

Seeing with Eyes of Faith: Schillebeeckx and the Resurrection of Jesus

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John Macquarrie in his *Jesus Christ in Modern Thought* well formulates a criticism which is often raised about Schillebeeckx's discussion of the resurrection of Christ. Macquarrie suggests that Schillebeeckx is arguing that the resurrection is better thought of as a powerful, but subjective, experience in the minds of the disciples.¹ Macquarrie's criticism echoes the point made by another of Schillebeeckx's Anglican critics, David Brown, who is uncompromising in his characterisation of Schillebeeckx as a 'deist'.² Brown is certainly correct in identifying Schillebeeckx's attempt at a more subtle account of God's relationship to creation than a classic interventionist account might hazard, but I think the attribution of a deist position is wide of the mark. This is not the place to develop the general point other than to suggest that Professor Brown over-simplifies the issue in arguing that Christian discourse about God is inevitably either deist or theist in so far as it asserts the propriety of an interventionist or a non-interventionist account of God's dealings with creation.³

It is important to address the specific point which these critics raise in suggesting that Schillebeeckx is unable to maintain the objectivity of the resurrection.⁴ This can be better explored by considering the extended discussion in Peter Carnley's important study of the resurrection, *The Structure of Resurrection Belief* (Oxford, 1987).⁵ Carnley goes rather further than either Macquarrie or Brown in acknowledging that, for Schillebeeckx, 'the Easter faith certainly involves a post-mortem experience of encounter with the risen Christ' (p 200). In spite of this Carnley is ultimately sceptical of Schillebeeckx's account of the risen Jesus as fulfilling claims to objectivity. Carnley regards his position as a failure to establish the 'epistemological structure of resurrection belief (p 222). It is a failure which is considered to rest on two premises: Carnley suggests that Schillebeeckx undervalues the post-resurrection appearance narratives and, in preferring a parousia Christology to a Christology founded on these narratives, introduces a serious flaw in his exegesis of the New Testament texts concerning the risen Christ. Thus he claims that

Schillebeeckx 'continues from time to time to go beyond the mere assertion of kerygmatic diversity to insist on the historical priority and importance of the parousia Christology over one containing references to appearances or present experiences of the raised Jesus' (p 211) and that 'the inclination... to favour the future parousia over present appearances, conditions his assessment of the remainder of the New Testament evidence' (p 212).

These are serious criticisms. Carnley argues that Schillebeeckx tends 'to weaken the dogmatic impact of the tradition of the appearances' (p 206) by understanding the Greek word *ophthe* (he appeared) primarily in terms of God's revelatory initiative rather than the human sensory perception involved in responding to it. This is precisely what Schillebeeckx is doing.⁶ For Schillebeeckx the experience of the resurrection must be treated as independent of, and prior to, the accounts of the appearance and empty tomb narratives of the gospels (see Schillebeeckx, *Jesus*, p 332–4, 354). Such accounts inevitably fail to do justice to the event itself. It is the underlying experience of encounter with the risen Christ, only later to be teased out in 'concrete and materialising terms' in the appearance and empty tomb narratives of the gospels, that remains primary. These original experiences bear witness to 'a transcendent Christ who is revealed rather than observed... an object that was perceived by faith rather than by sight' (Carnley, p 200). The narratives of empty tomb and post-resurrection appearance are thus to be thought of as the expression of, rather than the origin of, Easter faith; they are narratives in which the Church recognises and affirms its experience of the risen Lord. It is in this encounter with the risen Lord, an encounter renewed through the ages in the community of belief, that men and women discover forgiveness and new meaning. This is an experience of salvation that is both very personal and also communal.⁷ Here Christians of each generation bear witness to their belief in the resurrection and in doing so attest the same experience as the apostles in their acknowledgement of the resurrection.

In his discussion of the word *ophthe* Carnley suggests correctly that Schillebeeckx is heavily dependent on the work of André Pelletier.⁸ Pelletier and the Reformed theologian Wilhelm Michaelis, in his important article in Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (vol. 5, pp 315–382), each in his different way, do make an attractive case for an interpretation of *ophthe* which emphasises the primacy of revelation. An array of Old Testament texts (see, for example, God's appearance to Abraham at the Oak of Moreh, Gen. 12.7, God's appearance in the Burning Bush, Ex 3.2ff, seeing the glory of the Lord, Isaiah 26.10. 35.2, 62.4–5), and the suggestive verse preserved in I Tim

