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THINK ABOUT WHEN WRITING ANTI-AR, BOOK

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BARMANN'S AND VON HUGEL'S PRO-MODERNISM

BOOK

not loyalty "to its authority structure"

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, within the Catholic Church, arose, a liberalizing movement. While this movement, often called "modernism," was itself divided on various issues, it was united in that it professed loyalty to institutional Catholicism and ~~its authority structure~~, while insisting various teachings of the Church be changed to place them into conformity with the latest findings of science and Bible criticism. A controversy developed between the scholars ~~who advocated modernism~~ ^{outward} who desired intellectual freedom within the Church and it to change its doctrines, and the defenders of the traditional teachings, who saw them and their views as heretical and as denying true Christian beliefs. Baron Friedrich von Hügel (1852-1925), a modernist scholar of German-Scot background, was a major player in this controversy, although he normally operated behind the scenes. Lawrence F. Barmann in Baron Friedrich Von Hügel and the Modernist Crisis in England¹ presents a ~~very~~ thorough, very detailed, yet decidedly biased analysis of the Baron's activities and his conflicts with authority in the Catholic Church, for he cannot hardly conceive that the authority figures who destroyed the ~~liberal Catholic~~ ^{modernist} movement were sincere in their convictions or (worse yet) could be right in their beliefs.

Barmann's work mostly describes the scholarly activities of the Baron on behalf of modernism in England as well as in France and Italy in the period 1890-1925. After briefly describing his childhood and largely self-educational preparation ^{for} in his career as a liberal scholar, Barmann describes how von Hügel launched campaigns defending various fellow liberal scholars, such as Alfred Loisy and George Tyrell, ~~generally behind the scenes.~~ In print he also attempted to narrow the application of various Vatican and Papal decrees that

attacked the methodology and/or results of Bible criticism, such as the
¹Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1972.

encyclical Providentissimus Deus (1893) and the condemned set of propositions found in Lamentabili Sane Exitu (190⁹). His and others' constant struggles with the defenders of traditional orthodoxy, especially with those in high places in the Vatican, receive detailed attention, as well as his attempts to persuade those in authority to a different, liberal and/or liberal-tolerating, course. Von Hügel dies in 1925, after seeing the modernist movement within Catholicism mostly destroyed by excommunications and other suppressive measures, leaving him officially uncondemned², but largely alone in his beliefs within the Church.

Barmann's ~~work~~ doesn't attempt to write a full autobiography of von Hügel, nor does he describe in systematic detail the Baron's theological ideas. By leaving out so often von Hügel's personal life, or at least its potentially significant effects on his work, it is somewhat hard to get a feel for the Baron as a man, as opposed to as a campaigning ~~theologian~~ ^{intellectual} deeply immersed in church politics. For example, von Hügel's deafness gets only incidentally mentioned once or twice, when such a problem could have been fundamental in shaping his life, or his outlook upon it (B., p. 68). His concerns over his own health and his wife's also ~~get~~ ^{are} mentioned in passing now and then, but no attempt is made to see how such problems may have affected the Baron's worldview (B., p. 33, 70, 72, 136). Perhaps the Baron's attaching upon the importance of suffering in developing one's human potential was related to his own and his family's health problems, but Barmann doesn't speculate on such possible connections (B., p. 73).

Likewise, the specific liberal theological ideas von Hügel and others had and which were at the center of the modernist crisis get mentioned, but they largely take a backseat to describing how the Baron worked to defend these ideas and those who advocated them in print. ~~Mentions of~~ such issues as the unity of Isaiah, the date of Daniel, the author of the fourth Gospel, etc. are

^{mentioned} specific ~~made~~, but the reasons why the Baron holds the (liberal) views he does hold ^{newspaper} but he is never forced to specifically deny his liberal view of Scripture, ~~later in life~~ (B., p. 184).

aren't hardly ever given (B., p. 20, 221). Only a very few of the specific propositions condemned in Lamentabili Sane Exitu get included in the text (B., p. 190-2). While Barmann routinely assumes the Baron's ~~liberal~~ views on such subjects must be--of course!--correct, little argumentation or proof for them is ever given in the text.

Since Barmann doesn't closely analyze the Baron's character or personality (although, to be fair, that's not the point of Barmann's work), he sometimes takes von Hugel's description of himself for granted, when further analysis could be fruitful. For example, he quotes von Hugel as saying he doesn't like Church politics: "I am no politician; even Church politics I quickly have too much of" (B., p. 30). Yet, on the other hand while he disliked the "Labour and Battle" of ecclesiastical politics in Rome, "(H)e found it exhilarating and would be unwilling to exchange it for a quite existence elsewhere" (B., p. 87). Indeed, much of the book is a record of how von Hugel defends Loisy and Tyrrell by various backdoor maneuverings and attempts to influence his peers and those in the hierarchy ~~over him~~ to look favorably upon scholars in the Church engaged in Bible criticism. Indeed, although von Hugel is ~~only~~ a mere layman in the Catholic Church, he shows himself to be a consummate player in church politics throughout much of his career, although Barmann never states this. In the end, he and his point of view loses, but this was due to the weakness of the hand he was dealt, not the skill with which it was played by the Baron. Hence, since ^{von}Hugel did so much church politicking, he probably liked doing it, as well as felt a duty to engage in it.

