The Christian Origin of Contemporary Institutions

Part II: The History of Christian Institutions

James Doull

The common assumption of recent times has been that institutions exist to protect and promote the rights of their individual members. There is assumed to exist a free individual who can expect as of right from the state, from the economy, from the family, the satisfaction of his needs and desires in increasing measure, approximating his full satisfaction. These and other institutions are thought to derive all their authority from individuals so defined. Because the measure of justice lies in the particular will and opinion of individuals, not in the objectivity of institutions, in universal ends, the distinction of state from economic society, of family life from participation in the work of society, is in great part obliterated. Marxist and liberal are in perfect agreement that a former elevation of the state above society — the realm of particular interests — has been superseded, as also the family which once was thought the principal interest of women, who were therefore excluded from the productive and progressive work of society.

The questions are asked in this inquiry, what is the origin of this assumption? Is it well founded? What are its limits? To ask about the origin and foundation of what has been, one may say, for a century and a half an ever more fixed and settled dogma is not without difficulty. It may appear to be only an antiquarian inquiry, curious but without practical interest, or else, what is thought intolerable, to recommend a return to the institutions and beliefs of an unliberated age. But the necessity of the inquiry can no longer be disregarded: it becomes always more deeply felt and recognized that this contemporary society can give no account of its principal assumption, of the confidence which once animated the democratic and socialist revolutions. The existential individual, who was taken to be the bearer of all former traditions, the cultured individual of the nineteenth century, appears incapable of that burden, to be more at home with the beginning of European thought than with the further course of its history. In particular the various attempts during this period to maintain a relation between this culture of radical liberation and the Christian religion expose always more clearly that its principal assumption, as Feuerbach, Marx and others perceived from the first, annuls that religion — all religion, one might add, so far as the distinction between history and a divine or absolute spirit is concealed in this assumption.

Dionysius, Vol. VIII, Dec. 1984, pp. 53-103

The first part of the present study has shown that contemporary freedom — the humanity which is in possession of the conditions for the attainment of its particular interests, its rights — was unknown to the ancient Jews, to the Greeks and the Romans. These peoples were not freely in the world in the contemporary sense, but occupied rather with freeing themselves from nature or the world. Contemporary freedom was first defined in opposition to an older European world whose institutions and culture had been formed by a long Christian history. In that relation it was perceived as the rejection of the attempt to attain in belief and thought the same freedom as was now known to have its true form in 'praxis', in the consciousness of a temporal unity of individuals in their particular interests with the universal. This transition was commonly taken to be in some sense the completion of the older order. Later this derivation appeared problematical or quite unintelligible, as the new revolutionary freedom became established and itself the point of departure for considering older Christian times.[2] Taken thus on its own account contemporary culture resembles most the unformed freedom of the Germanic and other northern peoples, out of which they were originally converted to Christianity, as though the long labour of articulating this freedom through thought and rational institutions reverted in the end to the immediacy in which it began.

There is a great difference certainly between barbarous tribes still in a pre-political condition, where individuals had not yet been constrained to subsume their freedom firmly under the authority and common direction of a state, and a developed political order which is said to have its basis in the pre-political rights of individuals. In the second case it is supposed that on that basis a political order will continue to exist, that the realization of common purposes and the impartial application of law will be possible. Likewise a difference remains between the old Germanic and Celtic religions, which expressed as in process and not in eternal stability the free spirit of those peoples and a Christianity drawn from the eternity of thought into process and reforming activity. The difference remains, but as custom, language, nostalgic affection for the arts and productions of a former age, not as knowledge of the historical

1. The great cultural shift of the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century was most clearly defined at the time from the side of the new revolution in opposition to Christianity and the older political and social order by Feuerbach, Marx and others who had learned enough of philosophy from Hegel to articulate the opposition.

2. In the philosophy of the twentieth century (Russell, Husserl, Heidegger, Wittgenstein) the historical derivation of contemporary culture from the older Christian world is totally forgotten.

mediation, of the mediation as present and actual.[3]

It is the great interest and importance of recent philosophy to have separated contemporary culture from Christianity and an older Christian Europe. The principle of this culture — the free existential individual — then inevitably becomes itself the object of philosophical inquiry. It appears as the contradiction of being at once beyond the older European world and incapable of it. In this relation it can no longer stand as an unquestioned dogma. The philosophy which begins to ask about this principle answers that it is no other than the being of the ancient Eleatics: when the inner freedom of the individual and the modes of his being in the world are drawn into one view in the stability of thought it is said that the truth of individual freedom is being and becoming, which Parmenides and Heraclitus had said long ago were the principles of all things.[4]

From the contemporary standpoint, thus isolated and purified of the assumption that it merely continued and completed an older tradition, it is very difficult to recover a knowledge of the mediation which distinguishes it from the culture of the northern barbarians before their conversion to Christianity. In that conversion the barbarians received a religion not only first revealed to another people but by other peoples thought through, given systematic theological form; its relation to nature, to the powers of the soul, to history determined. This whole was easily received, as articulating somehow what these peoples groped after in their native culture and religion.[5] How there was in the new religion, and the ordering of human life according to it, the development and formation of their own spirit and tendency, could not be asked. That question imposes itself on contemporary culture, when once this is known as the immediacy of a concrete freedom, as having in it the striving after an actual freedom of individuals, but incapable of defining and giving direction to that freedom. For it is supposed that we are beyond all abstractions, at the same time as philosophically we hesitate between the conclusion that philosophy is no longer possible and that we must revert to the first abstract standpoint of the Eleatics.[6]

If the ancient peoples among whom Christianity was received and theologically formulated were unacquainted with contemporary freedom, there is found among them the development of thought

3. The religion and culture of the northern barbarians will be discussed at a later point in this study.
4. Heidegger.
5. An extensive discussion of the conversion of the German nations in J. de Vries, *Altgermanishe Religionsgeschichte*, Berlin, 1957, Chap.XII.
6. Wittgenstein after he abandoned the logic of the *Tractatus*; Heidegger.

out of a first substantial identity with being, from which thinking is only distinguished as it compares the true way of being with the false way which would admit negation and the possibility of finite being. In the religion and institutions of the Jews, Greeks and Romans there was realized a freedom which was not immediate, but mediated through the relation of an ideal or intelligible order to a derivative sensible world. The human good lay not in a deliverance from the finite, as in the great religions of the Far East, but was mediated by it. The essential differences of the religions and institutions of these peoples from one another was to be found in the form of the mediation.

The covenant of the ancient Jewish people with the one creator God assured them the possession of a land and other temporal blessings for obedience to the divine law. In this religion it is thus known that life and temporal goods depend on law, on the universal divine order. The logic of this dependence, the necessary connexion of the two, is inward however, on the divine or ideal side. In the Hellenic religion the necessary relation of the ideal and the sensible is explicit, being the truth in which the particular ends of men and gods meet their limit. In the one religion stands therefore the firmest conviction that the one God is beyond all the finite, the λόγος or word, in which the divine purpose is determined, being a creature and not comprehended in the divine unity. In the Hellenic religion not only are the relations of men to the many gods reduced to the form of fate or necessity, but necessity itself is thought to reveal the divine freedom. There is here the beginning of the Christian concept of God as not only the One but equally the creative λόγος.

The Roman religion contained a further development in the relation of divine to human. Human freedom was not only in the final consideration in relation to the One which is beyond the division of the λόγος and its sensible appearance; and not only in a concrete or spiritual relation which gives way to abstract necessity. In the Roman religion there is a subjectivity comprehensive of necessity, which knows the division of good and evil, of law and the sensuous will as belonging to itself. This religion is devoted to a worldly and finite end — the extension and maintenance of the 'res publica'. But this end is not of the Roman people only, but proves to be also a universal human end — the imposition of law and reason on the divisive, exclusive interests of the natural will. The worldly aspect of the Judaic religion was the well-being of a particular people; the Greek religion had its existence in a plurality of independent and potentially warring states. In the Roman religion there is a total relation of worldly interests to an inner divine freedom. This freedom is however without any proper

content: it underlies the division for the individual of an abstract universal good from particular interests, politically the good of the 'res publica' from the unsubdued will of the conquered peoples. The ideal is present in this Roman world of a reconciliation of a reason and the natural will. But what is realized in it is rather the sceptical consciousness of their contradiction.

The same complementary relation of these peoples may be observed in their institutions. Judaic institutions do not develop beyond a patriarchal form: as in the Platonic political philosophy the emergence of other polities must appear as a deviation from this original solidarity. The typical development of Greek states is from a patriarchal monarchy through aristocratic and oligarchic forms to democracy, in which the perception of a common political good is in due course dissipated. The ideal polity, in which unity and freedom are best harmonized, is a democracy of the virtuous. Beginning as a tribe or collection of tribes, the state here converts this natural into an ethical basis, as in religion the Olympians drove the nature gods into the dim background of Tartarus. Here the freedom of individuals in the family cult, their immediate elevation to the eternal and divine beyond transitory human interests, is other than the political freedom which rests on the ordered relation of passions and particular interests to the common good. The deepest interest here is to discover a unifying principle of these institutions, as this appears through their total conflict and its resolution in tragedy and comedy. In the Aristotelian philosophy, the pure potentiality of the soul, the reason which is its own end and the various dependent relations of humans to the world are conceived to be one principle.

The immediate inner unity of nature and freedom in the family is united in the institutions of the Romans with political freedom. The unity is not that of a patriarchal community, but where rather an abstract political will is extended to the family, as the absolute authority of the 'paterfamilias'. The consciousness is present of an original integrity, an uncorrupted golden age. The great Roman poet explains the Roman people as constituted by an alliance between the Latins, who live in this original simplicity, and the Trojans, whose political will can only be purged and raised to a universal, benevolent purpose if grounded in the Latin spirit. These elements the poet shows as combined in the purgatory of the underworld. But in their historical realization is shown rather the strongest division and opposition of abstract reason and nature, this alike in family and in state.

The Roman religion may truly be said to combine the Judaic and Hellenic religions, but in such a manner as to obscure the characteristic excellence of both.[7] In Judaism the direct perception

7. Hegel, *Ph. Rel.* (Lasson), part 2, pp. 192-3: the Roman religion "die Vereinigung der Religionen der Schönheit und der Erhabenheit", a relation in which is exposed the one-sidedness of both.

of the relation of the chosen people to the one God is not destroyed by the hard legalism which also belongs to that religion. The recurrent lapses of the Jewish people from the covenant have the form of a breaking away of the natural will from the substantial unity in which they are one with their God in their particularity. The difference of human from divine occurs only to be at once negated. The Olympian religion takes the human into the concept of the gods, and this concretion of the two is the foundation of the ethical life of the πόλις. But with this concreteness there remains also a natural individuality, grounded in the family, which can come into collision with it and destroy it. In the Roman religion and institutions the idea of a concrete relation of human and divine has fallen into the background, a presupposition outside which falls the reality and the religion proper of the Roman state. In the political religion of the Romans is experienced a radical dividedness of the human in its relation to the divine. For a consciousness of this dividedness to appear it is only necessary to bring into one view the inner uncorrupted unity of the Vergilian purgatory and the opposition of law and abstract reason to the natural will which is constitutive alike of the Roman family and the Roman state.

The fall of man, the separation of human ends from an immediate unity of human and divine, the knowledge of evil as the opposition of the human will to the one divine good, — these are essential elements in the Judaic religion. The correction of human evil is the inevitable divine justice which brings peoples to ruin. The fall appears here as what should not have been, the return from it as an inner divine necessity. In the Roman religion the opposition of good and evil has come to have a subjective form, to be a dividedness of man himself. The divine necessity which corrects and exposes the limits of finite ends falls also within human subjectivity, the opposition of the actual will to its pure uncorrupted potentiality.

The historical realization of this religion is not the good of a particular people, but universal. But this universal good, the awakening of mankind to a knowledge of right and free personality, is itself a finite end, to which is opposed the interests of the natural will. From the fatality to which this and *a fortiori* all other human ends are subject the individual is also free, as knowing the origin of this division in the undivided potentiality of the will. These elements are farther integrated in the scepticism which knows the divided will as the relation of an indifferent universality to particular ends, to which assent is at once given and suspended. The divided will in this view is no longer the relation of formal freedom to a natural limit but the contradiction in which these elements annul each other. In scepticism the divided will — the human as such,

in relation to a presupposed nature — appears as without stability. The sceptic does not draw the conclusion that the divided relation of the will falls under its undivided unity, is the mediation of the individual with a universal no longer contentless but the origin of the divided and finite. But this conclusion is drawn philosophically in Neoplatonism, and in Christianity it becomes the belief of the Roman world.

The conditions in which Christianity might be received as credible, as responding to a definite desire and expectation, are complete in the Roman religion, as this went beyond its limit in the subjective freedom of the empire. The relation of human and divine might pass into a spiritual form comprehensive of finitude and difference. In Judaism all the finite was known as the creation of the one God who was exalted above the creature. The highest relation to God in this religion was an inspired prophetic thought in which human finitude was immediately negated and the prophet declared the divine word. This relation was not mediated by the different, a thought repugnant to this standpoint as confounding the finite and divided with the absolute divine freedom. An imagined unity of human and divine was found weaker than necessity — the logical form of their difference. But necessity was conceived in Hellenic philosophy to be a dependant form, comprehended in a divine self-knowledge mediated by what was other than itself. This spiritual relation of human and divine was implicit in the Roman religion, as a freedom from necessity, from the inevitable division and conflict of its worldly aspect. The experience of this religion in its historical course was then to know the nullity of its finite ends, of their separation from its inner freedom.

