The Christian Origin of Contemporary Instutitions

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The Christian religion was originally polemical towards worldly institutions: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26); "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come follow me" (Matt. 19.21); "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's" (Luke 20:25). For a considerable time the Christian community sought to remain separate from the general pagan society. To leave the world for the ideal of a monastic life remained the better way even under the Christian emperors of late antiquity and in medieval Christendom. Family, work, the obligations of a political society were afterwards preferred by Protestants as better conformed to a Christian life than an idle monastic virtue. Through Enlightenment and the reaction against it at the end of the eighteenth century family, civil society and state were more deeply Christianized, taking into themselves finitely the concrete spirituality known absolutely in the belief and sacraments of the Church. There is found in the following century a secular life which no longer knows a dependence on the Christian religion, an unalienated revolutionary humanity, an existential individuality to which the transcendence of itself in an older religion and philosophy is repugnant and unthinkable.[1] It is impossible to depart farther than this revolution, which still prevails, from original Christianity, and yet the contemporary society of individuals certain of their rights, of unlimited confidence in a technological reason, can give no account of itself apart from its Christian origins.

There is in this contemporary society at once a certainty that in it all previous forms of thought, belief, institutional order are superseded, and a disintegration of institutions, an incapacity for

1. The relation of contemporary culture to the objectivity of the older Christian belief, to European institutions, the sense of the liberation from them as the beginning of a new humanity are expressed with incomparable vehemence by Feuerbach and Marx, and later by Nietzsche. The account of the origins of these attitudes, which are still dominant, in Lowith, *Von Hegel zu Nietzsche*, is from a Nietzschean standpoint. A more balanced treatment is greatly to be desired.

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philosophy and theology as are found in older Christian times. Thus the family which could once comprehend the difference of men and women, the education of children to independence in a common and sufficient end is fragmented into a contingent association of individuals taking various forms. The family is not conceived as itself effecting a unity of life and thought, a Christian humanity, but as a function of the general society, of an extrinsic reason, or else as a flight therefrom to natural immediacy. The general society again has not the form of a spiritual community where various and competing interests are reconciled and discover a common humanity. Work is not inwardly dignified but related to a universal good through an abstract, external reason. Science and technology are assumed indeed to serve and liberate humanity, but liberation is experienced as empty and formal or as a barbarous naturalism, not as a Christian integration of life into a comprehensive rational spirit. Nor again is the state a community in which individuals are drawn out of the dividedness of occupation and class into the knowledge of a deeper unity, where through law and government this unity is made their common end, but is rather the classless society where differences are levelled, not integrated into a common life but, against the levelling, left as a plurality of separate interests. Government of this pluralistic society becomes itself a part, a party, which seeks to compute an acceptable balance of interests.

By some the older Christian order is thought to have gone over wholly into a liberated revolutionary society. Religion has become humanity, the process of its self-liberation. For a humanity in principle free there is no place. Together with this disintegration of former institutions in contemporary society, there is also a general assumption that in this there is liberation. Between this assumption and the experience of unresolved division and conflict of individuals with institutional order and authority, there is a contradiction commonly disregarded. One aspect of the division is given attention, the whole interpreted from that standpoint: humanity is in course of liberation through an even more powerful technology; individuals are ever freer of natural limits. But then this power over nature is seen also as oppressive and destructive: human freedom lies in respect for nature, in an existential individuality. These moments, could they be integrated, would reveal the presence of a concrete Christian humanity in this society. To the assumption that this concreteness is present can be traced the confidence that the revolution is indeed a liberation, that all past beliefs and institutions are superseded in it. To attain this concreteness and overcome the division, to this desire one may

ascribe the continuous movement and animation of the revolutionary society, the belief and confidence of individuals in it.

Where the Christian religion is not taken to be superseded in this technological revolution, whether in its Marxist or its liberal form, it is thought at least to be in need of radical revision. An older theoretic spirit gives way to a religious 'praxis'. In this appears the division of a universal technological aspect and an existential individuality. Religion may approximate to revolutionary activity, or may on the contrary draw back from this to reverence for life and nature against an abstract reason.[2] It is plain that to neither of these attitudes can the ancient Trinitarian and Christological doctrines be accessible, since their division and opposition is overcome. There would indeed not be question of revising but rather of abandoning the Christian religion altogether, were not the unity of these moments in some measure recognized as well. The division may coalesce for feeling in sacramental symbolism and imagery. From this inner, inarticulate ground it may develop into revolutionary process, the becoming in which the difference of Marx and Nietzsche, of technology and existential individuality vanishes. To this practical spirit belongs thus a Dionysiac religion, an immediate transcendence of division and finitude.

