



# Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development 1909-1936

By Bruce L. McCormack

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This book is a major intellectual biography of perhaps the most influential theologian of the twentieth century, Karl Barth. McCormack offers the first full-scale revision of the well-known theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar's seminal interpretation of Barth, which was first published in 1951. Drawing on a wealth of material, much of it unpublished during Barth's lifetime, as well as a thorough acquaintance with the best of recent German scholarship, McCormack demonstrates that the fundamental decision that would control the whole of Barth's development--the turn to a new, critically realistic form of theological "objectivism"--was already made during the years in which Barth was at work on his first commentary on *Romans*. He further argues that the most significant decisions--both material and methodological--were made in Barth's *Göttingen Dogmatics* of 1924/5, and not later in the 1931 book on Anselm, as has often been alleged. This unique and important work provides not simply a fresh interpretation of Barth's development, but a new paradigm for understanding the whole of Barth's theology.

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#### Review

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#### About the Author

Bruce L. McCormack is a Frederick and Margaret L. Weyerhaeuser Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary.

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