The 'praeparatio evangelii' may thus be said to be complete in the religion and culture of the early empire. The preparation took place not within Judaism but among Greeks and Romans. It can therefore appear remarkable that Christianity should appear not among these peoples but as originating in Judaism. As the authority of the former institutions was eroded by the subjective freedom of Roman-Hellenistic culture and the need and desire was felt of an objectivity adequate to this freedom, this foundation could not be found in the world but must be sought in thought. The forms of this conversion of relations to the world into a spiritual form were principally two. Either the movement was from the side of free human subjectivity to a principle in which division and finitude might be known as in undivided unity; or it was taken as rather from the side of God, as the revelation of God, not untruly in some finite medium, where the finitude of the medium was the difference of a concrete spiritual unity from itself. The former movement received its developed philosophical expression in

Neoplatonism. The latter was established in the belief of the Christian Church and systematically formulated in the accepted theology of the ancient church.

In Neoplatonism the sceptical doubt which knew that the abstract independence of the free individual or person was without any true realization was rightly interpreted as showing that this divided consciousness with the logic in which it sought a determinate knowledge of the world, rested on a prior unity — on an ideal world where thought knew its objects as its own, their dividedness resting on a comprehensive unity, their difference from thought as dependent on an absolute unity before all division. In this movement of thought is found a new beginning, as also in the Christian form of spirit.

This principle and the logic of the movement to it being discovered by Plotinus, the interest of later Neoplatonists was to restore on this basis human or finite relations to the world. An Aristotelian logic of the finite which to Plotinus appeared a mass of contradictions,[8] Porphyry, taking the new standpoint as established, could reinstate as the logic of a lower, finite reason.[9] Others sought to find place for human particularity, as separated from the unbroken relation of the individual to the ideal world, and in this interest introduced into philosophy the myths of religions undermined already by the free subjectivity of Hellenistic and Roman culture.[10] The limit to this desired concreteness lay, however, in the starting point of Neoplatonic philosophy: moving from division to the intuition of an undivided unity, how there might originate in this unity a dividedness or finitude itself unified in its difference, and not a falling away from the unity of the principle, — such a synthesis of intuitive and discursive moments was not possible to this standpoint.

What is logically impossible from the Neoplatonic standpoint is taken to be known in a revealed knowledge in Christianity, namely that what is other than the absolute One comprehends division or finitude and indivision actually — is not constituted by the separation of these moments.[11] For this standpoint the individual in his particularity or finitude is contained in the infinite divine purpose. When Proclus, looking for concreteness, draws the myths

8. Plotinus' criticism of the Aristotelian logic, *Eneads* ,VI, 1.
9. Porphyry's *Introduction* and his *Commentary on the Categories (Comm. in Arist. Gr.*, IV, 1.).
10. Iamblichus, Proclus.
11. What the belief of the church, that in Christ God and man were revealed to be one totality, that God is triune, means logically first comes distinctly to light in the Augustinian theology through its opposition to Neoplatonism. See 3(b) below.

of all the nations into the framework of his philosophy, the One, if it can be allowed to have a pluralized actuality at all, in a strict consideration can have this only in the 'henads' or highest order of the gods, who are distinguished one from another only by the abstract predicate 'many' as against 'one'.[12] In a subsequent reflection the Proclan philosophy appeared not to attain at all the concreteness it sought, but to dissolve into a series of hypotheses.[13]

The belief of the church was incomprehensible to the most articulate reason of the age. The church held its belief to be neither the product of mythical imagination nor contingent fact, but a necessary knowledge in which the nature of God was revealed. How could such a knowledge enter the consciousness of the age?

This question is peculiarly difficult for contemporary culture. The various ways in which the receptivity of the soul for a higher than natural knowledge was explained in older theologies do not satisfy an age which will have no division between faith and 'praxis', or between faith and the experience of the individual in his finitude.[14] Regarding the ancient theology of the church as the work of a philosophical reason which exceeded the limits of human experience, theologians would return to the origins. But the New Testament is found to give a variety of different and conflicting testimonies.[15] What Christianity, purged of later contaminations, was, receives no convincing answer. To the intrinsic difficulties of the question are added those that belong to the presuppositions of contemporary culture. That there was an original Christianity which fell within the limits of an existential or other mode of contemporary reason is an unfounded assumption, as likewise that the church in its theology corrupted, distorted or narrowed an initial revelation and did not rather stabilize and preserve it.

The present inquiry leaves contemporary assumptions to be treated in their place, in relation to their older modern antecedents, and answers the question asked in this way: Christianity becomes humanly revealable when the free subjectivity of the Roman world is taken into Judaism. There this subjectivity receives quite another interpretation than arises directly from Greek or Roman culture, where it was first understood as individual freedom as against the objectivity of religion and institutions grounded in religion, then as scepticism and the desire of the individual to discover an objective

12. Proclus, *Elements of Theology* , propositions 114, 115.
13. Damascius, ἀπορίαι καῖόυεις περὶ τῶν πρώτων αρχῶν (Ruelle).
14. A brief comment by the author on the logic of contemporary theology in *Dionysius*, Vol. VII, pp. 129-136.
15. See W. J. Hankey, "Preparing for a Post-Critical Theology: Biblical Criticism and the End of Contemporary Culture," *No Abiding City*, Ed. William Oddie, Pub. SPC K (London 1985).

principle and true content of his freedom. The turning of the individual has here the form of a negation of division and particularity, so that the One is known as that which is before division. How division might begin with the One, how the One might reveal itself in the divided, are not questions logically answerable. In Judaism instead finitude or division is immediately given up in relation to the one God. The finite is conceived to be absolutely derived, to be created. But this knowledge is not continued into the finite relations of humans to the world, which are rather a fall into idolatry, into the assumption that the created is on its own account. The subjectivity which developed among the Greeks and Romans is here the form which permits the immediate adherence to the one God to be maintained and continued in human finitude and difference. The mediation is not on the side of the human but rather the development of the concept of God as originative of the finite, the world, to the spiritual form of self-knowledge in the divided and other.

This concept of a spirituality where the mediation falls to the divine itself recapitulates the whole movement in the Greek and Roman religions from the freedom of the gods to human freedom and from this, as a subjective freedom incapable of a true content, to a universal divine principle, the origin of human freedom.[16] The Neoplatonic form is one-sided, in that it presupposes the free subjectivity of the empire, forgetful of the objective mediation in which it originated. The πόλις and its gods, the historical labour of the Roman republic, which were this mediation, remained as superseded history, as culture, no longer accessible in their former meaning to the free individual who was their product.[17] This presupposition — the sceptical subjectivity — is retracted in the movement to the One. But a new beginning, the reconstitution of human finitude, of nature, and a return which should contain this moment of difference, is not possible. In the Christian form, as the subsequent argument will show, there is implicit a new ordering of human and divine, a concrete spirituality both in religion and in human institutions.

The contemporary freedom which assumes itself to be at home in the world and does not allow this assumption to be overthrown by abstract indifference and endless contingency — the elements of ancient scepticism which are also essential constituents of this culture — is evidently among the historical forms which have developed from the Christian principle. It is, as the argument will show, the form of immediacy, where the individual in his

16. Hegel, *Phän. des Geistes*, in *Gesammelte Werke*, IX, p. 402 ff.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 402.

particularity is assumed to be possessed of rights prior to all institutions and objective authority, this not as an undeveloped barbarous condition but as the collapse into immediacy of a long historical mediation.

If the history of Christian times be considered, not according to endless likenesses and differences of one age compared with another, but as exhibiting universal logical differences of the Christian principle itself, there is found the following division:[18]

A. Ancient Christianity, which is occupied with the church and its theology, does not reconstitute secular institutions in the image of its spiritual principle, but has need to appropriate the culture in which it originated. The church is in the contradictory relation to the Roman world that it is both beyond it and lives under it. This contradiction is in the end resolved: the church finds in itself the ground of its relation to secular institutions.

B. Medieval Christianity, where a secular order is constituted under the church. In this order there is a division between a ruling or universal class and the class occupied with particular ends. The church in relation to this secularity falls itself into the opposition of a ruling clergy and an unfree laity. The spiritual unity of these differences is known in the theology of the church — as the result of A. The moving interest here is that this unity should be known as actual, both in secular life and in the church as related to it.

C. The older modern age: through B the difference of classes has been subsumed under an effective sovereign power in church and state, whether the relation to this sovereignty be as a movement to it (Catholic) or this movement be subjectively appropriated (Protestant). As against this inner unity, into which the former differences have been absorbed, the interest is now to find a relation of the elements where within the unity differences will also be preserved. This history takes the form of a subjective enlightened freedom, which opposes itself to authority and tradition both in church and state, where the concreteness of doctrine, through B received into the structure of institutions, appears to be destroyed by an abstract thought, the thought however of a reflective self-consciousness which in the end subsumes its divided moments under the unity it sought to destroy.

D. Contemporary culture: in this the concreteness sought for in C is presupposed. There is thought to be place for natural or human interests within the universal end of institutions, neither, as in B, the process of overcoming their separation from the universal, nor, as in C, the revolutionary opposition of society to

18. Of the parts of this division A. will be treated in the present article, the rest subsequently.

sovereignty by divine right. The conflict of church with secular institutions and secular thought appears for a moment to be resolved: on both sides is the same reason in diverse forms, with which disappear the former grounds of conflict. This mediated concrete freedom the individual then takes to be his immediate possession in a new and completer revolution than that of C. The reconciliation of nature and thought is to be found in existential experience and revolutionary 'praxis'. This second phase of contemporary culture differs from that of the Roman Empire in this, that the presupposed reconciliation with nature opposes the recognition of the division also present of natural particularity from abstract freedom. The need to save this presupposition is the root of an aversion to philosophy, to the institutions brought into being in B to D, to the Christian religion, so far as its doctrines transcend historical process and individual experience. It is established however by the whole development that this second phase of contemporary culture is not to be taken simply on its own assumptions but in relation to the first phase, as a negation and loss of mediation, which its inmost tendency is again to discover and restore.

A. ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY

In the first part of this history there occur principally three questions, each of a difficulty well known and where each successive question supposes the previous question in some manner answered. The first is whether there is continuity between the idea of Christianity as this has been elicited from the antecedent religions and the criticism of them in the light of a subjective freedom originating in them, and the revelation recounted in the Gospels.[19] The second is whether the knowledge of the revelation which the church thought itself to have is true to the original revelation or a mythologized transformation of it.[20] The third question is whether the pre-theological knowledge of the Church is preserved in its theology or has been rationalized according to the concepts of an alien philosophical thought.[21]

19. The conversion of the ancient Mediterranean world to Christianity must be incomprehensible unless there was in the principal religions and cultures that 'praeparatio' which Paul and many after him, notably Augustine in the *Civitas Dei*, assumed. Hegel was the first to give definite form to the ancient conviction that Christianity came in the fullness of time.

20. The difficulty for contemporary culture to connect the religious experience of one man with the belief of the church that Jesus was the universal λόγος has remained since D. F. Strauss's *Leben Jesu*.

21. The ancient doctrines of the church since the great cultural change of the mid-nineteenth century have in general either been set beyond rational criticism (Newman, Pusey and the like) or have been supposed the product of a particular culture and thus not equivalent to Christianity, if this is pertinent to persons of every culture.

The Christianity of the ancient church which begins to have also a secular existence is that which not only believes but has an 'intellectus fidei', has its faith in the form of thought. The community of Christians living apart from the world in the inwardness of faith, which is expressed in word, image, symbol, cannot determine their worldly relations, but are in family, work, in their political and legal obligations determined by the culture they have abandoned. The historical reality of the revelation has passed for the church into the universality of language.[22] The truth of the history so preserved rests partly on the authority of the Apostles, partly on the sacramental unity of the community with the verbal and symbolic expression of its faith. The concreteness of the revelation is now known as extending beyond these limits to the whole range of theoretical and practical relations to the world. Only a thought which has freed itself from language and knows its relation to being through categories and other universal determinations can make this extension. If the church would maintain the inner freedom of faith in relation to the world it had therefore to know its faith also in the form of philosophical thought.[23] Constrained thus to think its belief the church attained beyond its intention the standpoint from which it might think to rule the world, where also there begins to appear a concrete secular freedom.

But if the theology of the ancient church should be thought a cultural accident, the adaptation of an unintellectual faith to the rational spirit of the Greeks, to the political genius of the Romans, the subsequent history might then appear only to continue this deviation farther. If again it was already a mythologized Christianity which in the ancient theology gave its myths the semblance of science, with still more reason would contemporary culture, should it find need to remain Christian, look for an original Christianity not yet subject to this twofold distortion. The hypothesis that there was such a Christianity must at least commend itself, where neither myth nor metaphysics is an accepted vehicle of truth.