3.16 ('He was revealed in flesh, vindicated in spirit, seen (*ophthe*) by angels, proclaimed among Gentiles, believed in throughout the world') add weight to the argument.⁹

Even if we accept Carnley's criticism of Michaelis as a subtle attempt to reinterpret the resurrection faith in terms of hearing rather than seeing (see p 208–9), it is hard not to think that Carnley significantly underestimates Schillebeeckx's point when he makes the claim that '*ophthe* is not to be understood as an ocular seeing but as a technically religious seeing akin to insight' (p 219). If Carnley is right, it must be conceded that Schillebeeckx's language does reduce 'the cognitive element in faith' to 'an intellectual seeing'. It is Carnley himself, however, who adds the subjective element here. 'Insight', 'intellectual seeing' focus the reader on the subjective and introduce, we may add, a distinctly reductionist agenda. Contrary to this position, Schillebeeckx is insisting that 'the experience of the glorified presence of Jesus in the community has a structure of its own which is not identical with the structure of the interpretation of the life-work of Jesus in faith'.¹⁰ At the same time this is not something that can be experienced independently of Jesus' life and ministry. Pannenberg's definition of resurrection of the body can appropriately be applied to Jesus at this point: 'it means that a man's identity depends on the uniqueness and non-recurrence of his physical existence'¹¹—the identity of the risen Christ depends on the uniqueness and non-recurrence (the New Testament *ephapax*) of the events of Jesus' life, death and ministry. Schillebeeckx asserts the resurrection to be objective in so far as he sees it as something that happened to the disciples: 'a divine ratification of his life', as the Pontifical Biblical Commission's document on Christology has it.¹² It is here that we can point to the 'cognitive nucleus' of faith which is guaranteed by an encounter with the indescribable and divinely authenticated objectivity of the risen Lord:

The objective, sovereignly free initiative of Jesus that led them on to a Christological faith—an initiative independent of any belief on the part of Peter and his companions—is a gracious act of Christ, which as regards their 'enlightenment' is of course revelation—not a construct of men's minds, but revelation within a disclosure experience, in this case given verbal embodiment later on in the 'appearances' model. (*Jesus*, p 390)

Carnley wishes to link this 'cognitive nucleus' more intimately with empirical sightings of Jesus after his resurrection. This Schillebeeckx is not prepared to do. I do find Schillebeeckx's approach both appealing and suggestive but Carnley is correct to emphasise that, as it stands, such an approach inevitably remains inconclusive. The exact meaning of *ophthe* remains elusive. It is demanding too much of a word to interpret it in

isolation: the issue succumbs to the telling and extensive criticisms on the whole venture of Kittel's *Theological Dictionary* made by Professor James Barr.¹³ An answer can only be provided by looking at a complementary line of argument.

The importance of the discussion of *ophthe* lies in the fact that it is firmly rooted in the context of the language and concepts shaped by the world of the Hebrew Scriptures.¹⁴ An adequate exegesis of the Greek word *ophthe* and an attempt to establish a satisfactory approach to the interpretation of the earliest New Testament texts referring to the resurrection cannot be solved in isolation. We need both to look back to the Hebrew Scriptures and forward to the life of the early Church in order to make sense of such concepts. Carnley is not sufficiently sensitive to this. Schillebeeckx is more so, as he makes clear in claiming that 'the identification of Jesus with the eschatological emissary from God (is) the bridge between "Jesus of Nazareth" and the Christ proclaimed by the Church' (*Jesus*, p 383).¹⁵ All too often discussion of the resurrection fails to include adequate reference to the Hebrew Scriptures. I would wish to argue that we cannot hope to offer any insight about Jesus' resurrection if we deal with it as a discrete event and fail to read it firmly against the horizon of the Old Testament. The disciples' reflection on Scripture did not create their experience but it certainly allowed them to make sense of something that was not of their making. The Old Testament provides the language and categories for giving words, even shape, to such an experience.

This is the context in which we can ask the central, yet tantalising, question proposed by Schillebeeckx. Accepting the Easter experience as given, Schillebeeckx asks whether we are to regard the resurrection idea as the oldest and original interpretation of this experience, or whether we can argue that there were other interpretations (*Jesus*, p 394). The hesitant attempts to do justice to this question form the roots of the Church's Christology, fragments of which we have preserved in the New Testament and related texts. Carrying out this task leads us on a complex journey both into the literature of the Old Testament and its contemporary interpretation in the communities of Judaeo-Christianity. It is this same play of essential meaning and symbolism which we must bear in mind as we explore the post-resurrection narratives of the gospels.

