Patrons are sometimes surprised to discover that Special Collections contains more than the archives of Princeton Theological Seminary. While Special Collections serves as the repository of both the Seminary’s institutional records and the personal papers of many former professors and administrators, our department also maintains manuscript collections for people and organizations with less direct connections to Princeton.

We acquire these collections because our mission is to document not only the history of Princeton Seminary, but more broadly “the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition and ecumenical Christianity in the United States and abroad.” We thus seek out collections of exemplary scholarly significance, whatever their origin and relation to the Seminary.

This newsletter describes two collections of significance: the personal papers and manuscripts of Markus Barth (1915–1994) and the organizational records of the Society of Christian Ethics (U.S.). The first collection complements the holdings of the collections of the Seminary’s Center for Barth Studies, while the presence of the second underscores the Seminary’s commitment to the ethical dimension of the Christian faith.

Of course, these collections represent just two among many. Our staff is currently in the process of converting our finding aids to Encoded Archival Description, which will make information about these resources more easily available on the web. In the meantime, we have posted a select list of our collections at our web site (http://libweb.ptsem.edu/collections/selectlist.aspx), which we invite you to peruse.

Luce Library’s Center for Barth Studies is a major site of research activity for both Princeton Seminary’s own students doing research on Karl Barth’s life and theology and for the many visiting scholars who come to Princeton to use the collection. In addition to all the published writings by Karl Barth, microfilms of the Karl Barth manuscripts held at the Karl Barth archives in Basel, and an extensive collection of materials published about Karl Barth, Luce Library also holds the papers and correspondence of Karl Barth’s son, noted New Testament scholar Markus Barth.

Markus Barth was born on October 6, 1915, in Safenwil (Aargau), Switzerland. His early schooling was peripatetic, as his father took up a series of academic posts in Germany. He began his university studies at the University of Bern in 1934 and continued them at the University of Basel, where he studied not only with his father, but also with other notables of the Basel faculty, including Eduard Thurneysen. He received a special scholarship enabling him to spend a year traveling and studying in Scotland and England in 1938–1939. In 1940 he became vicar and eventually pastor of the village church in Bubendorf, in the Canton of Basel-Landschaft in the north of Switzerland, where he served until 1953.

(continued on page 2)
The Markus Barth Papers

Kenneth Henke

(continued from page 1)

In 1947 Markus Barth was granted his doctorate in the field of New Testament studies by the University of Göttingen. In 1953 he was invited as a visiting professor of New Testament to the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. In 1955 he moved to the Federated Theological Faculty at the University of Chicago, and in 1963 he became professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. In 1973 he was recalled to Switzerland to serve as professor of New Testament at the University of Basel, a post that he held until his retirement in 1985. He died on July 1, 1994.

Markus Barth married Rose Marie Oswald in 1940 and the couple eventually had five children: Peter, Anna, Ruth, Lukas, and Rose Marie.

Markus Barth had an extensive publications record, starting with an article for the Basler Nachrichten in 1937 concerning the German Gestapo’s campaign against the Confessing Church. Other articles from the late 1930s and early 1940s also treated the situation of the Confessing Church in Germany or grew out of Barth’s trip to Britain and his study of British theology there. Matthias Gockel, a young German scholar who helped prepare an initial inventory of the Markus Barth Collection in 2002, rightly notes that the theological writings of Markus Barth show three major areas of special interest: the proper understanding of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper; the theology of the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Epistles; and Jewish-Christian dialogue in all of its biblical and theological dimensions as well as in its relationship to twentieth-century Jewish history, to the current State of Israel, and to the questions of Zionism and the rights of Palestinians.

Regarding the Lord’s Supper and Baptism Markus Barth published several major studies. In 1945 he published Das Abendmahl and in 1951 Die Taufe—Ein Sakrament? In 1986 he gave a series of public lectures in several venues on the Lord’s Supper, and these lectures are closely related to his book Das Mahl des Herrn, published in 1987. The following year a shortened English version was published by John Knox Press.

As Markus Barth was an academic scholar by profession, the papers contain much material from classes, lectures, and sermons that reveal his approach to biblical exegesis. Among the New Testament writings most fully addressed are the Sermon on the Mount, the Gospels of Mark and John, the Book of Acts, and the Letters to the Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. His earliest book in English was published in 1959. It is a study of the Epistle to the Ephesians aimed at lay readers, under the title The Broken Wall.

In the context of a close study of the text, Markus Barth explores the nature and mission of the Christian church and develops a biblical theology of evangelism. He would later go on to write a full two-volume scholarly commentary on the Letter to the Ephesians, which was published in the Doubleday Anchor Series in 1974. During his lifetime he also published biblical studies on the meaning of the apostolate (Der Augenzeuge, 1945), on the atonement (Was Christ’s Death a Sacrifice? 1961), on the resurrection (Acquitted by Resurrection, 1964), and on the Pauline understanding of justification (Justification, 1971), as well as numerous articles and book reviews of major works in the fields of biblical and theological studies.

