

# PARALLEL GUIDE 4

## *A People with a Mission*

### **Summary**

Christian missionary zeal thrived during the nineteenth century, even in the turmoil of revolution. Missionaries from various groups organized to translate scripture and religious materials. Their practices were rooted in the gospel and in the methods developed by the Catholic Church in prior centuries. That zeal lasted until after World War I. Only after World War II, when the colonial empires collapsed and native peoples asserted their rights to independence, did the colonial missionary methods come to an end.

### **Learning Objectives**

- The importance of Raymond Lull to the development of missionary methods
- The importance of Roman Catholic missions during the Age of Discovery
- The rise of Anglican missions and the development of the Anglican Communion
- The lack of mission strategies among the churches in the East
- The Protestant churches' rise to the call to mission in the nineteenth century
- The relationship of missions and colonization by European powers
- The post-World War II change in mission strategy

### **Assignments to Deepen Your Understanding**

1. In what way would you address the issue of the Christian desire (some say mandate) to tell the world about the gospel in the face of the accusation that it fails to respect the faith of people who are not Christians?
2. How do you explain to prospective converts the conflicts between Christians and Christian religious bodies, when the gospel is a proclamation of oneness in Christ?

### **Preparing for Your Seminar**

What do you see as your call to mission? What are the mission opportunities where you live? How could you engage them to bring Christ's word? Would your interpretation of the Gospel convince someone that the way of Christ is the way of truth and light?

### **Additional Sources**

Roland Allen, *The Compulsion of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983).

Ian Douglas, *Fling Out the Banner* (New York: Church Hymnal Corporation, 1997).

Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Penguin Books: Baltimore, 1964).

Titus Presler, *Horizons of Mission* (Cambridge: Cowley Publications, 2001).

Parallel Guide 4

William L. Sachs, *The Transformation of Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

## A PEOPLE WITH A MISSION

The pressure to bring the gospel to the nations has fluctuated over time. The very possibility of missionary activity beyond the apostles' initial work begins with the Christian movement's growth into an institution during the first centuries. The Great Commission at the end of Matthew's Gospel (Matt. 28: 19-20) is thought by some to be a later addition to sustain the missionary zeal.

We learned in Year Three how Christianity spread throughout Europe, North Africa, and even as far as India, only to be pushed back by the followers of Mohammed. The failure of the crusades to regain the lands lost to Islam and the decimation of European population by the plague effectively halted missionary endeavors for a time.

A new impetus for missionary activity developed during the age of discovery and conquest by the European nations. Perhaps Raymond Lull (c.1235-1315) provided an example for the future. A distinguished scholar, he insisted that a missionary should be fluent in the language of those he sought to convert. He sought to bring Christianity to the Islamic Saracens and made four visits to North Africa to preach to the Muslims. He died from injuries suffered there, a martyr to his cause. Lull's mission was followed by the Christian reconquest of Spain and Portugal, which had fallen to Islam in its earlier sweep across North Africa and the Straits of Gibraltar. Christian forces crossed the Straits of Gibraltar in 1415 and bishops were subsequently enthroned for Cueta in 1421 and Tangier in 1468. When explorations began under the leadership of Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), the explorers assumed that missionaries would accompany them to bring native peoples to the Christian faith. This is important now because the missionary thrust helped to shape the political as well as the current ecclesiastical landscape. In some cases various branches of Christianity were assimilated and became the cultural faith of the region. In other cases there was a reaction against the missionary endeavors, and Christianity was rejected. In still other places, the growing diversity of Christian offerings became matters of conflict and confusion.

Columbus' first trip began in 1492 and the conquest of the Americas occurred quickly after that. Spanish and Portuguese missionaries followed the conquerors. In 1493 Pope Alexander VI, in his bull of demarcation, granted the Portuguese exclusive rights to what is now Brazil and the rest of the Americas to the Spanish. He enjoined the conquerors "to bring to Christian faith the peoples who inhabit these islands and the mainland . . . and to send to the said islands and to the mainland wise, upright, god-fearing, and virtuous men who will be capable of instructing the indigenous peoples in good morals and in the Catholic faith." Dominicans and Jesuits led the way. By 1511 there was a bishop in Santo Domingo (Hispañola), by 1522 there were eight bishops in the Antilles, and a bishop was settled in Mexico by 1525.