---

22. The intermediate status of language between sensuous immediacy and thought, its universality which is also not separate from sense, has had the attention of philosophers since Plato. The ancients speak of λόγος and know its deceptiveness, but also that this form can express objects proper to a pure categorial thinking. When the primary Christian doctrines are spoken of as mythical, the assumption is made that their being is in language and imagination. The Hegelian concept 'Vorstellung' covers this whole intermediate form of knowledge, on which *Ph.R.* (Lasson), I, 110 ff.

23. That contemporary culture will seek rather a liberation from the rational and ideal and be more at home in linguistic forms is a phenomenon to be treated in its place.

1. *Continuity of the 'praeparatio evangelii' and the Gospels*

The historical 'praeparatio' might appear at best to give rise to a 'gnosis', a mythical pseudo-philosophical construction of another genus than the teaching received by the Apostles from Jesus whom they esteemed the Christ of Jewish prophesy. If in Pauline and Johannine Christianity there may be thought to be a rival 'gnosis' to the more purely speculative, the Synoptics at least appear to have departed not wholly from history and human experience, to contain a religion related to contemporary interests and modes of thought. The revolutionary and existential spirit of the present time which remains within an historical horizon, is obviously remote from the preaching of a kingdom not of this world, from a religion born in the despair of the Jewish people about their land and political existence. But if contemporary exegesis tends to be naively unhistorical, its assumptions are so far correct that the origin of our present humanistic and existential ideas of freedom is indeed to be found in the New Testament scriptures. The error is to forget the form in which these ideas are there present, namely in the mediation of their first discovery and revelation, not as immediately presupposed. The Celtic and Germanic peoples were prone to this supposition already in their pagan condition before Christianity.[24] Their conversion was a recognition of the instability of a concrete personal freedom taken as immediate. The same instability would be felt in contemporary culture were it possible to exorcize completely the effects of a long Christian history. The contemporary presupposition being radically questioned, the scriptural exegete might then inquire in what sense a mediation or proof of it was to be found first of all in the Synoptics. The scriptural text being approached thus critically, its teaching might be found to confirm the historical expectation.

The original scriptural revelation is through the teaching, the life, death and believed resurrection of one man. As in this medium it is neither philosophy nor the later theology of the church. Nor is it the knowledge of this history as completed, as the cycle of the incarnation and return of the divine λόγος to its origin, the form in which the revelation is celebrated in the church. The assumption was present, if never sufficiently elucidated, in older exegesis that these several forms could bear the same revealed content. Where this assumption breaks down, the appeal to scriptural authority in the church becomes wholly arbitrary.[25]

24. N. 5 *supra;* and a discussion to come in Part B of this history.

25. That point is reached already in the *Leben Jesu* of Strauss, where the concept of the unity of human and divine in Christ, the belief of the church from its institution, is transferred to humanity, as by others of that time to the existential individual. Nor is this division between synoptic history and the belief of the church repaired in subsequent theology.

Putting aside all the hypotheses of the historical criticism of the Synoptics, one can easily find in fact that they present simply and coherently the same doctrine as became the belief of the church. There is the formal difference that what is collected into one view in the church appeârs in the Synoptics as a succession of stages, which are as follows:

(a) the preparation for the discovery of the new principle;

(b) the preaching of the new principle, viz. the Kingdom of God;

(c) the realization of the kingdom.

In the first is negated what separates Judaism from Christianity; in the second is given the idea of Christianity; in the third the idea is known as actual.

(a) The transition from Judaism to Christianity is said in the Gospels to take place through the preaching of repentance by John the Baptist. This preaching condemns the natural or particular aspect of Judaism, the confidence of being from the chosen people; secondly, an abstract, legal correction of the natural will, in which the radical opposition of the good to the evil or fallen was not exposed. The repentance by which his hearers can escape this confrontation leads, not to the Kingdom of God, but to the expectation of it, the capacity to receive it.[26] What constitutes the capacity for the divine kingdom, the spiritual relation of human and divine, which will be the preaching of Jesus, is that the residual finitude in this relation be negated. The previous argument has shown the course of this negation in the Hellenic and Roman religions, the formation there of a subjectivity comprehensive of division or finitude. The Johannine repentance takes the movement into Judaism: it is not an unmediated return to the original paradise, but a purgation mediated by the fall or separation of the human.

John's preaching has in it the two moments of a radical opposition of the evil will to the good and the formation through penance of an inwardness or potentiality capable of this opposition and its spiritual resolution. The meaning of these moments is given more definitely in the preparation of Jesus for the preaching of the Kingdom of God. The three temptations to which he is subject following his baptism by John require that he reject in succession the forms of finitude in the relation of God and man belonging

26. The moments of John's preaching are (a) the imminent divine judgment, (b) a radical negation of the natural will as against a legal and customary virtue: the repentance, (c) the confidence that another will complete his work in a spiritual baptism. This expectation must be seen as grounded in the repentance, in a freedom from the finite which is the potentiality of a concrete or spiritual knowledge of it: *Matt.*, 3, 7-12, and parallel passages.

to the three religions here treated. The first temptation supposes an immediate realization of the divine will in life and human well being. The Kingdom of God in this view would be that perfect harmony of nature with the creator God spoken of by the prophets.[27] The second temptation supposes a finite identity of human and divine ends, as in the Hellenic religion.[28] The last temptation is to the Roman idea of world government.[29]

Jesus gives to the moment of repentance in John's teaching the form of a series of 'beatitudes' or purgations,[30] in which loss of natural goods — formerly the content of the temptations — awakens a knowledge of the pure universality of the soul,[31] its unfallen condition, in which it is capable of a relation to God which will not be distorted by finite ends but is comprehensive of them. John's teaching ended with this repentance or purgation. Jesus participated in its sacrament, the baptism of John, finding there not only the preparation but also his acceptance in the divine kingdom.[32] Then having reviewed the moments of the preparation from this standpoint, he is moved to begin the preaching of the Kingdom of God.

(b) The Kingdom of God is the idea of a concrete spiritual relation of man and God, where the human side of the relation is not through some abstraction and division but contains the difference of law and the contingent will, the differences which, set against the infinite divine will, constituted the fall or separation of human from divine. This idea is the teaching of Jesus in all the Gospels. His criticism

27. John the Baptist in *Luke* 3, 4, cites *Isaiah* 40, 3-5: Jesus at the beginning of his preaching (*Luke* 4, 17ff) *Isaiah* 61, 1-2. This immediate adequation of nature to its idea has in it also the immediate separation of the individual from the idea, that against which John's preaching was directed. Jesus' preaching is distinguished from John's by the mediation of the other two temptations.

28. In this temptation the unity of the natural will with the divine, immediately in the manner of the Greek religion, is the assumption made by the devil and rejected by Jesus.

29. The government of the world, the general good of humanity, is that in which the human will and the divine would meet in this temptation, as in the Roman religion. It is not, of course, assumed that Jesus was a student of Greek and Roman religions: these positions occur in the conversion of Judaism to the spiritual form of Jesus' preaching.

30. The 'beatitudes' gave to Dante the structure of his *Purgatorio*. The poet rightly saw in them not merely the negativity of penance but a reduction of the particular forms of the will to their origin in its pure potentiality, a restoration of the unfallen state.

31. The 'beatitudes' in Scripture are not only Dante's purgations but contain also, on the basis of the purgation, the restoration in spiritual form of the finite content of the will before renounced.

32. *Matt.* 3, 17, and the corresponding passages.

of the Mosaic law is not a particular opinion about its provisions, but measures it objectively by the idea of the spiritual kingdom.[33] It can therefore be said that the law is not abrogated but completed, the finitude in which the law is opposed to the natural will being taken into a comprehensive spiritual relation. In the universality of this idea his finitude or createdness is also for him transcended in the divine freedom. For this reason he can speak of himself as one with the Father, of the Father as revealed in this spiritual relation,[34] in which also he can assume the prerogative the Jew allows to God alone of forgiving sins.[35]

There is here the beginning of the Trinitarian concept of God which will be found in the belief of the church. For this concept to be revealed, to enter into human knowledge, it is necessary first that the subject who fears the imminent divine judgment and is purified of his particularity pass to identity with the universal, objective divine will.[36] There is need still that division appear, not only as referred by the subject to this objective principle, but as also instituted by it. Here occurs the question of the realization of the kingdom. Jesus says in *Matthew* that God is known only to the Son, and to whom the Son reveals Him. The declaration of the Son has, however, the abstractness of language as against givenness and immediate experience. The preaching of the kingdom only attained the form of objective and necessary truth through the crucifixion and resurrection.[37]

(c) The realization of the kingdom is spoken of in the Synoptics partly through parables, partly through the apocalyptic imagery of the irruption of the Son of Man into the world. These means serve rather to counter erroneous interpretations than to show the kingdom as actual. It is not to be brought into existence by the violence of the Zealots, for whom the historical content of the divine will is national liberation. The historical conditions being complete and the desire of the kingdom purified of all admixture of finite desires, it will come of itself, none could know when.[38]

33. All the criticisms of the Mosaic law have the purely objective form of pointing to its abstractness, against which there stands a human will to which it should be accommodated, the situation in which a casuistic legalism develops. Instead the difference of the human will from the divine is to fall within a spiritual unity.
34. *John* 10, 30, and elsewhere.
35. *Matt.* 12, 31 seq. and elsewhere.
36. The movement is the same but that it is concrete — is not from division to an antecedent indivision as in the transition from a sceptical subjectivity to the objectivity of the Neoplatonic One — but saves division and finitude in relation to the undivided.
37. The absurdity of finding a revolutionary social programme in the Gospels is evident from these considerations.
38. *Matt.* 11, and elsewhere.

A more definite teaching begins when Jesus relates the coming of the Son of Man to his own death, this the inevitable consequence of his teaching.

The idea of the Kingdom of God was mediated in the temptations and the beatitudes by the negation of every supposed otherness of the human from the one comprehensive divine purpose. Implicit in this beginning of the Trinitarian concept of God is that the human and the finite generally, as originating in this idea, will not have an absolute otherness but will be the otherness of the divine idea itself. Itself finite and other than God, the creature will be comprehended in the infinite divine activity. The rational creature will have knowledge of its finitude as in this infinite end. Such knowledge was sought by Gnostics through a mixture of philosophical ideas of the time and mythical concepts of various origin. But neither a concrete idea of God nor how this idea might appear truly in the rational creature was distinctly and logically expressed in their systems. There, as in the strictly philosophical thought of the Neoplatonists, the original One is defined as against division, and the embodiment of a rational being is in the vanishing of nature and division, is a seeming or docetic embodiment.[39] Human finitude falls again into the same division as where the movement to the One began.

The actuality of the Kingdom of God is not revealed to the disciples and apostles in philosophical form. Philosophy does not know a new principle, a new concept of God, in its beginning, but after it is already known in religion and art, and has informed the institutions and historical life of peoples. And the new principle is only imprinted on institutions and historical life when it is first known religiously.[40] The disciples and apostles are made certain of the reality of the divine kingdom — the idea of God as spirit — through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. One must distinguish in this the content of which they become certain and the immediate and factual form of the mediation which brings about their certainty. It might otherwise be supposed that this form — the experience of these events — had higher authority than the knowledge of Christians in the church, who were removed from the events themselves and knew of them only by dubitable reports.

One must also attend to the certainty itself of the first knowledge, how it is constituted. Otherwise the certainty of these first Christians may be referred to a psychological state, to some exceptional, unstable condition of the soul, incapable of truth and

39. Gnosticism is treated in 3(a) below.

40. On the relation of religion to secular institutions generally, Hegel, *Enzyklopädie* (1830), Hoffmeister, p. 422 ff.

universality. The crucifixion and resurrection were certain to the disciples because they were seen as in a necessary relation to the idea of the divine kingdom, which was for them the objective measure of the events. The events are revelatory of the nature of God, as explicating the concrete, spiritual idea of God, taught them by Jesus with prophetic authority.

The crucifixion is thus not simply the experience of the unjust death of a man of perfect virtue. It is for them the death of God in the moment of difference and finitude, in the immediate human individuality which is a moment in the concept of spirit. The finitude of this moment is peculiarly the mortality of the living individual, presupposed in the forms in which he has also the universality of thought and will. Human nature, as was already conspicuous to Aristotle, is the contradiction of dependence on nature, in which relation the individual is corruptible, and free spontaneous activity, which does not presuppose nature and relations to it through bodily organs. The crucifixion is the experience of the separation of these elements, of the loss of the free rational principle in the mortal, and then the negation of this. The potentiality to which the living individual returns in death — Hades, Sheol — is then the turning point, where the mortal element, severed from its immediate existence, is unified with the immortal: the difference of the two becomes the moment of finitude and otherness in an infinite spiritual relation. The crucifixion thus passes over into the descent into Hell and the resurrection.

The necessity of the mediation lies here in the negation of the supposed separation of Jesus as a living individual from his spiritual relation to God. The experience of the separation is imposed on the disciples by the crucifixion. In it is destroyed their relation to the spiritual kingdom which they had through him. The revelation of the divine nature is then for them the immediate intuition of the divine spirit as the truth of the natural. The division between their inner conversion to the kingdom through the teaching of Jesus and their despair at the crucifixion vanishes in this intuition.[41]

In the crucifixion and resurrection is thus confirmed for the disciples the teaching of Jesus about the love of God, that it is not abstract — of the legally righteous — but comprehends human finitude, evil, the moment of radical alienation and separation of human from divine. There is confirmed for them also the other teaching that they should love one another. What human

41. The concept of God revealed in the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension is the Trinitarian God, one with himself in the alienation. On the immediacy of the knowledge, *John* 20, 8: "Then entered also the other disciple . . ., and he saw and believed."

community, peace, love is, the crucifixion reveals to them in that Jesus is not only put to death but dies the death of the basest criminal, repudiated by his own people as the enemy of their religion and institutions. For the disciples is thus negated all the authority of human institutions, all distinctions of honour and dishonour. Through this negation is discerned the human community in which all these distinctions are not annulled but reduced to differences comprised within a primary equality. In this sense the Gospel was said to fulfill and not destroy the law.