A particularly interesting presentation of his approach to reading scripture can be found in Conversation with the Bible, published in 1964 and drawing on several series of lectures he had given widely in both the United States and Canada. He explains that the book in its final form was in part a response to a challenge “to write a book for the cultured among the non-Jewish and non-Christian students of sacred books and to explain to them what, if anything, is special about the Bible.” In it he draws out implications for reading and understanding scripture in light of Karl Barth’s call for the development of a “theology of freedom.”

Two further biblical commentaries on which Markus Barth had been working toward the end of his life were on the Letter to the Colossians and the Letter to Philemon. The first was completed with the help of Helmut Blanke and published in the year of Barth’s death as part of the Doubleday Anchor Series. The second was also completed by Helmut Blanke and published by Eerdmans in 2000, after Barth’s death.

A long-standing interest of Markus Barth was the mutual relationship of Christianity and Judaism. During the Second World War he had been involved with a Swiss committee that helped Jewish refugees from other parts of Europe find a haven in Switzerland, which had remained neutral during the hostilities. Shortly after his arrival in the U.S. he published a piece in Theology Today on “The Christ in Israel’s History.” A number of his articles explored the relationship between Israel and the church in Pauline theology. An article in the Journal of Ecumenical Studies in 1965 raised the fascinating topic, “What Can a Jew Believe about Jesus and Still Remain a Jew?” and a 1968 article in the same journal asked, “Was Paul an Anti-Semite?” Both articles had originated in talks given by Markus Barth in American synagogues to Jewish audiences. In the aftermath of the Six Day War of June 1967, the essays were republished in 1969, together with a study of Jewish-Gentile relations as portrayed in the Letter to the Ephesians and a new foreword asking difficult questions about Zionism, the claims of Arabs residing in Palestine, and American Christian reactions to the war and the changed situation on the ground in the Holy Land. The resulting book was given the title Israel and the Church: Contribution to a Dialogue Vital for Peace.

In the late 1960s Markus Barth was asked to join a study group of the National Council of Churches on the “Theological Significance of Israel Today,” and his further reflections on the theme of Jewish-Christian relations can be found in the books Jesus the Jew (1978) and The People of God (1983). The first contains the essays “What Does It Mean That Jesus Is a Jew?” and “Israel and the Palestinians.” In summarizing the thesis behind both parts of the
book, Markus Barth writes: “For Christians there is no loyalty to Jesus, the great brother of all humans, without a critical solidarity with all the Jewish brothers and sisters who are living today, particularly with the Israelis who are fighting for survival. There is, however, also for the Israelis no other way to survival—and for Christians no other way to support them—than by reflecting anew about faith and loyalty and by a new structuring of the relationship to the Palestinians. What is at stake is nothing less than the relationship between faith and life or between the love of God and the love for the neighbor.” In *The People of God* Markus Barth presents Paul’s thinking on the oneness and unity of the people of God, and goes on to draw the consequences of this for the common life of Jews and Christians today, including Christian response to anti-Semitism, to various forms of Zionism, and to the State of Israel.

Of course it is impossible to fully describe in this brief article the richness of a collection that currently consists of more than 200 document cases of material. Besides the academic papers related to the topics already mentioned, there are classroom notes from Markus Barth’s student days with his father and others; sermons, prayers, and youth catechetical materials prepared during his years as a parish pastor; documents connected with his pastoral visits among German prisoners of war being held in England in 1946–1947; and materials giving background to Karl Barth’s 1962 visit to the United States, and to the establishment of the Karl Barth archives, the Karl Barth Foundation, and the Karl Barth Society of North America. There are also materials describing and reflecting on Markus Barth’s first-hand experiences with the church and communism in the former East Germany and with the Christian Peace Conference, which brought together theologians on both sides of the Iron Curtain during the Cold War period, as well as correspondence and documentation that gives insight into the nature of American theological education as Markus Barth experienced it and reflected on it in the middle of the twentieth century.

Markus Barth saved and filed much of his correspondence over his lifetime, so materials exist that trace his entire life and career. There are letters to and from family members, friends, students, and professional colleagues. There are even official German government letters from 1934 and 1935, in both cases closed with a hearty “Heil Hitler!” and inquiring why Barth had not registered for the mandatory half-year of German national service in the first case, and why he had not first applied for permission before leaving Germany to pursue university studies in Switzerland in the second. Of course, the simple answer was that, although he grew up and received much of his education in Germany, Barth was still a Swiss citizen and not subject to these German laws. However, the government officials who wrote seem to have been unaware of this fact. It is somewhat amusing to find a parallel situation when Markus Barth is teaching in Chicago many years later and his son is part of a local scout troop. The scoutmaster writes to the family to complain that their son refuses to participate in the customary Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Markus Barth has to remind the scoutmaster that as his son is a citizen of Switzerland, not the United States, it is hardly to be expected that he should pledge allegiance to the American flag!