Through the Portuguese explorers' incursion into Asia, the Western missionaries encountered the Church of St. Thoma (Kerala), an ancient Christian mission established, according to tradition, by the apostle Thomas in southwestern India. As the explorers pushed forward, so did the missionaries, and so the Portuguese brought Christianity to Goa and to Malacca.

In 1549 Francis Xavier landed in Japan. The evangelization of Japan remained with the Jesuits until 1593. By 1600 there were probably 300,000 Christians in Japan. The persecution that ensued brought this to an end, except for a small remnant whose Cathedral was at Nagasaki. Japan remained relatively closed until the nineteenth century.

Missionaries came to China by way of the Portuguese settlement in Macao, an island off the southeastern tip of China. On the mainland Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), with the trick of knowing how to restart a clock, managed to gain support from the emperor and remain in the capital city for a decade, permitting him to begin a Christian congregation. Similarly missionaries began to work in the Philippines, probably arriving there from Mexico. The Pope created the See of Manila in 1579 and elevated it to an archbishopric in 1595.

Throughout the age of discovery the first Christian missions were Roman Catholic, but they worked in competition with each other. In 1622 Pope Gregory XV created the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, sometimes nicknamed "the Propaganda." Under the leadership of its first secretary, Francesco Ingoli, Roman Catholics were organized along national lines. During this era the Spanish missions extended their lines of communications along the west coast of the United States and into the interior. Many famous American place names derive from this era: San Antonio and San Marcos, Texas, and San Francisco and San Luis Obispo, California.

By the seventeenth century Jacques Cartier (1534) had claimed Canada for France, and in 1615 Mass was celebrated in what is now Montreal. Subsequently the Ursuline nuns sent missionaries to Canada where they toiled amid hardships.

Things changed quickly in later years. After 1600 Protestant nations entered into exploration and missionary work. The English captured Jamaica and began to dominate the Caribbean. Holland (Netherlands) established colonies in South America (Surinam) and the Far East (Indonesia). England had defeated the Spanish Armada, and from that time on Spain's fortunes receded. Portugal, a small nation, could not maintain a global presence. In China the government began to repress Christians, so that, during the eighteenth century, many in China were in hiding. Thus, while much had been accomplished during the previous centuries, by the end of the eighteenth century the Christian missions under the leadership of Roman orders were waning.

### **The Eastern Church**

The Eastern Orthodox church in general was paralyzed by a number of factors. First was the virtual destruction of its great center, Constantinople, by Western Christians

during the crusades. This effectually marked the end of the Eastern Empire. The second blow came from the rise of Islam, which nearly entered the heart of Europe. Only at Vienna, in 1529, then at the sea battle of Lepanto in 1571, and finally again at Vienna in 1683 were the Turkish armies finally defeated. But by then the Eastern church lay largely in Islamic hands. Only in Russia did Christianity spread, and Russian missionaries brought Christianity to the eastern frontiers of Russia. Not until the seventeenth century did missionaries come to East Siberia. The first Christian witness on the Kamchatka peninsula probably arrived in 1705. In the eighteenth century the first Russian missionaries came to the Aleutian Islands and eventually settled in what is today United States soil, formerly the Russian outpost of Alaska.

Protestants first spent their energies fighting for survival in the Thirty-Years' War. With the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 a sense of stability emerged. Internal divisions and controversies that had racked Protestant-dominated lands were, if not resolved, at least contained by the juridical decision expressed as *cuis regio, eius religio*, which loosely translates to: "The religion of the ruler shall be the religion of the land." By this nationalizing of a particular brand of Christianity, proselytizing efforts outside a jurisdiction could be deemed as actions to destabilize a local government, a matter that made efforts to obtain conversions something close to treason.

The German-speaking people were to remain divided into electorates until the end of the nineteenth century, so there was little energy to send out missionaries. The thrust of Protestant missions thus fell to the commercially enterprising, the Dutch and the English. Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) wrote *De veritate religionis Christianae* (The Truth about the Religion of Christians) for Dutch sailors to use as a text, and the Dutch East India Company established a seminary in Leyden to train Dutch ministers for service in Indonesia and Ceylon. When the Dutch drove the Spaniards from Taiwan (Formosa) in 1624, they tried to establish a Christian community. This ended badly, however, for Chinese pirates in turn threw out the Dutch in 1661.