Through the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension the Trinitarian or spiritual idea of God contained in the teaching of Jesus receives for the disciples the certainty of fact — of a kind of knowledge, that is, whose mediation is external and transitory. In this knowledge an assumed difference and separation of the humanity of Jesus from his prophetic identity with the universal divine will is removed for them. The argument which moved from God through nature and human finitude to God is taken in its conclusion as revealing the concrete unity of human and divine in Jesus, who therefore becomes for the disciples the Son of God. Their faith is constituted by this movement, being their adherence to the conclusion, which becomes for them the beginning of a new movement. In this the humanity of Jesus is no longer taken immediately, but as the incarnation of the Son of God, the divine λόγος to which before his humanity returned in the ascension. One thus comes to the standpoint of the church. The difference of this from the first revelation lies only in the form of the mediation. There the movement was taken as from God, but the knowledge that this was so was through the divided relation of the disciples to the universality of the teaching of their master and to their despair about its actuality. This division is removed in their faith, and the mediation is in the element of spirit thus constituted. In this element the content has the form of a 'Vorstellung' in which difference and division rest on a prior unity, where thought and universality have been impressed on sensuous immediacy.

2. *Continuity of the original revelation and the pre-theological knowledge of the Church*

Christ's kingdom was not of this world.[42] In the Kingdom of God, according to its idea, there would not be a merely partial and abstract conformity of human interests with the universal divine purpose, but human finitude would have place only as a moment in that purpose. That is, the Kingdom of God was not an historical kingdom. For if states and governments cannot long continue

42. *John* 18, 36.

without the effective subordination of all special interests to one common end, it is also the case that this political end is only realized in particular natural conditions, needs, ambitions — presuppositions for the political will over which it may have power, to which it may also succumb. The relation of states in general to religion is that through their gods peoples know absolutely the relation of their finitude and natural dependence to the unifying end of their common life, a relation which is both present and hidden, maintained and opposed, in their political life. This relation of human and divine as known in religion might itself be abstract. It might appear as the truth of religion that human interests were a servitude to nature, where the only good was that they should be negated, or, if there were a human freedom, that this was finally subject to fate or necessity. Men were freed from nature and fate, but their freedom did not have historical existence.

The church is the Kingdom of God realized in a community of men.[43] In this form the universal divine kingdom has relation to history, but as the power through which historical existence should be brought quickly to its fulfilment, where the alienation from God, the Fall, which was constitutive of history, would be no more. The members of the church had inevitably economic, political, family relations to the world, but these relations were principally indifferent, extraneous to their one proper interest as Christians. If they were exhorted to conform their life in the world to their faith, the intention was not to promote any worldly ends, but that these should not impede or distort the faith.[44]

There is, however, a most important difference between the practical teaching of the Pauline and other Epistles and that of the Synoptics. Human institutions are not simply to be abandoned, as binding one to the old and superseded order. The divine kingdom itself has relation to human institutions: there is the beginning of a Christian way of being in family and state, in the making and distribution of wealth.[45] But the Christian, if he is thus in the world, must not be of it. Nor does this ambiguous relation have the same sense as in later antiquity: there is not a part of the church which lives in the world, another which withdraws from it to a monastic life. The apostolic church admits a relation to human institutions only to retract this admission directly and declare that it was better to be dead to the world.[46] For the same reason in the apostolic age there cannot be a definite order of church

43. The church is "der Geist in seiner Existenz, Gott als Gemeinde existierend", Hegel, *Ph. Rel.* (Lasson), part 3, p. 198.
44. *Phil.* 1, 27: *Col.* 1, 10.
45. *Ephesians* 5.
46. *Phil.* 1, 23.

government, since this supposes first of all the difference of a laity from a clergy, and thus a more stable relation of the church to human institutions and occupations. The unstable relation of the apostolic church to the world has its origin in the form of its knowledge of the revelation. On the one side the church participates in the reconciliation of human and divine in Christ. As thus returned out of the division of its humanity from the divine spirit present in and constitutive of it, the church has the principle of a new ordering also of secular relations and institutions. On the other side the life of the church is the process in which, having fallen into the division of humanity from the universal or divine spirit, it strives to follow the example of Christ, the "firstborn among many brethren" [Rom.8:29], to pass through the negation of its finitude and division and know itself reconciled with God. It is the belief of the church that these moments are eternally equal in God. In the revelation they appear as successive, as the history of the fall and restoration of mankind. With Christianity the revelation is taken as complete, but this in one man, not universally. There is thus a residual separation of the moments in the church, to remove which is its moving interest and spirit.

It is necessary, if the subsequent course of the present argument will be clear, that this tendency in the apostolic church to a completion of its history be seen as intrinsic to the structure of its faith. In the New Testament this striving has its expression in the *Apocalypse*. The sense of this Christian apocalyptic is very different from Old Testament Apocrypha. The expectation here is that what has already been revealed and is known in the faith of the church should be known fully, that the Empire and the former order of things should not remain along with the church, when the Christian knew them as already abolished.[47] Apocalyptic loses its urgent interest once the church has a reason in itself wherein it can remain self-related in its division and relation to the world. But the necessity of this development will only appear when the faith of the apostolic church has been defined more closely.

The church came into being, as is told in the *Acts of the Apostles*, when for the disciples the immediate and sensuous certainty of the resurrection had vanished from them, had passed from this immediacy to a thinking spirit for which could unfold the whole course of the revelation. The beginning for this universal spirit was with the ascension of Christ, where the whole revelation of the divine will in him returned out of the separation of its moments

47. The practical admonitions in the Pauline and other epistles should always be set in the context of the *Apocalypse*, which with reason concludes the *New Testament*.

to their original unity in God. The idea of the Kingdom of God was thus not as at first, for a thinking abstracted from life and human existence, but was proven by the agreement of its manifestation with it. The revelation which is for the church begins with this confirmed idea, with the negation of the former immediate knowledge in relation thereto. Thus the church knows Christ first as the λόγος eternally with God and itself God. Secondly, it knows the life and finite existence of Christ not as separate simply from the divine λόγος, but as the division of the λόγος into the universal creative will and the contingent existence of an individual human life.[48] The incarnation, baptism, preaching, death and resurrection are then the course through which the hidden unity of the divine and human moments is revealed. This history of the individual is now also explicitly the history of mankind from a first immediate harmony of human life with the creative λόγος, through the division of the two into the extremes of a good and an evil or diabolical will, human history as forms of relation of these powers, then the revelation in Christ of a restored and mediated unity of human and divine.[49]

For an abstract reflection the revelation as known to the faith of the church afterwards appeared to contain only a modalistic or economic concept of the Trinity.[50] The difference of the divine and human elements in Christ did not in the revelation remain in their unity: the process to their unity and their attained spiritual unity did not appear as the equal moments of one divine activity. For the faith of the church which rests in and takes its beginning with the knowledge that the moments have been absolutely united in the resurrection and ascension, this difficulty does not occur. Questions whether the λόγος was incarnate or the humanity of Christ was elevated to the λόγος at the baptism, whether the created λόγος was subordinate to the Father, being subject to the finitude and temporality of a creature, — these and like questions belong not to the apostolic faith but to a Christianity which has begun to enter the world, which has need to know the truth of its faith not only inwardly but as concretely continuing into the finitude of human existence. The apostolic faith has not this interest but is content to know the realization of its truth at the point where it can represent to itself the separation of human from divine as overcome in Christ; and its members, negating their divided humanity, can sacramentally participate in this realized spiritual

48. *II Cor.* 12, 1-5, for the inner spirit in which the Pauline theology originates.
49. *Romans* 5.
50. On modalism, *infra*, 3(a).

unity.

In this relation to the world the church has no need to define its faith conceptually. To express its Trinitarian idea of God it suffices to use the language of biological generation, to speak of the revelation through the related images of incarnation, resurrection of the body, and the like. Faith knows the meaning of its language, neither falling into categorial confusions nor measuring its content by the linguistic and imaginative form of its expression.[51] This stability and assurance is possible to faith because its content, though known first in immediate or sensuous form and then through language, does not have its proper being in these forms but in the universality of thought. For, as the argument has already shown, the beginning of the Christian religion is with the idea of God as spirit, as the unity of human and divine mediated by their separation and difference. This idea as such is only for philosophical thought, for the thinking which has moved through the criticism of other proposed ἀρχαί to the Aristotelian γόηαις γοήαεως.[52] But in the Christian religion the reality of this idea was revealed immediately in the resurrection, in the intuition that the negated finitude of Jesus was at once his restored unity with the divine λόγος. The certainty of this immediate knowledge of spirit is replaced in the faith of the church by a knowledge which knows the division of human and divine and their restored unity in the light of the spirit. If to faith is lacking the certainty of the first revelation to the disciples, it has instead the stability of spirit which, resting in itself, can regard the whole mediation in Christ and strive to appropriate it.[53] Out of the mediation faith returns in the sacraments to an intuition of the unity of the individual in his finitude and separation with universal spirit.

The interest of faith is to know the agreement of the idea of God with the revelation. Beginning with the completed circle of the immediate revelation, faith moves again from its standpoint through the same circle.[54] The result is not simply as before — to negate immediately the separation of human from divine — but to bring into one view the already established unity of the moments and their division in the 'Vorstellung', thus to negate the difference of this form from the content and meaning of faith. Such is the logic by which philosophical thought develops within the Christian

51. Hegel, *Ph. R.* (Lasson), part 1, p. 284 ff.; *Enzyklo.*, p. 573.
52. Aristotle, *Met.*, XII, 7.
53. N. 48 above.
54. Both the original revelation and the apostolic faith as forms in which the Trinitarian principle is revealed have a circular or Trinitarian structure, the difference of the two from each other and from patristic theology being in the form of the knowledge.

religion. There arises thus intrinsically out of faith itself the need of an 'intellectus fidei', of a theology or knowledge of the faith through philosophical concepts. In the ancient church this development cannot take place directly, but is through the relation of the church to the philosophy and institutions of the Empire. For the reason which has its origin in faith itself finds its confirmation not in the 'Vorstellung' simply, but requires to know this as the result to which Hellenistic-Roman culture leads.[55] It does not suffice to review in the inwardness of faith the course and completion of history in Christ. There is now added a third circle to the two already considered. In this the mediation is through the actual life of the Empire. If from this mediation there will arise the idea of a 'civitas Dei' this is not an apocalyptic concept only, but also the beginning of a Christian history.

This third form of knowledge of the Christian revelation has sometimes been thought a corruption of the church, the imposition on its faith of an alien Hellenic reason. Against such extraneous interpretations (which rest on contemporary philosophical assumptions) is to be set the logical development of Patristic theology. The reason which appears in the church is at first abstract; the interest and movement is to convert this reason to the same concrete spiritual form as is known in the faith of the church.

The result of this theological development is not to confound the apostolic faith with uncertain and long superseded philosophical speculations. In antiquity and at all times in the history of the church the relation of faith to the 'Vorstellung' in which its content is expressed is disturbed by an abstract thought which stabilizes the separation of the sensuous and universal elements or human finitude, and measures the conversion of the elements to a concrete spiritual form by the criteria of finite knowledge. Patristic theology saved the concreteness of faith for a Christianity which admitted into itself definite theoretical and practical relations to the world.[56]

Although it has been proposed at various times in the Christian church to return to the purity of its first age, it is clear from the present argument that something other is intended in this than a simple return. For at no time since the first century has the church been without involvement in secular interests. Christ said that he had overcome the world, but the church has found the way to this end always less direct and abstract. Every supposed

55. That the Christian revelation is continuous with a 'praeparatio' in the culture of the Empire is now shown from within the Christian religion.
56. The relation of Christianity to the culture and institutions of the Empire cannot be expressed in religious language as such. Institutions are existing universal ends and therefore only intelligible to a thought which knows the logical relation of the ideal to the sensible.

return to the origins has been the beginning of a completer secularization of the church. It is not to resume the indifference of the apostolic church to the world that Christians recur to the first age of the church. What is sought is the concreteness of the apostolic faith and of the Synoptic preaching before it, when this is obscured or lost in the church and the general culture. The need is felt of a reason and of relations to the world which would have the same concreteness as is known in those παραδείγματα.

3. *Patristic theology and the apostolic faith*

In the Christian communities to which Paul wrote with the authority of an apostle — as one having full and direct knowledge of the revelation — there were dissensions about the order of spiritual gifts, about the conformity of worldly life to the faith, about a 'gnosis' which would know the faith independently of its revelation in Christ. The resolution the apostle gave to these incipient controversies was that the churches should give primacy to the spiritual knowledge of the revelation — to faith — then to hope or the division of the individual from the universality in which he has this knowledge and the movement of return, then to the charity which unites these moments.[57] The moments, that is, which constitute the spiritual community are to be the foundation on which there is place for other gifts. Another 'gnosis' than that which is through these forms was at once excluded, without room for controversy. The order of human life likewise followed directly from this participation in the divine.