In addition to all this paper material, the Markus Barth Collection contains one small box of memorabilia featuring, among a few other items, Markus Barth’s pipe and smoking paraphernalia. Along with this is a 72-page booklet describing the social, medical, and spiritual evils of tobacco. The title page bears an inscription indicating that the booklet was a gift from pipe-smoking Karl Barth to his pipe-smoking son Markus—a small, but happy reminder to his son of the sense of joy and freedom with which the elder Barth seems to have gone about his life and work. Clearly Markus Barth treasured this little joke gift from his father, and it remains a tangible reminder of his own dedication to preserving and extending his father’s biblical and theological heritage. The Markus Barth Collection, documenting this, is one of the many special treasures now available to researchers here in Luce Library.
In June Special Collections took custody of the records of the Society of Christian Ethics (U.S.). Previously the American Society of Christian Ethics, 1959–1979, the Society of Christian Ethics (SCE) is an academic and scholarly society that today consists of more than 1,000 members. Dr. Stephen Crocco, James Lenox Librarian for the Seminary Libraries and current archivist for the SCE, was responsible for facilitating the transfer of these important records.

Members of the SCE include faculty in ethics or related fields from universities, colleges, and theological schools, as well as others working in the realm of social policy. According to their Professional Conduct Statement, the following mission drives the society’s professional work:

The purpose of the Society of Christian Ethics is to promote scholarly work in the field of Christian ethics and in the relation of Christian ethics to other traditions of ethics and to social, economic, political, and cultural problems; to encourage and improve the teaching of these fields in colleges, universities, and theological schools; and to provide a community of discourse and debate for those engaged professionally within these general fields.

The records of the SCE were previously housed by the Syracuse University Library Special Collections Research Center. Syracuse library staff had processed and created a finding aid for fifty percent of the material (spanning 1953 to 1991) in 1992. Thirteen additional boxes contained material from 1959 to 2007, and though not inventoried, they were largely organized at the time of transfer. To preserve provenance, these additional materials were not integrated into the original collection, but instead PTS Special Collections staff created a separate record set for the additional records during the accession process.

The SCE records were originally arranged in four series: annual meetings, correspondence-subject files, financial material, and membership material. The annual meetings series contains material pertaining to the organization, planning, and execution of the annual meetings, including minutes, programs, and papers. Other material related to annual meetings can be found in the executive secretary’s files in the correspondence-subject files series.

The correspondence-subject files series contains correspondence within the SCE, correspondence between the SCE and other organizations, and material relating to the organizational structure of the SCE. Large portions of this material are devoted to The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics and the executive secretary’s files. The executive secretary’s files have a year-by-year history of the SCE spanning the years 1959 (just prior to its founding) to 1989. This history includes correspondence, minutes, papers presented at the annual meeting, and reports for many of the years documented in the collection. Individuals represented include board members and officers (Joseph L. Allen, Waldo Beach, E. Clinton Gardner, Edward Le Roy Long, Daniel C. Maguire, Douglas Sturm, Max L. Stackhouse, J. Philip Wogaman, Paul Ramsey, and James M. Gustafson). Organizations represented include the American Academy of Religion, the American Society of Christian Social Ethics, the Council on the Study of Religion, and the Societas Ethica.

The financial material series contains material pertaining to SCE financial transactions and includes bank statements, financial correspondence, ledgers, receipts, and reports. The membership materials series includes applications, correspondence, inquiries, completed applications, rosters, and vitae.

Additional records that were not processed by Syracuse and were later accessioned by Princeton Seminary contain much of the same material as the original collection, including material from the same period (1953–1991), but with additional material primarily from the 1990s. In addition, two new series were created: publications by the society, and papers submitted for the annual conferences.

We are happy to announce that these records and a complete finding aid are now fully available to our researchers.

---

Luce News

Bruno Linhares, who graduated from Princeton Seminary in 2008 with a Ph.D. in practical theology, recently spent three months at the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam working on the Abraham Kuyper Bibliography of Secondary Literature (www.kuyperresearch.org), a project cosponsored by Special Collections at PTS. He and the staff of the Vrije Universiteit celebrated the entry of the thousandth article in the database on October 7, 2008.

Clifford Anderson will take part in the Calvin Colloquium sponsored by the Seminary’s Department of Continuing Education on January 20–23, 2009. The colloquium will celebrate the 500th anniversary of John Calvin’s birth. Anderson will lecture on Abraham Kuyper’s development of Neo-Calvinism and its effects on Princeton Seminary. For more information about this event, see http://www.ptsem.edu/ce/coursepr9abt800.php.

The Abraham Kuyper Center for Public Theology will sponsor a conference on “Philosophy and Revelation” in celebration of the centenary of Herman Bavinck’s Stone Lectures on April 16–18, 2009. For more information, see the Abraham Kuyper Center web site: http://libweb.ptsem.edu/collections/kuyper/.

The Center for Barth Studies will hold its annual conference on Karl Barth on June 21–24, 2009. The theme of the conference is “Barth on Religion and the Religions.” For more information, see the Center for Barth Studies web site: http://libweb.ptsem.edu/collections/barth/.