

In "Jesus Has Many Names," Marxsen already operates with the distinction between what is first and what is second and with the concept of a reversal of direction whereby what is second is (mistakenly) treated as though it were what is first.

But in this earlier essay, what is first is "the experiences that one had with Jesus" (3 [217]), while what is second is "the [many] names these people give to Jesus [that] are a result of a process of reflection" (3 [216]). People "experience the speaking and acting of Jesus, but it produces different reactions in them. On the basis of these different reactions, however, they reason back to the one from whom the reactions proceed. And then they give Jesus different names: positive, neutral, or even negative" (3 [216]). By the same token, the "direction in which the transference of names to Jesus took place [was] from the experiences one had had with and [of] Jesus" (5 [219]). In short, first, experience of Jesus, and second, on the basis of one's reaction to him as experienced, the transference of names to him expressive of one's reaction.

In *Jesus and Easter*, as well as "The Limit to the Possibility of Christological Assertions," Marxsen still operates with the same distinction between what is first and what is second (or last) and with the same concept of a reversal of direction. In these places, however, what is first is "proclaiming only the activity [*sc.* of Jesus experienced and believed in as the activity of God]," while what is second is "a proclamation which includes the acting agent [*i.e.*, Jesus himself as the person acting]" (*Jesus and Easter*: 30). Thus Marxsen typically distinguishes between "first sentences" and "second [or, in some places, last, or final] sentences." "First sentences have as their content the *activity* of Jesus, the quality of which is believed. Then in second sentences the acting *Jesus* is qualified (described) on the basis of the quality of the activity" (34). Correspondingly, the reversal of direction pointed up in these later writings involves taking "assertions," or "statements," or "sentences" that are in fact "derivative" and treating them as if they were "primary" ("The Limit," etc.: 52; cf. *Jesus and Easter*: 36: "Statements which are possible only as second sentences have been made into first sentences.").

Striking in the later writings, however, is Marxsen's insistence that christology "always starts out with the experience that people have had with the activity of Jesus" ("The Limit," etc.: 50). In other words, he not only never questions, but explicitly affirms, that the perspective of the earlier essay is still valid. The difference seems to be simply that, in the later writings, what is second in the first is itself nuanced so that one can distinguish a first and a second even with respect to it. In this way, "implicit christology" comes to include even qualification of Jesus' activity as "eschatological," while "explicit christology" is limited to statements attributing certain qualities to Jesus's person. In the earlier essay, by contrast, "implicit christology" is limited to Jesus' activity—"christology *in act*, as Marxsen calls it—while "explicit christology" is taken to include all christology of reflection, even that which says nothing about Jesus himself but simply qualifies his activity as "eschatological."

The importance of this difference clearly ought not to be exaggerated. But there definitely seems to be such a difference.

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