London.
Gabriel Marcel. 1964. *Creative Fidelity*, New York.
Gabriel Marcel. 1950. *The Mystery of Being*, 2 vols Chicago.
Michael Fr. J. Marlet s.j. 1954. *Grundlinien der Calvinistischen "Philosophie der Gesetzesidee" als christlicher Transzendental-philosophie*, Karl Zink Verlag, Muenchen.
22. Zacharias Ursinus (1534-1583) and Caspar Olevianus were the authors of the Catechism of Heidelberg. Ursinus wrote a commentary on this Catechism: *Corpus Doctrinae Orthodoxae sive Catecheticarum explicationum*, Heidelberg 1598. David Pareus published this work again in 1616 "emendatius et auctius".
Zacharias studied in Geneva, where Beza was principal of the Theological Academy. His commentary has a scholastic framework in which, on the one hand, true philosophy (according to its natural principles) rules the field, and on the other hand, theological faith (as consent or certain knowledge of the propositions concerning God, his will, works and grace) determines human life. Cf. Op. cit., p. 4-5, 143.
23. Between 1521 and 1532 Melanchton maintained the position that the human intellect in its nature is incompetent and without any power, before God's existence and will.
In his commentary on Romans in 1532, Melanchton changed his position. He stated: everybody knows the existence and essence of God via the laws of nature and based on proofs. This knowledge is according to God's law which God has impressed on human reason, so that man is the image of God. This knowledge has to be supplemented by a personal relationship with the merciful God, i.e. forgiveness of sin.
Cf. H. Enggeland, *Die Frage der Gotteserkenntnis bei Melanchton* (The Problem of the Knowledge of God in Melanchton), p. 47.
24. Sybrand Galama. 1954. *Het Wijsgerig Onderwijs aan de Hogeschool te Franeker 1585-1811*. T. Wever Publ. Franeker. (The philosophical teaching at the Seminary at Franeker 1585-1811). Aristotelianism and Platonism determine theology in the 16th and 17th century. Newtonianism is influential in the 18th century, according to Galama.
25. The theological framework of the Canons of Dort can be known from the Acts of Synod of Dort 1618-1619. This synod was an European Ecumenical Synod, where representatives of the Presbyterian and Reformed strain of the Reformation discussed — and took decisions against — Arminianism. The scholarly elaboration of the way of thinking at Dort is to be found in the "Synopsis Purioris Theologiae". The rational approach in the Westminster Confession is clear in chapter I, VI where the Confession says that the whole counsel of God, also, may be deduced from Scripture by good and necessary consequence. Chapter II, I shows, in the definition of God, its scholastic character.

26. Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676), *Selectarum Disputationum Theologicarum*, 5 vols 1648-1669.
E.J. Dijksterhuis, ed. 1951. *Descartes et le Cartésianisme hollandais*, Paris, Amsterdam.
27. Herbert of Cherbury (1581-1648). *De Veritate*, Paris 1624. Religion is a complex of propositions based upon reason and knowable by reason. The intellect has a content, i.e. five common notions, as a final court of appeal for all our beliefs. They are a priori, universal, certain, necessary for life and apprehended immediately. The five common notions of religion are inscribed by God in the mind of man. They are the origin of the different religions. All the other elements in the religions of the world are additions. The only Catholic and uniform Church is the doctrine of the Common Notions, which comprehends all places and all men.
28. Karl Marx, *Thesen ueber Feuerbach* (Theses about Feuerbach) in Marx-Engels werke, Dietz Verlag, Berlin 1976 vol. 1, p. 378-391. (The Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction).
Marx called man back from his illusion, of which religion is the expression. Religion is, according to Marx, the illusory sun which revolves itself around man. The critique of religion gives man insight, so that man revolves around himself as the true sun. The critique of heaven has to become the critique of earth, the critique of religion has to change into the critique of right, and the critique of theology into the critique of politics. See also Marx's *Economic-philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, translated by M. Milligan, Lawrence and Wishart, London. 1970.
29. See note 14.
30. S. Wesley Ariaraja, "Towards a Theology of Dialogue", in *the Ecumenical Review* vol. 29 number 1 January 1977, p. 3-11.
"The intellectual framework provided by Greek philosophy, institutions and laws as fashioned by the Roman Empire, Germanic temperament and the major cultural revolutions of the West, has become so much the heart of the Christian religion that the churches in Asia and Africa are in virtual intellectual and institutional bondage. Happily, from the stage of blaming all the sundry for our bondage, we have now come to the stage of breaking loose so that we can struggle with our own experience of Christ in our own context. Asian and African theology has yet to emerge, and it can only do so as we enter into deeper and fuller dialogue with our context in the same way as the early church", p. 4. Cf. p. 6 where he speaks about "the stubborn refusal of the Church to accept the religious experience of others."
However, against Karl Barth and Hendrik Kraemer, Ariarajah has chosen for Bultmann and W.C. Smith, who separate faith itself from the outmoded forms and language in which it is presented, according to them. This is a new "Teutonic captivity", p. 5, 8.
31. Cf. Étienne Gilson. 1969. *L'Esprit de la Philosophie Médiévale*, 2e ed. J. Vrin Publ. Paris, p. 50-51 where he writes about "une métaphysique de L'Exode...".
32. Cf. Herman Ridderbos' Commentary on *Romans*.
33. A survey of what is available up till 1969 gives: Ans J. Van Der Bent, *The Christian Marxist Dialogue*, an annotated bibliography 1959-1969, W.C.C., Geneva 1969.
A critical analysis of the young Marx is given by Johan Van Der Hoeven. 1976. *Karl Marx. The Roots of his Thought*, Wedge Publ. Foundation Toronto, 1976.
Also Henk Van Der Laan. 1977. *Confrontation with Karl Marx*, Radix Publ. Ass., Sydney.
34. The selfconsciousness of Arab Islam is expressed by Ismail Ragi A. al Faruqi in his publication *On Arabism-Urubah and Religion, a study of the fundamental Ideas of Arabism and of Islam as its highest moment of Consciousness*, Djambatan, Amsterdam 1962. He sees Judaism and Christianity as two moments of Arab Consciousness.
35. J.A. Veitch, lecturer at Victoria College, Wellington N.Z. has focussed on this problem in his articles "The Case for a Theology of Religions" in *Scottish Journal of Theology* vol. 24, 1971, p. 407-422 and "Is an Asian Theology possible?" in idem vol. 28, 1975, p. 27-43.