The relation of these same elements is different in the church which is governed not by the apostles but by the continuation of their authority in a clerical order. The knowledge the successors to the apostles have of the revelation has another structure than before. Partly the apostolic faith has received the objective form of Scripture, which will be henceforth for the church an absolute measure of Christian truth. Partly the church has possession of the apostolic faith in the form of tradition, of which an absolute spiritual knowledge is thought to continue in the church, derived in unbroken succession from the apostles. Tradition likewise is taken to be an absolute measure of Christian truth.[58] These two measures at first appear as divided and independent of each other. They have however a common origin, and the actual measure of Christian truth is found to be neither independently, but to lie in their agreement. In both, the apostolic faith and its 'Vorstellung' have been collected into a whole, and this whole has both an external

57. *I Corinthians* 13.
58. Irenaeus, *adv.haeres.* II, 28, 6; III, 5, 1; Tertullian, *Praescr.* 27; etc.

and objective being and an inner being in the certainty of the church that it has possession of the revealed truth. In both forms the actual spiritual knowledge of the apostolic church has passed into an implicit or potential knowledge. The words of Scripture are dead without the spirit which can interpret them. Tradition is dead custom, and the yoke and burden of law without insight and freedom, unless the spiritual authority of the clerical element in relation to it can develop and pervade also the general body of the church. Since both forms contain the whole apostolic faith they are assumed to agree with each other. The assumption is however unproven, and only the complete development of patristic theology will discover it to be true.

There is here the beginning of a third relation of the church to the revelation, where it will be for thought, as well as for the 'Vorstellung' of the apostolic faith. Patristic theology is this 'intellectus fidei', the development in the church of a concrete or spiritual thought, which can admit into itself the full content of the apostolic faith. Of this development it can be said that nothing new is discovered in it, but only what was always and everywhere believed by the whole church. But this uniform, catholic relation to the faith itself belongs to this third standpoint, being only the undeveloped assumption with which it begins. The movement from this beginning appears not as intrinsic but as imposed externally by heretics, by those who perversely break the consensus of the faithful. But the response of orthodox theologians to the heretics is also the explication and discovery to the church of what it thinks. The heresies divide and threaten the unity of the church because they disclose an abstractness and inadequacy of this third standpoint. The theological response is effective if it allows into the church a reason more concrete and sufficient to the faith.

The history of patristic theology to the point of agreement between the reason of this third standpoint and the apostolic faith falls into two principal parts. In the first part, which extends to the Nicene council, the implicit spirituality of the new standpoint develops through a subordination of the moments of the Trinity to itself and a corresponding separation and succession of its οἰκονομία or manifestation to knowledge of the equality of the moments. The effect of this theological development in the life of the church is to correct a formal and legalistic relation of the clerical element to the laity, to convert this unfree relation into a spiritual community. The second part of the history begins with this result, with a certainty of the concrete and undivided unity of the Trinitarian persons essentially and in their revelation. The interest now is to convert the first intuition of this result in Athanasius into objective form, until the Trinitarian and

Christological doctrines should express the same concrete divine teleology as was the object of the apostolic faith. Finally in the Augustinian theology the residual subjectivity in the relation of thought to these doctrines was removed: the subjectivity moving and relating the divine persons was transferred to the object. Thereby also human freedom and servitude to nature could be subsumed under the infinite divine purpose in the Augustinian doctrine of grace.

Patristic theology may appear to be remote from the history of human institutions in medieval and modern times. But in truth only by this long argument did the Christian belief in the reconciliation of man with God receive the form in which it could be the presupposition and basis of finite institutions. For by this argument the inner, felt reconciliation in the apostolic faith is extended to the world, undoing the assumption that worldly relations are independent of the interests of faith. Until this extension is completed Christians, going over to their various human interests, must lose therein their relation to the concrete moving end they know in faith. The agreement of faith with the 'intellectus fidei', which permits this transition, is virtually complete in the Augustinian theology. It remained only that the intellectual or philosophical form should be separated from the religious, should stand on its own. An independent thought which takes itself to have the same content as the Christian religion appears at the end of the Patristic period.

The logic of this theological development has next to be given more exactly. It is not to be followed if one gives in to the assumption, congenial in many ways to contemporary thought, that patristic theology, especially from the time of Athanasius and the Cappadocians, abandoned the safe ground of human experience for metaphysical constructions of doubtful religious interest. The argument shows instead that the patristic theologians thought philosophically because their religion, from the point where it began to enter into relation to the world, was already philosophical implicitly, and had to be given that form if the church was to be more than a sect living apart from a cultivated world it was impotent to draw to itself. Patristic theology is not philosophy, in that it presupposes a revealed truth. It is however the genesis of a philosophy, in that its movement is towards an intellectual relation to the content of that presupposition. The thought which is in agreement with faith and its 'Vorstellung' is conscious also of its independence. The way to the beginning of this independence at the end of the patristic period is also a philosophical thinking which both looks to the authority of the revelation and is the authoritative interpreter of it.

(a) *The Discovery of the Doctrine of the Trinity*

The spirituality of the apostolic church is now held in the two-fold form of tradition and Scripture. The community which stands in this relation to its belief, having the need to animate by thought these inert forms, is the catholic or universal church.[59] Externally its catholicity appears as a relation and ordering of the many Christian communities to the higher dignity of Rome and a few others of apostolic foundation. The Spirit is thought to continue in this church in the inner or implicit form of an apostolic succession. It is a presence that is primarily in the clerical element of the church. The community of believers has begun to assume a firm institutional structure, with the distinction between those qualified to govern, to teach and administer the sacraments and a laity subject to clerical authority.[60]

The argument has shown this to be a necessary development, but in it is the difficulty of a new beginning, another relation to the faith which will have its own development. The same doctrine is present in the church, but the relation of the faithful to it has now primarily the form of submission to a received and customary teaching. The former sacramental mediation remains, but has also been subsumed under an abstract relation to Scripture and tradition in general and to a Spirit hidden in the divine authority of a clerical order.[61] So far as this new relation prevails over the old, the church might be thought to have fallen back into a Judaic legalism. That this standpoint is at first experienced in the church as a relapse into the legalism and servitude from which it had been freed originally has its cause in the loss of mediation. In the immediacy of this new beginning the former concreteness both in the idea of God and on the human side has been resumed into an absolute unity.[62] The distinctions are remembered and preserved in credal and liturgical formulae, but are not unfolded for the incipient theological thought of the church.

The church retains the idea of God as triune but in a monarchian form.[63] The relation to God as monarchic has the meaning on the human side of an immediate inner spirituality where the division

59. Irenaeus, *op. cit.*, IV, 26, 2; etc.
60. The new order has begun to appear in Clement of Rome and Ignatius: I Clem. 40-44; Ignatius, Smyrn. 8, 1, on the authority of bishops.
61. Origen, *contra Celsum*, VII, 8, among many testimonies of the loss of spiritual gifts in the church.
62. Christianity becomes in great part the teaching of a law like the Jewish, but simplified by a clergy endowed with divine authority: Tertullian, *contra Iud.* 2; Irenaeus IV, 16, etc.
63. Tertullian, *adv. Prax.*, 2 ff; Irenaeus, IV, 6, 8.

of reason and the natural will is negated only in relation to the transcendent One, not also in human self-consciousness. The free subjectivity of the classical world, which in the origin of Christianity had found its principle in the Trinitarian God appears now to be repressed and expelled from the church.[64] The development of this standpoint is the restoration of the freedom thus apparently lost. The mediation is restored alike in the life of the church and in the knowledge of the Trinitarian principle. There is the same movement on both sides.

This development does not take place without a profound disruption of the church by a number of heresies which take up the subjective principle as against the externality of law and tradition. These heresies have the great interest that in them the mediation which distinguishes Christianity from Judaism is brought to light, so far as this is possible from the side of human freedom. In them remains a knowledge of the dividedness and evil of human life which the monarchian relation prevailing in the church could not contain. In the church the divine goodness and justice were reconciled in the obedience which gave up the division of the finite. This attitude had its complement in a self-conscious thought which sought in itself a release from the duality of good and evil in the sensible world. How these elements can be restored to the unity in which alone they are Christian will occupy theologians until Athanasius.

Between the reason which moved in the heretical positions and that by which the orthodox fathers responded to them there is obviously the closest relation. For the form of the response is to show that the subjective freedom the heretics attend to is not as they suppose irreconcilable with the divine monarchy. Thus the λόγος for the heretics, since their knowledge of it is mediated by their dualistic starting point, is that in which the terms of the division are united, where with the unity the possibility always remains open of falling again into the negativity and evil of the sensible world. From the instability of the λόγος this thought tends therefore beyond itself to a One in which this defect is negated. The λόγος therefore is a subordinate principle, and this same subordination to which the heretical reflection inevitably leads is equally assumed by their orthodox opponents. It is therefore of interest to follow closely the formation of this position, that the Son is secondary and inferior to the Father.

---

64. The subjective freedom which originally found its ground immediately in the revelation can now only have place if it attain the same universality as the authority to which it is subject.

Montanism is the least radical of the great heresies of the period: the logic of the division between law and spirit, servitude and subjective freedom, is least developed. Against a Christianity which could find relation to the world through an abstract reason the Montanist prophets would remain in the spirituality of the apostolic church.[65] In this they might appear to be untouched by the new rationality which had emerged in the church. But their faith is concentrated in the expectation of an imminent end of the world because the free prophetic spirit is confined and repressed in the church.[66] Their eschatology is therefore not that of the apostolic church, where there was no established relation to the world, but, as often in later times, the reaction of subjective spirit against an order not understood as pertaining to itself. Montanism belongs thus to the new order in the church; its relation to the apostolic church is merely nostalgic. There is therefore in the movement a tendency to return to unity with the church, taking into itself the tradition and clerical discipline against which it had rebelled.[67] This conversion to the ordered, conservative form it has with Tertullian could occur the more easily in Montanism because the subjective principle animating it remained inward and undeveloped. The dualism which breaks out in Marcionism is submerged in relation to the expected end of the world and its evils.

The opposition of Marcionite theology to the church is more developed. Central to it is a Pauline consciousness of the division which the law effects in relation to a free subjectivity.[68] The negativity and evil which the apostle experienced as a consequence of Jewish law is here felt as against an abstract reason in the church. The conversion of Paul was from this division to a spiritual freedom in which the law and the natural will were reconciled. The Marcionite church did not know this concrete reconciliation but stayed with its fixed opposition to the Catholic church. By its own selective canon it could remain in relation to Scripture and suppose itself to be the true continuation of the apostolic church.[69] But, an unresolved division of the will remaining, its spirituality had the form of a flight from nature, the work of the demiurgic Jewish god.[70] In the Marcionite church these discordant elements — its dualism and its attachment to Pauline theology — remained side by side. For the relation of the two to appear it was necessary

65. Hippolytus, VIII, 19, 2; Eusebius V, 18, 2; etc.
66. Tertullian, *adv. Prax.* 1; *adv. Marc.* IV, 22; etc.
67. Hipp. VIII, 19, 1; Eusebius V, 17, 4; etc.
68. Irenaeus, I, 27, 2-4: Tertullian, *adv. Marc.*
69. Irenaeus, I, 27, 2; Tertullian, IV, 2-5.
70. Tertullian, I.

first that the dualistic or subjective aspect should be developed fully on its own ccount, as occurred in the Gnostic sects.

In Gnosticism the nostalgic attachment of Montanists and Marcionites to an older church and the authority of the revelation is gone. A turbulent and unclear speculative spirit moves in the Gnostic sects, which think themselves in possession of a higher knowledge than the belief of Catholics in an historical revelation and the recollection of it in tradition. Though they thus separated themselves fully from the church, the speculation of the Gnostic had a powerful attraction for Christians.[71] Far the most dangerous opponents of the church in the second century were those whom the church might be thought able to ignore, as having no common ground with it. The church is vulnerable to Gnostic teachings because the rational spirit which has taken root in it has in them its full subjective development. For Marcion the standpoint of the division or duality of the will was primary — the conflict of an abstract freedom and an unfree involvement in given natural conditions. For resolution of the division he looked therefore rather to the scriptural doctrine he knew than to the subjective principle itself. The Gnostic systems are not only dualistic, but in them is also discovered a unified relation of self-consciousness to the ideal or universal and to nature.[72] The subject which knows the division of the rational and the sensuous or natural will is here not the Stoic or sceptical subject, which either holds abstractly to the universal or doubts that a true relation of the parts can be found. The Gnostic knows rather the instability of the division, the contradiction of its moments, the sensible world as the untrue appearance of an intelligible world.[73] The good which could not be realized in the natural world is for him in the universality of thought the undivided principle of the otherness and division of the ideas. Self-consciousness is then not contracted into itself out of the opacity of its objects, but is the connection of these moments — of the good and the difference and multiplicity of the ideas.[74]

The Gnostic systems do not have the logical clarity in the connection of the principal moments found in the Platonism of Plotinus or in the Christian Platonism of Origen. The λόγος or

71. Of all the heresies of the time Gnosticism receives far the greatest attention from ecclesiastical writers, principally Irenaeus and Hippolytus.
72. However impurely, there is always in their systems a relation of the two worlds to an absolute One, in which relation the dualism is resolved.
73. The great differences among the Gnostic systems are neglected in the present argument which intends only to define their systematic relation to Christianity. Considered in this relation, the system of Valentinus is the most developed and reveals most clearly the limits of the position.
74. Irenaeus, 1, 2, 5.