Early charters granted by the English crown stipulated that their colonists were to win over the local population to the one and true God. John Eliot (1604-1690) had some success by first learning the Mohican language. The New Testament was published in 1661 and the Old Testament in 1663 in that language. French missionaries in New France produced glossaries and grammars of Indian languages. In Canada, Anglican missionaries in the 19th century translated scripture into aboriginal languages, developing a system of syllabic writing to put Indian and Inuit languages on paper.

By 1701 the Anglican Society for the Propagation of the Gospel began its work to minister to Anglicans in America and the West Indies. As a parallel, the Moravians also began to send out missionaries. They established missions in Greenland and Labrador as well as on the island of St. Thomas in the West Indies and even extended their missions to Surinam (Dutch Guiana).

Stephen Neill in *A History of Christian Missions* suggests that, by 1800, it was still not certain that Christianity would truly become a universal religion. While outposts had been established in various countries in Asia, this was still only a first step. In

some nations like Japan, Christianity had been generally repelled. Hinduism still dominated in India. But in the course of the nineteenth century, European nations established a domination over much of the world. For a time the sun truly did not set on the British flag. By 1914 Britain controlled much of Africa. Belgium had its Congo state, which was the private possession of the King of Belgium. Germany had outposts in Africa, China, and some of the Pacific Islands. France had colonized the Sudan and parts of North Africa as well as islands in the South Pacific, and Italy had succeeded in claiming Ethiopia. Even Antarctica received its first temporary settlers, complete with foreign flags.

The missionaries followed the European regimes and formed numerous missionary societies. Among them were the English Baptists (1792), the London Missionary Society (1795), the (Anglican evangelical) Church Missionary Society (1799), the British and Foreign Bible Society (1804), the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1810), the American Baptist Missionary Board (1814), the Berlin Society and the Basel Mission (1815). Other national groups formed shortly thereafter. The result was a great new missionary energy, albeit one that promoted Western culture along with Christianity. In keeping with this outlook Western leadership was favored over the raising of indigenous bishops and other church leaders.

The new mission churches followed the religion of the controlling national government so that the Christian missions changed on occasion when the dominating power changed. For instance, when African colonies fell to German control, Lutherans entered. The Anglican Communion followed the British flag into places as diverse as New Zealand and Australia, as well as the British colonies in Africa, and the Roman Catholics followed the Spanish and French flags in various areas of the Americas.

### **Foreign Mission Activity**

The early twentieth century was a time of strenuous foreign mission activity. The work grew out of nineteenth-century roots and depended on the support of America's mainline churches. In a less than happy merger between foreign missions and foreign policy, the advance of faith seemed to coincide with the march of civilization. Americans had offered relatively little to the African mission field in the nineteenth century. There Europeans predominated, the Church of England having an especially powerful presence. In Asia, on the other hand, the American influence was profound. By the beginning of the new century numerous American missionaries were already active in China, the Episcopal Church among them. But China's vastness made even the most optimistic missionaries cautious. After the Spanish-American War, Americans rushed to the Philippines. There the Episcopal Church exercised a powerful influence in a predominantly Roman Catholic society. In 1948 it bestowed the historic episcopate on the Philippine Independent Church, also called the Alipayan Church, which had separated from Roman Catholicism in 1902 as a protest against Roman control of the clergy. At the same time American political style decisively changed the Filipino model of government, while American technology began the process of modernization.

The Episcopal Church was a pioneer in Japanese mission work. In 1859 Channing Moore Williams of Richmond, Virginia, became one of the first Protestant mission-

aries in Japan. As bishop of Japan, Williams founded a small school for boys, St. Paul's School, in Tokyo in 1874. Soon St. Paul's grew into Rikkyo University and expressed a novel blend of Japanese ways and an Episcopal ethos. Meanwhile Williams merged his work with that of British and Canadian Anglican missionaries. The Nippon Sei Ko Kai (Holy Catholic Church in Japan) became unique in Anglicanism when it united the activities of several branches of Anglicanism.

