Are not they being taught also? And where is the evidence that they are learning? The whole view sinks in quicksand.

I suggest that the Bible never resorts to the reincarnation doctrine because it is never trying to prove that everything comes out right. It sees the end as judgment, a sifting of good from evil, a final perspective of mercy and love. It does not try to know more than that. Ferré says, ". . . mature love, the definition of perfection, never knows the unsatisfaction and dissatisfaction of waiting for fulfillment" (p. 45). An important discussion could begin with that, to me, quite dubious statement.

These critical remarks are evoked by a powerful and probing book written by a vigorous theological thinker whom I have been privileged to know over many years as friend and coworker. I commend his book heartily to all seekers after ultimate truth. And if one finds that the way leads for him in a direction somewhat different from Dr. Ferré's he will still be grateful for what that other traveler is saying.

MAN BECOMING AND GOD REVEALING

Unfinished Man and the Imagination: Toward an Ontology and a Rhetoric of Revelation, by RAY L. HART. Herder and Herder, New York, 1968. 402 pp. $9.50. Reviewed by AMOS N. WILDER, professor emeritus of divinity, Harvard Divinity School.

WHAT MAKES this book distinctive and valuable is the full working out and interweaving of two approaches essential to a contemporary theology. One of these is the "new hermeneutic" and its concern with language and rhetoric as it seeks to deal with the historical character of the Christian faith and its tradition. The other is a phenomenological view of man in his aspect of becoming or "being-toward," and of the primordial activity of the imagination both in his coming to be and in all aspects of his knowing.

The author delimits his task. His starting point is the Christian given, the prius of faith. He confines himself to matters of method and does not propose to exegete particular doctrines. He takes it as axiomatic, however, that "God gives us our humanity in concert with the course of historical reality." He wishes to pursue his inquiry without being dependent upon any particular ontology, such as that of Heidegger, though he may draw upon such. He believes, moreover, that "we in America today are in the position of being able to think through the scope of theology without being tyrannized by a Great Vogue in doctrine of revelation."

The first and shorter of the two parts of the book deals with "contemporary foci of the problem of revelation." Three such foci are here identified in a preliminary way as they are highlighted by the dilemma of contemporary meaningfulness and translation. In the second and main part, entitled "Unfinished Man, Imagination and Revelation," each of these three foci is dealt with in a lengthy chapter, now in the context of a fundamental anthropology. These foci of revelation are (1) the Given, in its mediacy and immediacy, (2) its modes of cognition and their corresponding rhetorics ("the scale of mental acts"), and (3) the re-presentative and cognitive potency of tradition, involving the whole question of traditional symbolics.

Returning to the first part, we note the peculiar difficulties of the translation of the faith today. We are saddled not only with the fate of a long conceptualization of Christianity in doctrine. We are also "in bondage to a fated imagination." Both need to be dismantled and "de-recondited" by a proper hermeneutic. Tradition represents not only a remembering but also a forgetting, and a "forgetting that we forget." The Given is to be recovered, not only by breaking through old formulations, but also as it is quickened in new events (such as the event of Selma). It is not a question of returning to some supposed sheer immediacy of the Word since it always comes to men in particular historical conjunctions. We must also take account of the scale of religious testimony which runs from the first-order language of Scripture and avowal through intermediate rhetorics to theology, from direct reflexive response on the one hand to reflection on the other.

The task of the translator today cannot rightly be carried out either by the theological undertaker who assigns certain formulas or symbols to burial, or by the theological grave-robber who seeks to reanimate the language of some classical period of the church. Nor can the task be rightly carried out by a "theology of culture" which identifies a latent Christianity in contemporary secular experience and idiom. What is required is a hermeneutical theology which overcomes the truncation between past and present and between historical and systematic theology. It can do this only by allowing the revelation its full rights, also over our method; by taking full account of the various modalities of language in which the Given has been reported and diversified; and by attention to the ways in which all such responses to revelation have been conditioned by their historical settings in the past.