νοῦς is diffused into a plurality of Aeones whose number is determined by no principle.[75] The ideal world, though in this thought the exemplar of the sensible world, does not extend its goodness to the image.[76] But a wild speculative fancy tends to be disciplined and controlled by the logic of the system. The successive emanations terminate in a turning back to the origin, in the negation of all that is different from the One. The Aeon or intellectual principle which would thus know its good, because it cannot sustain that relation in which the mediation of its return is lost, is the origin of the sensible world.[77] The lost mediation is for it as a nature of which it cannot take possession as its own. Set in this systematic context the original aversion to nature is found to be nothing else than the incapacity of a formally free self-consciousness to grasp the mediation of its objects with itself. In consequence it finds itself bound to a sensible world to which it has at the same time the relation of a free person. But as the Gnostics thought through more definitely the form of this circular movement the contradictory practical relation of the individual to the world with which the argument began was taken into a Platonic contemplation of the agreement of the image with the exemplar.[78] The presupposition of a matter, the principle of evil, was perceived as from the propensity of thought to externalize its self-identity.

The simple result to the Gnostic and other heretical movements treated is thus to regain a knowledge of the mediation not yet developed intellectually in the church. A spiritual relation of the individual to the monarchic principle was discovered. The λόγος which mediates between the One and the individual, enlightening him and liberating him in thought from the bonds of the material world is not the λόγος of the Gospel which was with God and was God, which, being incarnate revealed the unknown One. Although the revulsion from the creative God of the Old Testament felt by the heretics all but vanishes finally in a Platonic contemplation of the goodness and beauty of nature, a difficult barrier still remains. The Gnostic λόγος cannot be thought to have been in truth incarnate, to have taken the form of a living individual. The falling away of the rational individual from contemplative freedom to nature is an irrational act which is not contained in the divine teleology. The λόγος has power to liberate precisely because it can maintain in thought the true relation of the two worlds and has not lost its freedom in the immediacy of life. Nor does the λόγος

75. The 365 Aeons of Basilides are reduced to 30 in the system of Valentinus. The νοῦς of Plotinus has possession of all the ideas.
76. Plotinus II, 9.
77. V. n. 74.
78. F. D. Baur, *Die christliche Gnosis*, 124 ff.

in this manner of thinking reveal the One: that which is different from the One has a divided and finite being which cannot wholly reveal its origin. The λόγος is subordinate to its incomprehensible source.

The theologians who reply to these heretical positions, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, do not have a clearer concept of the λόγος than their opponents. The spirituality which they show to be present in the universal church reflects the same subordination of the λόγος as with the heretics.[79] It is for them traditional knowledge that God is triune, but the meaning of this doctrine they will not examine in itself but as it appears in the divine οικονομία or history of human liberation. That this method is not in truth independent of the speculative thought of the Gnostics to which it is opposed the church will be constrained to recognize by the modalistic interpretations which principally Sabellius will give to it. What permits the semblance of a more empirical procedure is that for these theologians the radical division of the will, the consciousness of the diremption and evil of human life, which was the origin of the heresies treated, enters their thought indirectly.[80] They will show the continuity of the Old Testament with the New, but this they accomplish without allowing the depth of the division between the two to appear.

If the anti-Gnostic fathers could discover a total Trinitarian form in the history of revelation, that was because they presupposed the Trinity. But the Trinity they conceived in the strongly monarchic form it had assumed for the church at this time. The difference of the persons from their origin did not have a logical structure for them. In the revelation their difference appeared as an historical succession.[81] But whether in this succession were reflected essential distinctions was a question only to be approached from the human side: was there in truth a development in this history or did the beginning continue as the unretracted presupposition of the following stages? In the latter case the history would undermine and destroy the assumption that in the monarchic God there were personal distinctions. But also then the Trinitarian structure of the

79. Tertullian's concept of God is of one substance in which Son and Spirit participate: the two subordinate persons both inhere in the substance and are that through which the divine οικονομία the salvation of men — is effected. The difficulties in this position escape him. Irenaeus will not speculate on the Trinity, but know it only through the economy. Tert. *adv. Prax.* 3; Iren. IV, 7, 4.

80. In these, theologies man is saved indeed from the powers of evil in the οικονομία by the death and resurrection of Christ but there is no developed subjective appropriation of this work on the human side, as in Paul.

81. Irenaeus, III, 18-23; Tertullian, *adv. Prax.*, 2-9.

history would dissolve: an economic Trinity taken by itself is devoid of sense, as with contemporary revolutionary progress which like Kronos endlessly devours its own children.

The integration of the Christian revelation into a Judaic or monarchian beginning had different but complementary forms in the theological thought of Irenaeus and Tertullian. The one speaks of the Word made flesh in the manner of the fourth gospel, while the other sees rather the human taken up by the λόγος at the baptism.[82] The difference of these scriptural formulae was of little account in the earlier church, but becomes important at this third or rational standpoint. The unity of natures may be regarded as immediate or as mediated through their difference. An adequate Christology must combine the two. In agreement with this Christological difference the elevation to spirituality of an abstract legal relation to the church takes diverse forms for Irenaeus and Tertullian. The one has before him principally the end in which the dividedness and mortality of human life is transcended;[83] the other is occupied rather with the way, which is through an austere morality.[84] For both theologians Christianity is in great part the revelation of a new law completing that of the Old Testament. Then also through the death and resurrection of Christ this practical virtue has its consummation in an immortal life. The question of primary interest for the present argument is how these parts are thought to be related, how an abstract moral reason and the individual in his particularity are to be united by participation in the resurrection of Christ. Tertullian approaches this concrete unity from the side of the rational will, Irenaeus from the natural individual. So far as one holds to these equally one-sided attitudes the antagonism of the two, which the heretics knew, does not occur. For this reason in the spiritual relation of the individual to God these moments are not concretely united as in the apostolic faith.[85] The mediation is not preserved in the spiritual relation and therefore both theological positions, despite their intentions, must in the end be found to be monarchic.

The Sabellian doctrine that the persons of the Trinity are only modes in which the one God is related to men in the economy of salvation[86] has two-fold importance. It gives first the conclusion to which the anti-Gnostic argument of Irenaeus and Tertullian must

82. Tertullian, *de carne Chr.*, 17-18; *adv. Prax.*, 27; Iren. III, 16, 2-7.
83. Iren. III, 18-19; III, 24.
84. Tert., *Contra Iud.*, 2, and elsewhere.
85. Elements which in John and Paul are combined though having a different emphasis, are taken up, the Johannine by Irenaeus, the Pauline by Tertullian, but not united.
86. On Sabellius, Hippolytus, *Refutatio* IX, 6-12.

lead. Secondly it makes inevitable the introduction into the church of the speculative theology of Clement and Origen. The Platonism which had been rejected as the source of heresies is now received as alone capable of saving the essential distinction of the Trinitarian persons.[87] For the argument of Sabellius that the Trinitarian economy or history of revelation told nothing of a triune nature of the one God assumes the empirical or materialistic standpoint to which the anti-Gnostic fathers adhered against the Platonizing speculations of their opponents. For that standpoint the revelation of the λόγος can only be through the medium of a momentary unification of the rational and the natural or sensuous soul. The difference of these moments is not stabilized and contained in their unity. There is thus not on the human side that in which immutable personal distinctions in God might be reflected. Modalism for the church of that time, as also in contemporary culture, has the attraction that it can be thought to secure the difference of human particularity from God, to serve human freedom. But it is a particularity without truth, as in Stoic pantheism.[88]

If the monarchic pantheism of Sabellius is not in agreement with the faith, to move from this point is only possible through a more developed reason. The barrier which separates the thought of the church from the content of the faith is an abstract and divided reason, the fixed assumption of a human standpoint, which has rather to be known as derivative from a divine reason. The limits of the same Stoic, Hellenistic reason were exposed in the original revelation, in the crucifixion.[89] Then the resurrection revealed this human reason as comprehended in a concrete divine reason.[90] The same conversion has now to occur in the theological thought of the church, and this begins with the λνῶαις of Clement and Origen.

The speculative theology of Origen, unlike that of the Gnostics, assumed the truth of Scripture and tradition. These authorities Origen does not merely assume but begins to inquire into them, what they are and how they are able to contain the revelation.[91] The Spirit which was the interpreter of the revelation in the apostolic church is now implicit in the divine authority of the clerical order. This inner spirituality has however no true expression in a finite theological reason. What it is begins to be evident in the speculative

87. Origen, in *Joh.* X, 37, 246; *de Princ.* I, 2, 12.
88. The Stoic λόγος can be concretely realized only in a process. The logical basis of the divine economy of Irenaeus and Tertullian is Stoic; unlike Sabellius they do not draw an assumed essential Trinity into a direct relation to their Stoicism.
89. Human culture negated in the crucifixion was so defined; see 1.(c).
90. *Supra*, 1.(c).
91. Origen, *de Princ.*, I, preface.

thought of Origen. Thus in relation to Scripture Origen is conscious that its meaning can only be discerned to the degree that the thought which considers it has the same form as its essential content.[92]

Since Origen's theology has for its intention a speculative knowledge of the revealed doctrine already known in other forms, these may appear to provide a measure of the truth of his λνῶαις The application of Scripture and tradition as criteria of theological positions has however the difficulty that these criteria are indeterminate. Measured by the later orthodoxy the Trinitarian and Christological doctrines of Origen are defective, and correspondingly his anthropology. But that criterion only came into being through the criticism of Origen.[93] How then did this correction take place, in which also the criterion of its truth was discovered? The form of the apostolic faith is of an infinite teleology where the movement begins with the Trinity, passes over to the division of human life, then in the negation of this division reveals the divine purpose as accomplished. The theology of this period presupposes an inner or essential Trinity, then sets in the way of a revelation of it a human medium fixed in one or other finite form. The several theological positions are distinguished by the way in which they take this finitude. The Gnostics and the heretics generally who did not find the divine idea immediately present in human life, but rather division and evil, resolved this division in a speculative thought which sought to maintain its independence and freedom as against the conflict of reason and the natural will in the sensible world. Their theological opponents, averse to this flight to the universality of thought, would show the divine purpose as revealed in a continuous and complete history.

But in this they remained with, or rather did not fully admit, the dividedness of human life. For this reason Sabellius concluded rightly that their economic or historical Trinity was not revelatory of a triune God.[94] The modalism of Sabellius permitted and made necessary the introduction of speculative thought into the church. The purified Gnosticism of Origen contained a more developed relation of the human and created to the presupposed Trinitarian idea, in that it knew both the division of reason and the natural will in man and an abstract resolution of their conflict. Only the residual abstractness and finitude of this relation separates the theology of Origen from its intention, its agreement, that is, with the apostolic faith.

---

92. *Ibid.*, IV, 1-2.
93. The remaining argument of this section to Athanasius.
94. V. n. 88.

The church at this third standpoint, assuming the Trinity, stands in an undeveloped, inarticulate relation to it. The impediment is the assumption on the human side of a finite reason. This finitude is like a Platonic hypothesis which is to be retracted and subsumed under what is prior to it in itself, if not for us — in a view itself constituted by that hypothesis. The theological positions considered are successive and complementary hypothesis in this sense. The movement of the theological argument is towards the point where they can be retracted in their totality and known then as comprised in the Trinitarian teleology, whose movement they no longer impede. Through this argument the common assumption of this period that the λόγος is subordinate to the Father will give way to a recognition of their equality. The supposed subordination will be seen to have its cause in this, that God as determinate or as λόγος is not known as free from determinations or finitude.

The λόγος in the theological system of Origen is equal to the Father as having there its origin and end. Considered in this relation it is said to be of one substance with the Father. But as personally distinguished from its paternal origin it is subordinate. The nature of the λόγος in this subordination and difference is an indeterminate freedom: either it may turn to the undivided principle, negating in that relation all the content and difference of its thought or, holding abstractly to itself and losing the mediation of its content it may be at the point of falling away to the externality of a sensible world, to an unfree relation to the ideal world it knew as its own. The λόγος is distinguished from all other separate angelic intelligences in that it adheres to the good tendency of its freedom and is not susceptible to the evil tendency which also lies in its nature. The existence of a sensible world is not ascribed to the one God but to the freedom of the angelic hierarchy. The natural world is thus not antecedent to the fall, as in *Genesis*, but coalesces with it. The redemption of this fallen world is through the λόγος which can alone without corruption enter into relation to it through a human soul.[95]

The λόγος so understood is in Origen's system a divine and eternal being. The criticism of his theology which will complete the argument of this period consists of nothing else than showing it to be a creature. The divinity of the λόγος here is of the ideal and unchanging as opposed to the sensible and corruptible. This opposition it transcends inwardly or potentially, not actually and concretely. If an account can be given by Origen of the Incarnation more lucid than elsewhere in the theology of the time, the unity of the opposed moments of the freedom of the λόγος which this

95. *de Princ.*, I, 2-3; II, 6; IV, 4, 4.

entails belongs not properly to itself but to the One in which this division is transcended. The finitude of the λόγος as such becomes at once apparent when one attempts to determine its difference from the One at the point of this total relation. The difference then, taken as actual, is not the attained unity of the moments but the movement and striving towards it.