Also, von Hugel engages in a major number of word games to try to avoid the clear intent of various Vatican decrees and others in authority in the Church, although Barmann never really calls him to account for this due to sympathizing with his position (~~one suspects~~). For example, in Providentiss-
ismus Deus, von Hugel hunted through ~~it~~ to find loopholes in its plain endorsement of an inerrant, infallible Bible ~~in its original autograph~~, which his

friend Loisy himself was skeptical about finding (B., p. 42). Likewise, when the Holy Office issued a decree that ^{the} part of I John 5:7 which is missing from almost all Greek manuscripts was to be considered inspired Scripture, the Baron ^{wrote} ~~had~~ The Tablet ~~publish~~ a letter ~~of his~~ that questioned the finality of this decree (B., p. 67). Similarly, he goes over the Vatican decree Lamentabili Sane Exitu trying to find a way to lessen its authoritativeness based (quite literally) on what day of the week it was issued, which Loisy properly looked upon as an illusory subterfuge (B., p. 190-1). Von Hugel ~~wrote and had~~ published a letter that seemed to endorse the encyclical Provententissimus Deus, yet tried to interpret it as loosely as possible in order to try to get the higher critics within the Church intellectual breathing space, when in fact he felt the encyclical was trash, plain and simple (B., p. 45-47). Since the Baron greatly valued the institutional structure of the Church, his refusal to openly condemn the Church head on ~~over~~ such an issue is very understandable, but one has to wonder whether such tactics are at some level deceitful, which Barman says little about (B., p. 78, 250).

Barmann's work is very scholarly in its attention to detail while pushing through ^{the} a mountain of documents ^{upon which} he bases his monograph, ~~upon~~ Barman frequently corrects the minor errors of other scholars or sources (B., p. 127, 137, 151). He constructs an excellent, highly detailed narrative of what the Baron is doing behind the scenes and in print to promote modernism during the 1890-¹⁰~~1925~~ period by following the Baron's diaries, letters, published pieces, and the writings of others, like Loisy's memoirs.

~~However~~ ^{however} pervasive in Barmann's work is a very entrenched bias against those who held to the traditional teachings of the Church, and especially against those in authority who sought to enforce orthodox doctrine. He, much like the Baron himself, cannot ^{hardly} see any sincerity or truth in those holding views opposed to liberal Catholicism. Hence the authorities in the Catholic Church are seen as "throwing up a barrier of prejudice," ~~that~~ the

Baron was on the side of "sincerity, rather than (that of) orthodoxy," ~~that~~
"the Pope and curial Rome (made) ever more irresponsible statements and
decisions," ~~that~~ Wildrid Ward made "excuses for the excesses of the authorities,"
and ~~that~~ the authorities often were "hysterical" and "reactionary" (B., p. 33,
111, 207, 210, 246). "The authorities destroyed a whole generation of thinkers
within the Roman Catholic church, forcing those who would survive as members
of that institution back into the thought patterns and formulae of another
age" (B., p. 245). The good guys and the bad guys are not hard to find here!

The hazards of this bias are clear when the evidence could really be on
the side of traditional orthodoxy's view of Scripture. ~~A contemporary of von
Hugel's, Robert Dick Wilson (1856-1930), who ^{studied} ~~obtained~~ a Ph.D. at Princeton and~~
~~two further years of postgraduate study at the University of Berlin, taught~~
~~at Western Theological Seminary and Princeton and mastered over 40 Semitic~~
~~languages, was willing to say: "I may add that the result of my forty-five~~
~~years of study of the Bible has led me all the time to a firmer faith that~~
~~in the Old Testament we have a true historical account of the Israelite people."~~³

substantive
The next
example
is more
telling

To give an example of how orthodoxy has been often vindicated by research into
the bible's origins, the book of Daniel on philological grounds alone cannot
be dated later than the fifth or late sixth centuries, since if it had been
written in the 160's b.c. as the higher critics suppose, ^{or} its vocabulary should
have been similar to what has been found in the Dead Sea scrolls of Qumran.⁴
Similarly, the Pentateuch is full of loan words from Egyptian, ~~which would make~~
~~sense if Moses really was the author since he spent much of his life there,~~ but
doesn't contain once the term "the Lord of Hosts," which was a staple reference
to God by the post-exilic prophets, which indicates it had to have been
written much earlier before ^{when} this term was in common use. Hence, while some
loose ends almost inevitably will always exist for a traditional orthodox
view of the Bible, it's hazardous for Barmann to assume, as the Baron did,
³ ~~emphasis removed~~, as found in David Otis Fuller, ed., Which Bible? (Grand
Rapids, Mich.: Grand Rapids International Publications, 1975), p. 42.

⁴Gleason L. Archer, Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties (Grand Rapids, Mich.:
Zondervan, 1982), p. 283.

that "brutal facts" refute the traditional view of the inspiration of Scripture (von Hugel's emphasis, B., p. 214).

Hence, ~~While~~ Barmann has done much valuable work in throwing light on how a particular modernist scholar (Baron von Hugel) defended and advocated his views within the Catholic Church, he shares his subject's bias against the wisdom of the authorities within the Catholic Church. Hence, he ends up seeing the Pope's secretary of state, Merry Del Val, as sending a "curt snub" of a letter to von Hugel, when in fact Del Val may have been annoyed at being manipulated by the Baron's letter (written with 'much pains' he said) ~~to look more favorably upon him because he had been kind to the Baron's children~~ (B., p. 105). Hence, with such a bias against the Catholic Church's hierarchy, the analytical portions of Barmann's work are going to be seriously off-base on the motives behind the hierarchy's actions, which mar his work here as a whole, and make it harder to understand what the other side was thinking and doing during the modernist crisis in England and France in the Catholic Church.

*Your style could be more economical;
that is, it is sometimes too wordy.
~~It uses unnecessary words~~ in some
sentences.*