The use of Psalm 110.1 ('The Lord says to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand...'), reference to which is to be found embedded in different traditions underlying the New Testament,¹⁶ seems to offer an important clue to early Christian interpretation of the Easter experience understood primarily in terms of ascension, an exaltation to the right hand of the Father. Norman Perrin makes a strong case for identifying the way in

which the first generation of Christians worked out their theology in a manner akin to, but not identical with, what we find in other groups within second Temple Judaism. This is in terms of a Christian pesher tradition.¹⁷ More specifically, Perrin offers further evidence which suggests a specific 'early Christian exegetical tradition concerned with the resurrection'. Perrin argues that we can trace three remnants of a tradition of interpretation which is based on Dan 7.13. He points to the ascension tradition which links the verse again with Ps 110.1 (See Mark 14.62a); secondly, a passion apologetic starting from crucifixion rather than the resurrection and which uses Zech. 12.10ff ('And I will pour out a spirit of compassion and supplication on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that when they look on the one whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for any only child...') (See John 19.37; Matt. 24.30); and thirdly, an interpretation which brings the notion of parousia to the fore, putting more and more emphasis on the expectation of the second coming (See Mark 13.26; 14.62b).

Sometimes such fragments allow further development, sometimes not, representing merely a false start and coming to a dead end. It is tempting to go along with John Robinson's suggestion, for example, that the most primitive of these fragments is that found in the speech of Acts 3. 12–26.¹⁸ Here we have, according to Robinson, 'a first tentative and embryonic Christology of the early Church, as it struggled to give expression to the tumultuous implications of what had happened in Jerusalem in these last days' (p 183–4). This is a view that regards Jesus as the 'forerunner of the Christ he is to be' (p 181), not yet Messiah, though, without doubt, destined to become so. Deeply rooted in the theology of the Hebrew Scriptures such a Christology represents the questioning of a community looking forward to that 'act which would inaugurate the Messianic rule of God and vindicate him as the Christ' (p 185). It is Robinson's contention that the early community had yet to identify this divine vindication with the cross and resurrection of Jesus. Such a Christology was soon to be superseded. I give this example not only because of its support for a diversity of theologies in the earliest proclamation and as a tantalising glimpse of a Christology which appears even more primitive than the Parousia Christology normative for Schillebeeckx, although it clearly represents a stage on the way to this, but to underline just how complex is the thinking of the early community regarding the Easter experience and its 'tumultuous implications'. The terms for this debate were not ready to hand and had to be wrested from encounter not only with the risen Lord himself but with material provided by the Scriptures.

One of the great services Jean Daniélou has done for us in his

Theology of Jewish Christianity, is to introduce us into this alien world of thought (bizarre would not be too strong a word). Margaret Barker, similarly, in a series of recent and challenging studies has brought this world to the foreground of interpretation.¹⁹ Daniélou acknowledges that the theology of this period (we are dealing with a period after the gospels have crystallised in a form with which we would be familiar) accepts 'the idea that the risen Christ remained for a while on earth and then departed at the end of that period'.²⁰ This being said, however, Daniélou points out that in works such as the *Testament of Benjamin* and the *Gospel of Peter* the Resurrection is not mentioned as such but Jesus' vindication is read primarily in terms of heavenly exaltation:

Contrary to the practice of later theology Jewish Christianity expresses the glorification of Christ from the point of view of the Ascension rather than that of the Resurrection, an approach which fits better into the structure of Jewish Christian theology with its more cosmological than anthropomorphic world-view... The important point, therefore, in the accounts of Christ's Ascension is the essential meaning, not the cosmological expression. Nevertheless, since the cosmological symbolism serves as a means of presenting doctrine it calls for careful examination...²¹

Barker offers a rather more radical picture. She, too, points out that texts referring to an ascent rather than resurrection are used of Jesus in the New Testament (e.g. Acts 3.26; 5.30; Heb. 7.11,15) and she makes an important point in identifying a shift of interpretation evident in period of the early Church. This can be illustrated in the fact that Irenaeus, for example, seems more interested in proof texts of physical resurrection as opposed to ascent. She notes that *Adversus Haereses* 5, 15.1–2 looks to Is 26.19, 65.22, 66.13 and Ez. 37, texts which are concerned with primarily physical resurrection.²²

