

Cragg, Gerald R. *Freedom and Authority: A Study of English Thought in the Early Seventeenth Century*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975. 302 pp. \$15.00.

The Reformation destroyed the pattern of authority which had developed in England in regard to the tension existing between papacy and monarchy. The reformers and their immediate successors were concerned to elevate the authority of the monarch—the new head of the church—as a bulwark against the restoration of Catholicism. Not until the accession of the Stuart dynasty did individuals feel free to reassess the role of the monarch and question his increased authority. Only then did men become aware of the conflicting interpretations of authority and the competing interests claiming the right to exercise, or to limit, that authority.

Cragg has skillfully analyzed this intellectual conflict, basing his study almost entirely upon books and pamphlets from the time period covered. Consequently, there are very few references to secondary literature (although he does appear to be aware of current research). Moreover, manuscript sources are completely ignored. His extensive knowledge of the printed primary materials has, however, enabled him to use numerous brief quotations which provide both clarity and enrichment.

The discussion of the intellectual milieu within which these controversies occurred includes a chapter on Bacon and the new science—a chapter which he justifies by claiming that “the challenge to old authorities arose in part from a new intellectual confidence” (p. 37). He then describes the divine-right concept of kingship and juxtaposes this with the developing theory of parliamentary sovereignty. These chapters merely provide the background against which he analyzes the problem of authority in the sphere of religion. This is where Cragg’s interests lie and where he is at his best. His sensitivity to the issues enables him accurately to reflect the concerns of individuals searching for an authority around which to stabilize their own personal religious beliefs.

Cragg points out that although Hooker had provided a theological basis for the uniqueness of the Anglican Church, this appeared inadequate to “the school of Laud” which stressed the role of reason, history, and tradition in an attempt to strengthen the authority of the Church. Catholics realized the weakness which this implied for a Protestant church and renewed their ideological campaign in favor of Rome as a center of authority.

Cragg next turns to the division within the Catholic Church in England, where individuals were torn between the conflicting claims of their own political government and the religious authority of their Church. The Puritans, meanwhile, upheld the authority of the Holy Scriptures (see esp. pp. 142-143) against the claims of both Rome and Canterbury. Cragg’s analysis of their position is excellent. He then discusses the manner in which failure by some individuals to resolve the tensions between the authority of the Word and the authority of Canterbury led them to form small separatist sects. But these, he concludes, had merely exchanged one set of tensions for another as they strove to accept the authority of the Word without antagonizing the authority of the magistrates.

Throughout these years, but especially after 1620, Cragg discerns a movement led by a group whom he defines as “lay liberals,” to provide a basis for the practical toleration which was achieved in England by the end of the

century. Authority for this group consisted of the common-law precedents which defined the limits within which Englishmen could act as free individuals.

Thus Cragg moves from a discussion of the various competing concepts of authority to delineate the growing concern for freedom in early Stuart England. Not only has he shown a sympathetic understanding of this complex period in English history, but he has also made the study of its intellectual and religious movements both easier and more pleasant for those who follow in his footsteps. In addition, many of the issues raised in the early 17th century have returned to haunt the world of the 20th century. In that context, the debate on the relationship between authority and freedom is as relevant today as when the Stuarts ruled England during the 17th century.

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Cullmann, Oscar. *The Johannine Circle*. Trans. John Bowden. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976. xii + 124 pp. \$6.95.

The present volume represents an excellent translation of the German original that appeared in 1975 under the more descriptive title, which may be translated as *The Johannine Circle: Its Place in Late Judaism Among the Disciples of Jesus, and in Primitive Christianity* (Tübingen, 1975).

In general, the book may be characterized as Cullmann's attempt to defend some of his old views on Johannine matters, and at the same time to position himself vis-à-vis the arguments advanced by E. Käsemann and J. L. Martyn concerning the Johannine milieu. He follows Käsemann and recognizes the distinctiveness of the Gospel of John as due to its origin within a distinctive Christian circle (Cullmann prefers "circle" to "school," "sect," or *ecclesiola*). But there his agreement with Käsemann ends. The Johannine circle in no way finds itself at odds with the Christian mainstream. The Fourth Gospel does not represent a "naive docetism." It is, rather, a missionary document that proclaims Jesus as the Christ within a *heilsgeschichtliche* framework. Cullmann agrees with Martyn in that the Gospel reflects upon two historical moments at the same time. But whereas Martyn has argued that the stories in the Gospel describe both the experience of Jesus (an *einmalig* event) and the experience of the Johannine community (a contemporary event) simultaneously, Cullmann on the other hand argues that the evangelist has superimposed the Christ who is present in the church upon the incarnate Jesus. Thus, in contrast to Luke, who sets apart the Jesus who worked on earth in the flesh from the Christ who works through his apostles, John seeks to consider Jesus after the flesh and the present Christ together in one and the same perspective" (p. 14).

In order to defend this position Cullmann constructs a revised edition of the history of early Christianity, giving special attention to the formation of the Johannine community. His argument is rather simple: Among those who followed Jesus there were some who came from "marginal, heterodox Judaism." Because of their position within Judaism these followers of Jesus never fared well within the group of disciples of Jesus who came from "mainstream, orthodox Judaism." One of these marginal Jews was a disciple of John the Baptist who became known as "the other disciple" of Jesus. In time