The criticism of Origen took place not directly but through the Arian heresy. The conclusion was drawn before Arius that the λόγος was a creature when Dionysius of Alexandria sought in Origen's theology a defense against Sabellianism. But when this teaching was condemned by a Roman bishop of the same name as contrary to tradition he retreated from it.[96] What there was in the relation of these two positions had no development at that time. It was the virtue of Arius that, bringing into one relation a monarchic concept of God and the λόγος of Origen, he held firmly to the most disturbing consequences of this position. The one God he assumed, as was the tradition of the time, to be inwardly triune. The presupposed personal distinctions he rightly perceived were not revealed in the λόγος of Origen. Of this, taken concretely and actually in its difference from the one God, he further observed rightly, it was a temporal being, and as such a creature. It was infinitely (ἐπ' ἄπειρον) removed from the one God, being subject to the endless opposition of its abstract freedom and its materiality and relation to a sensible world. So considered, the incarnate λόγος through whom mankind was believed to have been liberated must be thought to stand in the same need of liberation. The argument might appear simply to lead back to Sabellius, to a divine transcendence and the impossibility that it be revealed through the finite. The difference lies in the more developed concept of the finite. There is not a concrete unity of the rational and sensuous elements of human nature, but such a relation of them as belongs to a theoretical understanding and to the abstract freedom of the rational will. In these powers there is as Origen knew a certain unity of the ideal and sensible worlds, but also a recurring difference. The movement and tendency of these powers was to a ground beyond themselves in which their division and finitude was transcended. The finitude of the λόγος of Origen is that of the rational powers of the soul, of the freedom which is its nature. Arius says truly of the λόγος that its unity with the Father is not of nature but of will, that to overcome its separation from that end it has the same need of grace as every other rational creature.[97]

---

96. Athanasius, *de Sententia Dionysii.*
97. Athanasius, *contra Arianos, de Decretis.*

The λόγος of Origen as thus developed in the theology of Arius is not revelatory of the Trinity in so far as the movement to the immediacy of natural existence and the return from it to an intellectual freedom are regarded not objectively but from the side of a subjective freedom which would transcend its limit in the One. Through the whole theological history of this period there has been a separation of this subjective or spiritual movement from an immediate undeveloped objectivity where the concrete Trinitarian idea was assumed but unrevealed. With Arius the relation of these elements has reached a point where nothing further divides the hidden inner Trinity from a revelation of it except a separation of the rational powers of the soul from the concrete whole to which they belong. It should not be supposed that the theology of Arius is more defective by the Trinitarian measure it brings to light than any other theological position of this period. It exposes the defect of them all at the point where it can be corrected.

It was evident to Athanasius that the Arian theology was destructive of the Christian religion.[98] The Trinitarian idea of God was lost: there could be no revelation of it, since whatever was other than the one God fell under a finite teleology, was a product inferior to its cause. There was no human liberation, since the mediator too had the same need of mediation. The cause of this destruction was also evident to him: there was lacking to Arius the concept of an infinite generation, where the generated was not separated from the generator by the opposition of universal to sensible, immutable to mutable, eternal to temporal, but could sustain and mediate this division. The theology of Arius deprives the credal and sacramental language of the church of all sense. Athanasius at the same time perceives this ruin and the adequation of the Trinitarian persons in their difference which will restore, because it agrees with and expresses for thought the meaning of the Trinitarian formulation of the liturgy. The agreement of the theological thought of the church with the apostolic faith emerges here so directly that there is no separation of Trinitarian speculation from Christology but an immediate congruence of the two, of the essential Trinity and its manifestation.[99] The mediation which brings this congruence to light is the negation of the finitude of the created λόγος of Arius.

(b) *The Trinity: ground of secular institutions*

How greatly the Trinitarian theology which has come into view with Athanasius differs from the theological positions of the second

98. *contra Arianos*, I, 35; II, 43; II, 67; II, 70.
99. *contra Arianos*, III, 4; *de Decretis*, 23-24.

century in relation to a practical and institutional order may be estimated in a general way if one compare Origen's concept of 'civitas dei'[100] with that of Augustine. The church for Origen did not stand apart from the universal Roman state but was rather in course of replacing it. The direction and moving end which were lacking to the Roman state were present in the church. To this end all humanity must eventually be drawn. But Origen's universal church had not the power any more than the 'Platonopolis' of Plotinus to animate and order the worldly interests of a state. Its purpose was rather to detach its members from these interests as what should not be, to draw them from a practical involvement to the freedom of an aesthetic contemplation of the sensible world. The Augustinian 'civitas dei' is wholly separate from the Roman state. It is related to it as to a perverse and divided society ignorant of an end in which its divided will might be concretely united. To this state the 'civitas dei' can neither give direction nor can it absorb it into itself. The state to which it might provide a paradigm does not exist. The semblance of a practical relation has been lost; the idea of a true and concrete relation has been discovered, but is without historical realization.

The whole interest and movement of patristic theology in this second period is towards the formation of this idea known immediately and inarticulately in the reaction of the church against the Arian theology. The human and finite reason which in the earlier period had an independence and separation from the divine Trinitarian reason of the revelation has now the status of an incomplete relation to it. The human standpoint in this relation is not lost but secured and saved from the destructive conflict of its abstract moments. The essential Trinity is no longer an assumption without confirmation in human experience but revealed as the end in which the extreme division of sensuous immediacy and rational freedom is contained. The impediments to a knowledge of this idea are no longer as before extraneous to it. They consist in a fixity of finite relations to the idea, but the measure of these assumed limits, the Trinity itself, is present. The development here can appear more difficult than before as taking place in an intellectual aether not easily accessible. The theologians of this time are of a profound philosophical culture. To participate in this requires of a contemporary that he be in some measure released from the anti-metaphysical bias of recent philosophy. This theological thought in a superficial view seems to have lost connection with the life of the church. But the previous argument has shown the agreement of this thought with the language of faith, as also that tradition

100. *contra Celsum*, IV, 22; VIII, 68 ff.

is in truth this theological thought, that only by it can the reading of Scripture be purged of subjective delusions and extraneous assumptions.

The Arian heresy, although superseded in principle in the theology of Athanasius, continued to hold its ground for many years after Nicaea.[101] Against an immediate agreement of the essential Trinity with its revelation it was possible to point to their difference. The doctrine of Athanasius and Nicaea appeared in its result to be Sabellian, a return through the manifestation of the personal distinctions to their undivided origin. The difference of what was other than the Trinity from it must still be thought to lie in its temporality and incompleteness. The Arians, while they might seem to save the human from dissolution into the divine unity, lost as before the redemptive relation of the two natures in Christ.

The incongruity of the divine and eternal with the human and temporal in this Arian argument belongs to an empirical standpoint which, while it relates the universal to the sensible particular, remains in the endless separation of the two. To this position there was no response to be made unless, as Origen had done before in another context, through the Platonic thought which discovers the total relation of the two worlds. The agreement of the Trinity with its manifestation is to be sought not immediately but in the universality of thought. The theology of the great Cappadocians, because it begins with the negation of this renewed Arian standpoint, can consider the relation of the Trinitarian persons first as separate, in the reflection of the temporal manifestion into itself. The object which this thought considers is the same as for Athanasius: the absolute divine unity, the difference from it of its total relation to the world, the individuality which is at once the completed realization of the λόγος and the mediated return from division to the original unity. Here the thought which considers this object does not apprehend it as immediately present but in a stabilized universal relation to it.

The Trinity for this thought is one substance in three 'hypostases', each the same absolute totality, as the comprehensive origin of all difference, as remaining in itself while distinguished from its objectivity or world, and as the spiritual relation of these totalities through the complete determination of their difference.[102] Considered in its content this concept of God is in perfect agreement with the belief of the church. The thought which would know

101. Until the Synod of Constantinople, 381, where the several forms which Arianism assumed in the continuing controversy were all condemned, after which gradually it died out (Sozames, *Hist. Eccl.*, VIII, 1).

102. Greg. Naz., Or. 31, 9; 38, 11-12; 42, 15; Basil, Ep. 38, 4: Greg. Nyss., Catech. 1, 1-3; etc.

these concrete objects is however itself abstract. It would bring the Son and the Spirit under the substantial unity of their origin.[103] Their difference is for an external thought, not in an intrinsic development from the origin through the distinction of persons. Even in the discovery of the equality of the persons they thus remain subject to a unitive tendency in which their equality is lost.

The relation of the Trinity, as it is for this contemplation, to the world is at the point where the persons have been brought out of their separation into absolute unity. There is one energy or operation of the Trinity in the world which it produces and sustains. But the universal and the individualized nature reflect the same imbalance as in their Trinitarian cause.[104] The consequence in human life is to subordinate the difference of rational and sensuous moments to a prior unity. In Christology, where the relation of human to divine is treated in paradigmatic form, this formal unity of the Trinity appears as a tension between a Monophysite tendency and an opposing emphasis on the humanity of Christ.[105] The Chalcedonian formula on the relation of the two natures recognized and sought to mediate between both interests.[106] But the same logical form remained in Greek theology, and in the end obscured the difference of the persons.[107] The simplest expression of this result is found in the writings of Dionysius, where the difference of the Trinitarian persons is only in the process towards a transcendent unity.[108] There is a perfect agreement

103. Greg. Naz., Or. 42, 15; Greg. Nyss., *contra Eunomium* , Migne 45, 901.
104. Here the imbalance has the form of a division between the divine and human natures and the person or hypostasis. The natures are not concretely united in the person, where rather they would pass into an immediate unity, were the opposition or unconfused difference of the two held to by a reflective finite thought.
105. Apollinaris in close dependence on the Trinitarian thought of the Cappadocians, proposed that in Christ the human rational soul should be thought replaced by the divine λόγος by that in which finite reason has attained its end and perfection. Against this position it was easily agreed that the humanity of Christ could not thus be eliminated. Between Cyril and Nestorius the difference was thus whether the relation of the two natures should be approached from the divine side or from the human.
106. The Chalcedonian formula combines the opposed directions in which Cyril and Nestorius sought the relation of the natures. In this it stablizes the division between a finite or discursive thought and a movement beyond it to intuitive unity.
107. The Chalcedonian expression of the relation of the persons is not free of a certain subjectivity, which is removed in response to the Monophosite and Monothelite controversies.
108. The relation of the persons when it is given objective form is that of a process in which the human term of the relation tends to transcend itself in an undivided unity with the divine. The difference remains in theology as that between mystical theology and the discursive knowledge of divine names or predicates.

between Trinitarian and Christological doctrine, but an agreement in which division and difference is not an equal moment of the whole. The moving interest of patristic theology, that the 'intellectus fidei' should agree with the faith, is here fulfilled, but in a particular form. Dionysius can draw the whole content of Christian belief into the infinite teleology of the Proclan system. But the relation of thought to Scripture and to the settled doctrine of the church is that of a formal reflection which can give order and system to a content it does not know according to its proper logic. Philosophy and religion appear to be the same, the one thinking according to its categories what the other believes. Between Christianity and the philosophical culture of late antiquity there remains no antagonism.[109]

The history of this second period is not however completed in the Platonic theology of the Greeks. The Trinitarian doctrine with whose discovery the first period ended is here treated from the side of a subject whose interest is not so much to know the finite and particular comprehended in the infinite divine purpose as to be liberated from it to an immediate unity. The same subjective movement was found also in the first period, there in an heretical opposition to an undeveloped monarchian standpoint. In the Trinitarian thought with which that period ended this opposition was overcome. It does not recur in the same form, but as a twofold relation to the Trinity as discovered through the earlier argument. There are now two systems in which theological thought would know the infinite Trinitarian teleology.[110] They differ in their knowledge of the mediation. In the one the creative movement from the One to the world has the logical form of a passage from unity to multiplicity and to an individual which returns to its origin by successive negations of its plurality or difference. The movement here is not intrinsic to the system but falls rather to the thought which considers it. In the other the individual who is the immediate terminus of the divine creation is implicitly the end to which it returns. In scriptural language the creative λόγος is incarnate in a human individual. The division in this individual between his self-identity and his otherness or plurality is subsequent, the result of a fall from original unity with God. The movement here is the development of that immediate unity of the λόγος and the natural individual to a unity comprehensive of the ensuing separation of human and divine. Augustine will say of the one system that it knows the end but not the way, that is, the mediation. The relation

109. See R. D. Crouse, "Semina Rationum: St. Augustine and Boethius," *Dionysius*, Vol. IV.
110. The Dionysian and the Augustinian.

there is not of the concrete individual but discovers an immediate unity with the origin by excluding division and mediation.