It makes good sense to suggest that the earliest communities bear witness to a rich and varied pattern of Christological experimentation. The New Testament has already developed beyond these positions and preserves only fragmentary allusions to what has gone before. We lack sufficient evidence to construct a complete picture of the beliefs of individual communities. The speed of Christological development in these early years is astounding.²³ I would be rather more hesitant than Schillebeeckx in accepting the possibility of constructing with any certainty what he terms the credal statements of these communities which have contributed to the shaping of the New Testament (*Jesus*, pp 402–438).²⁴

Schillebeeckx is on firmer ground in contending that the earliest tradition understands resurrection and exaltation as two aspects of the one eschatological event:

Thus in ancient Christology the resurrection is seen, not primarily as God's correcting the scandal of the cross but as the ground of the approaching Parousia, as ushering in the eschatological universal arising from the dead and as the event confirming Jesus' message of the coming rule of God... That was the original Easter experience. Resurrection and Parousia, although distinct, were closely adjoining. (*Jesus*, p 359)

This is a distinction least clearly articulated in the early hymns of Phil. 2.6–11 and 1 Tim. 3.16 (*Jesus*, pp 535–538), most clearly in Luke-Acts (*Jesus*, pp 534–5). I have alluded already to the significance of Ps 110.1 in relation to the exaltation; Luke draws out the difference between resurrection and exaltation by introducing, apparently for the first time, Ps 16.10 (arising from the world of the dead) as a text specifically marking out the resurrection. Luke marks just the beginnings of a process which, in rightly insisting on the reality of the Risen Lord, seems to be drifting into a literalness which is increasingly less than helpful: Jesus risen life is spelt out in terms more physical than metaphysical, more akin to resuscitation than resurrection. In Irenaeus, as Margaret Barker has shown, we see but a further development of this line of argument.

Some insight into what seems to have been going on here is afforded by a fascinating study of the first hundred years of Christianity by James M. Robinson.²⁵ Robinson argues that the shaping of the New Testament belongs to a period 'strung on trajectories that lead not only from the pre-Pauline confession of 1 Cor. 15. 3–5 to the Apostles' Creed of the second century, but also from Easter "enthusiasm" to second-century Gnosticism' (Robinson, p 6); Raymond Brown has argued similarly, it may be remembered, in his excellent study of the formation of the Johannine corpus.²⁶ Neither the position later understood to be heretical, nor that later accepted as orthodox, simply preserves the tradition without alteration. The New Testament, taking shape in response to Gnostic views, must be regarded as representing a considerable development from the original experience. Robinson, drawing on a wide range of New Testament texts, makes a good case for arguing that the New Testament contains considerable evidence to suggest that the earliest tradition understands the resurrected Christ as a luminous, heavenly body (see Robinson, pp 7–16). Such accounts were naturally a boon to those intent in arguing for a gnostic interpretation and orthodoxy, in turn, reacted by increasingly emphasising the fleshly reality of the Risen Lord. Robinson concludes:

Thus although orthodoxy and heresy could on occasion accommodate themselves to language actually developed to implement the emphasis of the other alternative, by and large they divided the Pauline doctrine of luminous bodiliness between them; Orthodoxy defended the bodiliness by replacing luminousness with fleshiness, heresy exploited the luminousness by replacing bodiliness with spiritualness. (Robinson, p 17)

This body of evidence suggests that the earliest interpretation of the resurrection could well have been expressed in the language of exaltation and ascent, rather than of physical resuscitation. This pattern of death and exaltation is seen in the hymn preserved in Philippians (2.8) as well as Mark 14.62. Luke 24.26 and 46 seem to suggest that exaltation and resurrection may be used interchangeably to describe what happens after Jesus' death, so, too, does Matt. 28.16ff.²⁷ Here is a context for Schillebeeckx's reading of *ophthe* in terms which emphasise God's revelatory action over human sighting, as well as for his preference for granting hermeneutical priority to I Thess. 1.10 over I Cor. 15: 3–8.²⁸ Both Schillebeeckx (*Jesus*, p 346) and, earlier, Xavier Léon-Dufour,²⁹ point to I Thess. 1.10 and 4.14 as perhaps the earliest reference to the Easter experience and point out that here we have resurrection texts linked to a future coming but not to an immediate post-resurrection appearance.