Much more than their British counterparts, American missionaries in Japan resisted training Japanese leadership for the church. The church's ultimate success, they were convinced, depended upon American direction. A few American missionaries, however, came to the conclusion that the church should have local leadership. Among them was Henry St. George Tucker, a lanky, young Virginian who would later become bishop of Virginia and still later presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. He came to Japan as a missionary late in the nineteenth century and became president of Rikkyo University and bishop of Kyoto. In 1923, after twenty-five years of mission service, Tucker resigned his See, convinced that the Japanese church required Japanese leadership, not perpetual American oversight. Few missionaries understood the wisdom of his resignation.

Unlike Bishop Tucker, most missionaries could not distinguish between the gospel and American civilization. Often the message was communicated unconsciously. Americans brought a way of life that was increasingly technological. Technology seemed the key to modernization, and modernization appeared to be the logical outcome of a nation's turning to Christ.

As the new century unfolded, Americans had convincing new evidence of the prowess of technology. Already the railroad and the telegraph crisscrossed America. Electrification was not far behind. Henry Ford's assembly line made automobiles widely available. Even more astounding was a flimsy creation built by the Ohio brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright and tested on North Carolina dunes. The Wrights epitomized American initiative and ingenuity.

As airplanes became more sophisticated and visible to the general public, so did radio. At first, only Morse code could be sent by wireless communication. Pioneers such as Lee De Forest soon perfected a way of transmitting sound, and by the early 1920s news and entertainment were broadcast. Some visionaries even prophesied that pictures in color could be broadcast into private homes. Many found the idea hard to imagine. It was an achievement in itself that they could visit the local theater where motion pictures provided the latest in entertainment. The first television set was built in 1928.

The strength of America's technological development was its public character. It afforded dramatically improved transportation and communication. There was a sense of public participation in America's greatness and, consequently, great pride in America's advances. Everywhere Americans looked, technology was improving the lot of the people.

## The First World War (1914-1918)

Although Americans sometimes felt that their presence was necessary overseas to resolve continuing conflicts and to establish justice, as in Cuba and the Philippines, there was a reluctance to enter global conflict. Europe, the old world, was seen as a corrupt, crumbling order. When war broke out in 1914, Americans at first held themselves aloof. President Woodrow Wilson hoped that American influence would provide leverage for peace. America's example should be moral and diplomatic rather than warlike. America should resist being sullied by age-old European quarrels. But it was no longer possible for European powers to make war on a purely European scale. Europe's economic and political influence had for some time extended to other continents. America was bound to Europe. Aggressive actions by German submarines offered tangible justification that America had been violated. In 1917, America declared war.

The Protestant churches generally embraced the war with enthusiasm. Lyman Abbott, the Congregational preacher and social reformer, called the war a "twentieth-century crusade." Many Americans agreed. Abbott rallied loyal Americans to make the world both peaceful and Christian. Many other church leaders, however, resisted his strident appeal. Americans whose ethnic roots were in nations involved in the struggle, notably German-Americans, were appalled by the zealous nationalism. Even apart from war issues, occasional outbursts of hatred against minorities—Blacks, Mexicans, and Asians—revealed the ugly side of America's white majority. The mainline denominations did not endorse such bigotry, at least in its violent forms, but they did represent the American establishment.

## A Return to Internal Issues

With the conclusion of World War I in 1918, the hopes of America seemed to have been achieved. The major denominations began to focus on their own internal issues. During the waning years of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century, for example, the Episcopal Church had made numerous changes. The Book of Common Prayer in its 1892 version had been hailed as a triumph. In 1913, however, the General Convention appointed a joint commission to begin the process of prayer book revision. The Convention of 1910 had made proposals that produced a new hymnal in 1916.

During the same era the Episcopal Church organized into provinces. In 1917, the Church Pension Fund formally was formed. The work of Bishop William Lawrence of Massachusetts helped to provide a decent standard of living for those who served the church.

Bishop Lawrence, although his Massachusetts roots extended into Puritan Calvinist teachings, also proudly espoused a gospel of Christian wealth. Like a number of prominent clergy, he held that wealth was the inevitable result of hard work. God, he held, had directed humanity to subdue nature, to promote order, and to be fruitful. Those who worked hard would be rewarded. America and its institutions were divinely ordained and chosen by God to vindicate the divine plan. Those who sought a place in this framework could achieve it by work.