The congruence of theological thought with the faith of the church which began with Athanasius is completed in the work of Augustine. What stood in the way of this congruence was a thought which did not have the form of its object, which treated it according to abstract categories whose movement and mediation was not in themselves but in the subject. In the belief of the church the movement does not fall to a subjective reflection but is of the Trinity itself. That theological thought remains thus separate from its absolute object has its source in this, that the movement of return from the human side is abstract. Augustine in his *Confessions* describes a return or conversion of the individual to God through which, because it is concrete, this residual subjectivity is given up and the Trinitarian standpoint of the church established. This conversion is first of himself, but because the forms through which it moves are universal he writes of it also for others.

The first nine books of the *Confessions* treat of his conversion. They remove the 'hypotheses', to speak Platonically, which separate the individual from the objective or divine standpoint. In the tenth book he brings the whole course of his conversion under the end to which it led. All the 'hypotheses' which impeded his relation to God thus removed, in the immediacy of this result the subjective movement passes into the objective or divine prior in itself. This transition is only distinguished from the like movement in Neoplatonism by the concrete subjective integration which prepared for it. Augustine has thus reached the standpoint where the scriptural revelation is open to him, where the creation and the spiritual return to the creative principle in Christ and the community of the faithful are for him in an objective, systematic Trinitarian movement. Such is the content of the last three books.

The language of Scripture was opaque to Augustine so long as he took the linguistic and imaginative medium — the letter — to be primary and not the truth it conveyed, which was most clearly disclosed to a spirit which both believed and thought the content of its belief.[111] There is not here a philosophy which is distinguished from theology and gives to it its method. Theology is the work of a thinking which has the same structure as the faith. It is not

111. ". . .maxime audito uno atque altero et saepius aenigmate soluto de scriptis ueteribus, ubi, cum ad litteram acciperem, occidebar. Spiritaliter itaque plerisque illorum librorum locis expositis iam reprehendebam desperationem meam illam dumtaxat, qua credideram legem et prophetas detestantibus atque irridentibus resisti omnino non posse." *Conf.* V, xiv, 24.

separated from the scriptural revelation, but is a thinking and not only a believing relation to it.

The moments or successive 'hypotheses' through which the conversion of Augustine took place can only be noticed very briefly here.[112] The argument begins with his infancy, where he is in the same relation to the end in which he will have rest as the infant Jesus in whom the church believed the divine λόγος to dwell. From this immediate relation in which there appears already the beginning of a subjectivity which can oppose itself to its universal good, the child begins to articulate its relation to the world. Of interest here to the argument is first the formation of a division between the order the child finds given and imposed, and an arbitrary freedom to reject it, a freedom which as set against the universal is simply evil.[113] The next stage in the development is that the opposition of good and evil should not be merely thus external but be a division of the free individual himself. Such is the form of Augustine's Manichaeism where his relation to the world is divided between a sensuous immediacy forever overtaken by the otherness of the world to him and a universality in which his self-relation is freed from this otherness. This division is for him in an external material embodiment, the opposition of light to darkness. His relation to the world is like that of a behaviouristic or Humean psychology, where the division of the will is without a unifying self-conscious centre, simply factual.[114] From this pseudo-scientific mentality Augustine finds next the beginning of a liberation in the Academic scepticism by which he can withhold assent to the deceptive alternation of an independence from nature and submission to it of the Manichees. In this sceptical freedom he both continues in his former interests and is indifferent to them. But the contradiction of this relation gradually makes itself felt: his particular interests both are and are not ends for him. Towards them he sinks into a languor and immobility, since they are not interests of the sceptical reason which withholds its assent to them.[115]

---

112. The reader can fortunately be referred to the thorough and accurate commentary on *Confessions* I-IX, by Colin Starnes shortly to be published.

113. In Book I. Cf. "Ita imbecillitas membrorum infantilium innocens est, non animus infantium," *Conf.* I, vii, 11; "Non enim meliora eligens inoboedien eram, sed amore ludendi. . .," *Conf.* I, x, 16.

114. Light and dark, good and evil, are thought in the Manichean system to be objective distinctions. The world in which humans find themselves is a mixture of the two, of the affirmative and the negative. The difference of this position from a Humean or from a behaviouristic psychology is that in these the mixed, unanalyzed condition is taken as the real. Where one is thus more content with the immediate a sceptical spirit is less easily awakened.

115. In Book VI. Cf. especially xi, 18-20.

The next stage in his conversion is that he should be freed from the presupposition on which this division of rational freedom from natural interests rests. That is the materialism of Stoic and sceptical philosophy and generally of the Roman world. Not only finite ends but the externality and necessity to which they succumb come before him as resting on an endless self-identical matter. In that relation his inner indifference to the world is realized in the indifference and nullity of the world itself.[116] This completed scepticism is the point of his conversion to the Platonism which knows the sensible world and contingent human ends in relation to it to have their ground in a world of substantial ends containing all the conditions of their realization. This ideal realm discovered through the negation of the former division of thought from its world is no longer alien to the free rational subject.

But there occurs at that point a new difficulty for Augustine. His relation to this ideal world is only mediated by the former sceptical position. The new standpoint itself is unmediated, is an end immediately known without the way to it. Platonism does not move him because it does not know the λόγος as incarnate, as united with the natural individual.[117] What separates him from the end is the finitude of the rational powers of the soul, intellect and will. For these powers there recurs a separation of sensible and ideal. The unity of the worlds has been discovered to him, but is also beyond the scope of his rational powers. The course of the integration is again in this form, that the sensuous will, taken as different and in conflict with the rational will, should appear a nullity, as a moment of one will comprehending their difference.[118] In the vanishing of this division there remained no further impediment for Augustine to the belief of the church. In Christ the beginning of his conversion and its end meet, the immediate unity of the human individual with the λόγος and that mediated by the whole course of their separation. The thought which through intellect and will would unite the ideal and the sensible, not immediately but through their difference, saw the end it sought realized in the revelation.[119]

The argument of *Confessions* is destroyed unless one sees the first nine books as introductory to the remaining four. Through these the subjective movement of the individual to God becomes the beginning of an objective contemplation of the creation, fall and

116. VII, i, 1-2; vii, 11.
117. VII, ix: ". . .sed quia uerbum caro factum est et habitauit, non ibi legi," (14) and "Inueni haec ibi et non manducaui," (15).
118. VIII, viii, 19 - xii, 29.
119. VII, xii, 29: "Statim quippe cum fine huiusce sententiae quasi luce securitatis infusa cordi meo omnes dubitationis tenebrae diffugerunt."

redemption — the whole content of the faith. The other forms in which the Christian religion was known, the original revelation and the apostolic faith, had the same structure: a subjective conversion to the infinite divine purpose, then to this standpoint the revelation of nature and human finitude as comprehended in this purpose. The difference of these forms lies not in the structure or content, but in the way it is known. The *Confessions* thus brings into view the whole Augustinian theology. Other works will begin from the objective standpoint to which the argument of *Confessions* has led.

In the *Trinity* he treats of the divine principle in itself. As in the *Confessions* the revelation was grasped in its full concreteness, so the Trinitarian principle as there treated is the reflection of this concrete revelation. The method of the work is to study the Trinity first through Scripture, then through nature but especially in the movement of the rational creature to a unification of its powers, which was also its conversion to the Christian revelation. The Trinity as known through the agreement of these complementary methods is no longer, as for the Greek Fathers, in a tension between the difference of the persons and their unity. The persons are the moments of an absolute creative thinking, where the unity of thinking with its object is not primarily before their division, but equally in the λόγος and the spiritual return.

When the human creature is considered not only in the process of his conversion and unification but also in relation to the completed process, where he is in principle conformed to the revelation in Christ, there is discovered the Augustinian doctrines of grace and predestination, which he elaborated in controversy with the Pelagians. The relation of human freedom to the divine will was not of equal concern to the Greek theologians, for the reason that the integration of the two was conceived by them rather hierarchically than as a comprehension of the finite in the infinite divine freedom, towards which first the 'hypothesis' of a separate finite freedom had to be radically negated.

What pertains more directly to the present inquiry is the concept of a 'civitas dei', the church considered in relation to grace and predestination, neither in the finite relations of authority and moral discipline nor, with Dionysius, as a hierarchic order of dependence on a primal unity. The 'civitas dei' is the community of Christians in whom the end sought in the conversion from the fall is operative. All other polities rest on a partial integration of human ends into the divine. For this reason the peace and justice which they seek is found in the course of time to be unstable and illusory. The 'civitas dei' however, being defined as the community in which the difference of the human will from the divine is overcome, is an

idea without historical existence. For it belongs to an historical community not only that there be in it a moving end but also that there be a separation from the end, the need and the labour of attaining it. The evil of former communities, which is in idea overcome in the 'civitas dei', is that this difference and separation does not have its origin wholly in the intended end, is not that end as immediate and undeveloped. The end rather was more or less abstract; the political good and the particular goods of individuals and classes were only superficially harmonized, so that civil wars could with difficulty be suppressed unless in the face of external enemies.

The 'civitas dei' is not the medieval church which will compete with the Empire for the government of humanity. It is the spiritual part of the church, through which the worldly part is sustained and the ministrations of its clergy have validity.[120] The relation of the two parts in the church itself has a like difficulty to that of other worldly communities to the 'civitas dei'. The Augustinian doctrines of grace and predestination, if not rejected by the church, must at first be accommodated to a Pelagian doctrine of human freedom. The worldly aspect of the church is assumed to have an independence of the spiritual, though in relation to it.[121] The 'civitas dei' will only have historical existence when the difference of these parts is not seen thus externally but as within the one moving end.[122]

But the realization of the 'civitas dei' is a new beginning. The interests and passions of men, their natural life, are in the belief of the church and its theological thought integrated into the infinite divine purpose. Their difference from this end has now the status of an otherness in which the infinite divine purpose is implicit, of the means through which it will be disclosed. At first in this

120. The spiritual church and the general body of the Catholic church with its clerical government are held together in Augustine's thought: the second tends to the first as to its end. Because the relation of the two is considered universally in the medium of thought, not empirically, he can avoid the sectarian separation of the Donatists. On this relation is founded his doctrine that the sacraments even if administered by unworthy priests are valid, so also the authority of the 'praepositi, per quos ecclesia nunc gubernatur' (*Civ. Dei*, XX, 9, 2).

121. 'Et ita semper gratia dei nostro in partem bonam cooperatur arbitrio atque in omnibus illud adiuvat, protegit ac defendit' (Cassian, *Coll.* XIII, 13). The Augustinian doctrine prevailed against its opponents at the Synod of Orange, 529.

122. The church of Gregory the Great is distinguished from that of Augustine in that this unification has taken place: the government and sacramental life of the church rest on an Augustinian basis, but to this they are related in an external and immediate way: *Dial.* IV, 58; *Mor.* XI, 14, 22; XIII, 18, 21; XXXV, 8, 12; etc.

beginning the natural will is related immediately to its ideal end. That is the condition of barbarous peoples who succeed to the dying power of the western Empire. Roman virtue, the product of another religion and culture, cannot enter into this immediate but concrete relation to the end.

The church also, while it remains Augustinian and not in an external, Pelagian relation to the faith so defined, sinks into an immediate relation to it.[123] The mediation of the individual with his absolute end becomes external to him; the means of grace are seen as things; the clergy, the universal element in the church, are deeply separated from those who live in their unformed passions. The reason in the church, though occupied with the content of the Augustinian theology, is not Augustinian. The Augustinian content is approached through the abstract logic of the Dionysian system.[124] The interest of the thinking part of the church is no longer to find an 'intellectus fidei' which should have the structure of the faith but to approach the faith through a philosophical reason separate from it. The object of philosophical interest is the content of the faith which is assumed, but the relation of reason to this content is indeterminate, as also the form of the reason. The Dionysian Platonism of Eriugena is not held to in its integrity but fall into opposed idealistic and nominalistic fragments.[125]

The 'civitas dei' in this first realized form is the paradigm of a new secular order.[126] The barbarous tribes, being converted to Christianity and knowing there a substantial end to which they would conform the unstable passions of the natural will, establish also a secular end for themselves in a sacred kingship. In relation to this they both give up their natural freedom and would retain it.[127] As their particularity is believed to be contained in the absolute

123. From this the realistic and symbolic interpretation of the Eucharist, which could continue together in the ancient church, tend to collapse into the doctrine of an immediate, objective transmutation of the elements, as in Radbertus Paschasius, *Liber de Corpore et Sanguine Domini* (Migne, *Patr. Lat.* , 120).

124. Eriugena, *de Divisione Naturae*. The Augustinian system will only assume an independent philosophical form in modern philosophy. Those aspects of Augustinian theology which have generally seemed most repugnant since Arminius and Enlightenment have their source in the immediate relation of thought there to the scriptural revelation.

125. Medieval philosophy begins in Eriugena with the Platonism of Dionysius and ends with it in Cusanus. In it lies the inner connection of the various opposed positions in early medieval philosophy.

126. The anarchic individual freedom of the northern peoples, Celtic and Germanic, through Christianity became capable of an ordered relation to an end comprehensive of it, as will be spoken of further in Part B.

127. Kingship and popular freedom subsist together in an undeveloped form especially in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, which were less subject to the traditions of Roman government.

end of their faith, so the kingship would rather save their particular freedom than enslave it. The development of the 'civitas dei' and of secular institutions from this beginning, the conflict between them as competing powers, of the reason in them and its relation to faith and Augustinian theology, must be left for the second part of this history.

Classics Department
Dalhousie University

(To be continued)