Taken by itself, the Biblical use of the aorist passive *ophthe* remains ambiguous: grammatically it can be understood as referring equally to an encounter with the resuscitated Lazarus, destined to die once more, or the risen Christ, who once and for all has broken the chains of death. Carnley seems to be incorrect in his insistence that a post-resurrection sighting of Jesus lies necessarily at the foundation of the disciples' belief. As we have seen, other interpretations of the New Testament evidence are to hand. Indeed the material which we have discussed suggests that at the roots of the tradition lies an objective encounter with the risen Lord which only later, as a result of pressure from the debate with gnosticism, came to be defined in increasingly materialistic terms.

We must talk of Christ's resurrection in bodily terms in so far as it says something about the transformation of earthly existence. As humans we are embodied, part of the stuff of the universe.³⁰ In the resurrection of Jesus, there is not only a promise but the foretaste of the life to come. The disciples' encounter with their risen Lord makes this clear: there is both continuity with what has gone before but also a startling discontinuity. An encounter with the risen Lord is an experience of the very threshold of the new creation. His is a transforming presence. The Easter experience demands an engagement with the world not a flight from it. Different ages seek different ways of avoiding this truth. The besetting error of gnosticism lies in demanding that we look to escape from the messy continuum of human living. As Luke's second Ascension narrative warns the disciples, they are not to stand gazing up into heaven but to stay in the city (Acts 1.1–14). Paul's insistence that the disciple must not avoid the rigours of work has the same import (I Thess. 3.6–13). A materialistic reading of the resurrection suggests a different escape-route: the risen Lord becomes increasingly regarded as part of the continuum of human

history, the object of human enquiry. But Christ, in his resurrection, remains Subject, Lord of history, present not past. As Schillebeeckx insists, the new life which the resurrection promises is not appropriated merely by looking back and weighing the evidence, but by an encounter with the risen One, who comes to meet us on the road of our own engagement with human suffering and injustice. The disciple is called daily to conversion.

- 1 John Macquarrie, *Jesus Christ in Modern Thought*, SCM, 1990, pp 308–313, 408.
- 2 David Brown, *The Divine Trinity*, Duckworth, 1985, pp 138–142.
- 3 See the critical discussion of theism in Nicholas Lash, *Easter in Ordinary*, SCM, 1988, pp 103–4. See also, Fergus Kerr, 'What's wrong with realism anyway?', in *God and Reality*, ed. Colin Crowder, Mowbray, 1997, pp 128–143.
- 4 Brown points to a passage in *Jesus* which might serve to highlight the concern evident in the work of both critics regarding the inadequacies of Schillebeeckx's discussion: 'May it not be that Simon Peter—and indeed the twelve—arrived via their concrete experience of forgiveness after Jesus' death, encountered as grace and discussed among themselves (as they remembered Jesus' saying about, among other things, the gracious God) at the 'evidence for belief: the Lord is alive? He renews for them the offer of salvation; this they experience in their own conversion; he must therefore be alive... A dead man does not proffer forgiveness. A present fellowship with Jesus is thus restored' (Schillebeeckx, *Jesus*, p 391, cited Brown, *op. cit.*, p 140). Macquarrie's conclusion focuses the criticism: 'On this view, it was a study of the Old Testament and some of the deuterocanonical literature that led Peter and then the others to believe that God would not desert his chosen servant, and it was this biblical promise that gave rise to the belief that Christ had risen and then to stories of an empty tomb and appearances, not the other way round. I have already sufficiently criticised this view on the ground that something much more dramatic than meditation on a few passages of scripture would be needed to bring about the belief that Jesus had risen from the dead. That there was indeed an intensive searching of the scriptures in the primitive church is attested by Luke (Luke 24.27) and was noted by Strauss in the early nineteenth century, but it is most improbable that it was a major factor in creating belief in the resurrection' (Macquarrie, *op.cit.*, p 408).
- 5 Carnley's discussion of Schillebeeckx is to be found principally on pp 199–222.
- 6 Schillebeeckx states most clearly in his *Interim Report on the books Jesus and Christ*, SCM, 1980: 'My intention here was to releave this visual element of the deep dogmatic significance which some people attach to it, namely of being the foundation of the whole of the Christian faith' (p 82).
- 7 'In these accounts of "private appearances"—a record of very intimate, personal religious experiences—the community recognises its own experience' (Schillebeeckx, *Jesus*, p 345).
- 8 See André Pelletier, 'Les Apparitions du Ressuscité en termes de la Septante', *Biblica*, 51, (1970), pp 76–79.
- 9 See, also, Phil. 2.9, Col 2.15, Heb. 1.6 and also the early Judaeo-Christian, *Ascension of Isaiah*, 11.23. On the theophany of the Burning Bush see the discussion and references cited in Bernard Robinson, 'Moses at the Burning Bush', *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 75 (1997), pp 117–119.
- 10 Schillebeeckx, *Interim Report*, p 93.
- 11 Wolfhart Pannenberg, *The Apostles' Creed*, SCM, 1972, p 171. See also as Scott Holland's rich comment, 'at the resurrection it was not only Jesus who rose, but his whole life with him' (cited in C.F.Evans, *Resurrection and the New Testament*, SCM, 1970, p 136).