With the conclusion of World War I, the limits of America's assurance soon became apparent. It was ironic that, at the hour of their greatest apparent strength, the major denominations began to show their tragic flaws. The nation was changing faster than the churches. Institutions other than the churches such as labor unions and other civil rights groups, had proposals to make concerning the direction of the country. As wars ended and America retreated into itself, the influence of the churches on American life began to weaken.

Protestants generally had hoped that the end of the war would be the opportunity for a united crusade. Late in 1918 leaders of major denominations proposed a scheme of global evangelism and social ministry on a lavish scale. The Interchurch World Movement relied upon the cooperation and nationalism that remained after the war. Elaborate programs of publicity and education were scheduled to begin in 1920. John R. Mott, a lay leader of ecumenical missions, was chosen as chairman. His lieutenants boasted of the ease with which millions of dollars could be raised to finance the effort. Initial estimates targeted \$336 million as the goal. At Atlantic City in 1920, a preliminary conference reassured the churches that their campaign would be a great success.

Sadly, the initial optimism lacked real substance. At the same time the League of Nations seemed doomed to failure. Though Woodrow Wilson touted the need for an international forum and for American initiative in global affairs, public opinion had other priorities. In March 1920, the Senate rejected participation by the United States in the League of Nations. Woodrow Wilson, a Presbyterian whose faith guided his political decisions, was crushed by the defeat of his ideals.

Like the League of Nations, the Interchurch World Movement also failed. It appeared costly and bureaucratic and assumed that people in the pew would give their unquestioning support. The loyalty of parishioners was not uncritical. The fire of the old social gospel was dying. The interchurch plan failed and, when it did, the churches had no strategy for coping with the decline of their own influence.

American history overflows, however, with other popular religious movements which brought about social change. By the 1920s, a tidal wave of conservative religious fervor was sweeping across the nation and asserting an influence that astonished those who tended to dismiss popular movements. One of the expressions of this fervor was the honoring of Sunday as a day of rest. Late in the nineteenth century evangelical Americans had called for public observance of the Sabbath. Evangelicals taught that no business should be conducted on Sunday.

In 1901, Episcopal bishops had issued a pastoral letter deploring Sunday business and recreation. They called upon American families to spend Sundays as a symbol of "our liberties, our government, our English civilization." By the 1920s, the honoring of a day of rest had, at least nominally, become general.

## The Interchurch Movement

4

## Evangelical Crusades

Bishops and other leaders of the churches, however, had great difficulty rallying around the other great evangelical cause: temperance. From the late nineteenth century temperance had captured the evangelical imagination. Figures such as Carrie Nation and groups such as the Anti-Saloon League and the Women's Christian Temperance Union amassed impressive political strength. Their base was in rural areas and small towns, where liquor symbolized the evil drift of American life and the increasing presence of Roman Catholic immigrants. Evangelical sentiments were directed by progressivist and populist politicians, and by a stream of evangelists, especially Billy Sunday, a former baseball player who felt himself anointed to save souls. With astonishing speed, this unlikely coalition pushed a constitutional amendment, the eighteenth, through Congress. Alcoholic beverages were prohibited as of January 1920. Evangelicals and progressivists alike predicted a new era of moral reform.

### **Pentecostal Zeal**

Until the present day, prohibition was the pinnacle of conservative evangelical muscle-flexing, although few at the time would have guessed this. Late in the nineteenth-century a series of secessions had rocked the Methodist Church. A line of new churches, notably the Church of the Nazarene and the Assembly of God, experienced growing dissatisfaction with the social respectability of Methodism. It had become indistinguishable from other prestigious churches. It was too sedate. The new movements turned instead to the promised power of the Holy Spirit. In such "holiness" groups, people often experienced speaking in tongues. They attributed their ecstatic utterances to the Spirit, who gave them power to speak again the ancient languages of faith. Pentecostalism went far beyond Methodism. In 1906, it founded a center at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles.