Of special importance is Hart's attempt to single out what is central and abiding in revelation, or what he calls its "fundament." He reminds us that the term "revelation" is a relatively recent one in theology for the divine disclosures. This term has itself become "sedimented" in our usage and carries dated implications. The reality in question always implies "revelation-to." As received by men it cannot then be a sheerly divine category. It is both *datum* and *dandum,* both noun

and verb, and cannot therefore be thought of as fixed, but related to all three of the modes of our temporality, past, present, and future. It comes to man not only in terms of some one faculty (reason, conscience, imagination), and not only in relation to some one theatre of his activity, but in relation to all the registers of his existence. Evidently the ways in which God informs our becoming are highly complex, and this complexity is all the greater since in one aspect they are associated with events in the past whose afterlife in the tradition has had its own vicissitudes.

In Part II the author inquires as to the dynamics of human being and becoming in order better to understand how revelation enters into the process and by what cognitive modalities. "If imagination is settled upon as the mode of concrete revelatory knowledge, that is owing to the role of the imagination in the constitution and expansion of human being." It is not a question here first of all "of psychological states or even of images but rather of that dimension of the life of the self which they express." Hart undertakes an extensive and technical phenomenology of the human self related to the work of Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Ricoeur, and others to show that man, as unfinished, projects himself through the operations of the imagination as it deals with the past (memory), the future (intention) and the present (concentration and choice). The Gospel itself arose as "event-inverbalizing language" (always "incorrigibly imaginative language") and this language is continually refunded in the crucible of new events.

The issues as to revelation or grace in our time are difficult (1) because of the collapse of ontological structures and (2) because the emergence of new concretions of faith in word and act are blocked by such a mass of pseudo-language and pseudo-symbol. The author is therefore driven to the prior and fundamental question: How does God solicit man to be and to become at any stage, and where is man, however fated, open to himself, to the *polis* and the neighbor, and to the world? The agent-self is rather an "operation" than an entity or an "essence." It is always "situated" in a larger movement of becoming, but it is always also situating itself as a world-intending power. Indeed, the root and ordering principle of personal being—the seat of the reality sense in man—is the will. It is at the point of the will that man is both finished and unfinished, situated and situating. But the will's dealing with reality involves the imagination first of all. "Imagination intends, and extends, the realm of 'coming to be' but also participates in such becoming." By the imagination the self entertains and deals with the immense complexity both of its background (memory) and foreground (relationships and options). Its apprehension of all such elements in its acts of choice begins at a precognitive or prepredicative and penumbral level: therefore the primordial role of imagination in our coming to be. Hart here reviews the classical views of the self as "form" or "essence" and rejects them in favor of the category

of "obediential potency." The self as "operation" has a potency or entelechy whose fulfillment is furthered by revelation in the context of historical life.

The final chapter deals with tradition and Scripture. Hart warns against a history-of-ideas approach to the meaning of the past and holds with Ricoeur that a phenomenology of symbols is required if we are to achieve a postcritical understanding of what the biblical images and archetypes intended and intend. Revelatory events cannot be construed or actualized apart from the images associated with them. He takes up successively (1) the relation between image and event, (2) paradigmatic events, (3) archetypes, and (4) historical master-images. All such imagery is discussed on the one hand in relation to the symbolic tradition in which it emerged, and again in terms of the "answering imagination" of our own time. If the tradition is to come to speech today in the first-order language of the Spirit and of power, it must relate itself to those idioms in which the secular imagination wrestles with our modern reality.

I have sought to summarize here a volume whose technical character is imposed by the issues at stake. Theologians and biblical interpreters in an understandable reaction against aestheticism, but also because of an inadequate view of language, have been incapable for the most part of according the imagination its rights. The book deals with these misunderstandings by a masterly analysis. But it also includes discussion of many of the topics argued in a wider public today, such as biblical imagery, art and religion, secularization, theological renewal, and the conditions for the work of the Spirit in our time. Technical treatment is interspersed with more general comment animated by a pungent style and concrete allusion. As this reviewer sees it, any criticism of the argument will have to do with detail. One could ask for a fuller clarification, for example, of a matter certainly recognized: the role of the moral consciousness in the revelatory transaction. Or one could urge that the archaic imagery of Scripture has a more continuing viability in the modern world than Hart appears to allow. But these are questions at a secondary level with regard to a work that surely represents a milestone in the enrichment and liberation of theological method.

RECOVERING THE DYNAMIC OF PREACHING

The Renewal of Preaching: A New Homiletic Based on the New Hermeneutic, by David James Randolph. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1969. 133 pp. $3.95. Reviewed by Donald M. Wardlaw, associate professor of homiletics, Columbia Theological Seminary.