- 12 See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Scripture & Christology A Statement of the Biblical Commission with a Commentary*, Geoffrey Chapman, 1986, p 13.
- 13 James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, Oxford, 1961, perhaps especially pp 206–296.
- 14 But see Barr's strictures on the use of the word 'concept', *op. cit.*, p 210–213.
- 15 See the discussion of Old Testament references in *Jesus*, pp 383—385.
- 16 Notably Peter's Pentecost sermon, Acts 2.34, the significance of which is explored brilliantly in Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic*, SCM, 1961, pp 36–51, as well as Mk. 12.36, I Cor. 15.25, Heb. 1.3.13. Luke's own 'development and rethinking of eschatology in an individualistic direction' is explored in C.K.Barrett, 'Stephen and the Son of Man', in *Apophoreta. Festschrift für Ernst Haenchen*, (Beihefte zur ZNW 30), ed. W. Eltester, Berlin, 1964, pp 32–38.
- 17 Norman Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, SCM, 1967, pp 173–185. See also, Norman Perrin, 'Mark 14.62: the end product of a Christian Peshet Tradition?', *New Testament Studies*, 12 (January 1966), pp 150–155.
- 18 John A.T.Robinson, 'The Most Primitive Christology of All?', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 7, (1956), pp 177–189. Schillebeeckx cites this article in a bibliography, *Jesus*, p 405.
- 19 See, particularly, Margaret Barker, *The Risen Lord*, T&T Clark, 1996.
- 20 Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, DLT, 1964, p 249.
- 21 Daniélou, *op.cit.*, p 249 and p 254.
- 22 See Margaret Barker, *The Risen Lord*, p 23. See also pp 12ff.
- 23 See Martin Hengel, *The Son of God*, Fortress Press, 1976, p 91.
- 24 I must certainly agree with Carnley in dismissing Schillebeeckx's recognition of a distinct 'Q community' in a way that allows us to argue for an identifiable theology which may be contrasted with other New Testament communities (Carnley, 212–213). Even if Q is to be considered as an independent tradition, it is impossible to reach definite conclusions as to what it does not contain. Schillebeeckx's claim, for example, that 'not only is the resurrection not proclaimed; it is nowhere mentioned in the Q tradition' (*Jesus*, p 408) cannot be used appropriately as the basis of a conclusive argument. We simply do not know whether Q has a resurrection *kerygma*, or not; there is not sufficient evidence to say.
- 25 James M. Robinson, 'Jesus from Easter to Valentinus (or to the Apostles Creed)', *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 101, 1, (1982), pp 5—37.
- 26 Raymond Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*, Paulist Press, 1979.
- 27 Gerard O'Collins (*The Easter Jesus*, DLT, 1973, p 51), in his discussion of these passages, suggests the exaltation theme is a later interpretation of an earlier resurrection tradition. I would be rather more hesitant in arguing this.
- 28 I find Schillebeeckx's exegesis of I Cor. 15:3–8 intriguing but not convincing. Failing to go along with Schillebeeckx at this point does not vitiate Schillebeeckx's interpretation of *ophite*. Schillebeeckx sees the passage as a schematic account of the expansion of faith implying no 'localising' of the Jesus appearances: 'the localising intended relates to the area of mission into which the resurrection was being taken' (*Jesus*, p 350). One can only agree with his conclusion: 'the initial recognition of the eschatological presence and epiphany of God in Jesus Christ and thence on Christian emissaries is then the immediate ground of the apostolic preaching of the crucified - and-risen One to all the world' (pp 350—351). See the discussion in *Jesus*, pp 346—351.
- 29 Xavier Léon-Dufour, *Resurrection and the Message of Easter*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1974, p 13.
- 30 I have touched on this theme in 'Bonebound Spirituality', *New Blackfriars*, June 1990, pp 297–303.