Fundamentalists, pentecostalists, and conservative evangelicals have never been considered identical. Rarely, indeed, have they found common theological cause. Fundamentalists assert the supreme authority of the Bible, literally interpreted. For them, pentecostal assertions of new gifts of the Holy Spirit were anathema. And evangelicals, while conservative in their interpretation of scripture, do not insist on literalism. The history of these groups is one of repeated division in the hope of retaining a religious and moral purity that is usually defined according to highly stylized standards. But such groups have had one common enemy—immorality—in American life as well as in the mainline churches. When able to agree on a particular target and tactic, a series of unwieldy groups can mount a potent crusade, until slumbering differences among them awaken, and infighting begins again. First alcohol was their greatest enemy. Having triumphed over demon rum, they found a new target: evolution.

### **World War II**

The second great world war of the twentieth century brought missionary work to a halt. Missionaries often returned to their homelands. Some, like the bishop of Singapore, remained as witnesses to the faith and suffered under occupation. With the war ended, missionary societies and national churches again sought to send out missionaries. But the world had changed and the second half of the twentieth century saw a different movement.

**Roland Allen**

A missionary to China between 1895 and 1903 wrote several books during the first quarter of the twentieth century which influenced the work of missions in the post-World War II era. In *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (1927) Roland Allen argued forcibly that basing church expansion on importing highly trained clergy into the mission field was inappropriate and ineffective. St. Paul, he argued in a successor book, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* raised up local leaders in the churches he founded and left them to preside, himself providing supervision and counsel as his letters made possible.

In the post-World War II adjustment the Western nations rapidly lost their colonies. The Commonwealth, a free association of independent nations, brought together former British Colonies such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and others. After the war the Philippines voted for independence, the English were forced out of India and the Middle East, and France lost Indochina with the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954. In Africa, European nations were forced, country by country, to give up their colonial possessions. This did not end the missionary extensions in these countries, but it changed them. Where they remained strong, indigenous leadership arose. Samuel Adjai Crowther became the first non-European bishop in 1857 when he was consecrated bishop in Nigeria. It was, however, many years before African and Asian bishops were consecrated. Today the national Anglican churches in Africa and Asia are self-governing and Rome has appointed cardinals and bishops who are native to the places they serve. The number of missionaries sent from Western nations to Africa and Asia has diminished, and the influence of the churches that were formerly part of the colonial empires has grown. As we begin the twenty-first century, some African and Asian churches are seeking to missionize the West which they consider decadent and in moral decay.

As we enter the twenty-first century a new kind of concern—religious repression—exists and affects Christian missions. With renewed energy Islam has grown rapidly and also feels repressed by Christian missions. The result, probably in part as a response to Western domination, is that Christians in some places have been persecuted in ways that had not been known for some time. Today some missionary efforts are aimed at those places that are closed to foreign missions and where local Christians are sometimes repressed and even persecuted. The entire matter, however, may have taken on a new perspective in view of recent events in the Middle East. Christian missions sometimes suffer from the history of Christian intolerance and the resentments which persist as a result.

In recent years, with the decline of the Communist bloc, new missionary efforts have been launched in countries that were formerly officially atheistic and hostile. While Roman Catholic Christianity remained strong as an opposition bloc in Poland, for instance, it has been reassuring to find that, in spite of repression and persecution, the Christian faith has remained and has resurged where it had once been nearly dormant. Today missionary efforts in conjunction with local churches that were more or less underground are bringing Christianity to the surface. With the advent of modern electronic communications and jet travel, a new missionary global village is beginning to form. How this will adapt to a new world order, however, is yet to

**Missions  
Become  
Established  
Churches**

4

**Repression****Religious  
Survival**

be determined. What now seems reasonable to believe is that the era of aggressive Christian missions has come to an end and that we who live where there is a separation of church and state must take into account the political and social consequences of any future missionary efforts. In a later chapter we look at some of the ways an increasing awareness of world religions other than Judaism, Christianity, and Islam is changing our views about the missionary venture.

We have seen the amazing rapidity with which events in the political and economic areas changed in the relatively short span of two centuries. Equally dramatic changes took place in the intellectual area. Old ways of viewing reality, indeed old ways even of thinking, were overturned. The effects on theology were dramatic and have not yet coalesced into a new synthesis. No “summas” are being written today, and it is not apparent if any ever will.

For the next several chapters we will consider the revolution in thought that began in the seventeenth century with René Descartes.