In revolutionary 'praxis' and its religion there is no true integration of the moments of a concrete Christian humanity, only an immediate negation of their division. But the characteristic evil of contemporary society is in some measure disclosed, that it is without knowledge of a true finitude. Family, economic society, state are found oppressive because to individual rights is opposed arbitrary, abstract authority, bureaucratic rigidity, thought externalized, conformed to computer logic, and the like. Even to dissipate this opposition into the empty form of a Nietzschean will is felt a liberation. It is much that from the finite arises a knowledge of infinite being, infinite becoming. But how far from the knowledge of an older Christian time of being equalized with, comprehensive of division, difference, finitude!

The relation of contemporary society to its Christian origins is not to be discerned while one holds to the separation of a universal technological society from particularities of culture and language, to a like division of abstract freedom and natural particularity in the individual. Both in belief and in the form of its institutions an older Christendom knew the terms of this division as abstractions. The revolutionary society which began its course in the early

2. As examples, M. Wiles, *The Remaking of Christian Doctrine,* and the revolutionary theology of K. Rahner.

nineteenth century would situate an older concreteness in the particular, in social praxis and an existential individuality. If in this an extension of human freedom was discovered, there was lost a knowledge of the ground of this freedom, of the universal in which this particularity begins and ends, if it is to be in truth other than the conflict of opposing and mutually destructive aspects. In revolutionary 'praxis' and a Nietzschean subjectivity there is the beginning of a return to a theoretic attitude.[3] In this knowledge philosophy is said to have reverted to its Eleatic beginnings. The theoretic attitude, however, in which contemporary society originated, which sustains and might give account of its confidence, is not Eleatic but a concrete Christian thought.

Impeding this knowledge is no more than the assumption that this concreteness can be and is present immediately, not through division and finitude experienced and overcome. The assumption has long been falsified by experience of the revolution, that it divides life from an abstract thought. The existential individual finds its assumed concreteness to be the emptiest and abstractest thought. It remains to accept this result, to give up the assumption or look elsewhere for its realization.

The argument indicates that contemporary society is to be understood as a certain form of Christian secularity. There is need to reverse the common attitude that particular aspects of this society are the measure and correction of older Christian belief and institutions. But this reversal is not without formidable difficulties. One is obliged to ask what Christianity is, and to answer that question independently of its particular relations to contemporary society. It must be asked further how this religion, which turned its adherents from this world to a heavenly kingdom, can be thought to give rise to secular institutions properly Christian, how its worldly involvement is not rather through extraneous forms, through Hellenic and modern philosophies and other borrowings. And if it to be found that one can speak truly of Christian secular institutions, it remains to ask how these can be thought to assume various and profoundly altered forms. Nor is contemporary society and the peculiar corruption of institutions in it likely to be intelligible unless through its relations to the institutions of an older modern Europe and a Christianity enlightened by modern philosophy.

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3. Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, esp. Vol. II, pp. 31-256: Dec europäische Nihilismus.

1. *The Origin of Christian Institutions*

The origin and nature of the Christian religion was a question of primary interest at the beginnings of contemporary culture in the 'forties of the last century. To Feuerbach, Marx and others it appeared that Christianity was in truth anthropology, the true concept of humanity which had no longer to be represented as other than actual human beings. The *Leben Jesu* of D. F. Strauss had taken the first step to this conclusion in making Christianity a myth about the man Jesus, the representation through him of a free humanity. The same standpoint appears in less radical form wherever Christianity is derived from an historical, existential Jewish spirit as against an unhistorical, speculative Hellenic mind. The Christianity of the divided technological-existential culture seeks to ground itself in such accounts of its origins.[4] The unity of human and divine is not for this culture an absolute speculative truth, as in an older Christianity, but a relation of these elements appearing in the process of human liberation.[5] The language and sacramental forms of former times may be saved, but as the vehicle of a new revolutionary content.

One would ask in vain on these assumptions what ancient Christianity was, how there occurred in it a turning from the world, how nothing was remoter from its interest than the temporal, historical orientation of contemporary culture. How was the former alienation of Christians from the world possible? How again was it possible out of this alienation to pass to an involvement with the world which should also be free, an involvement which is assumed to carry with it and complete a former theoretic liberation from the world? It is about this theoretic or thinking liberation one must principally ask if one would know what Christianity is. If the ancient theology which gave this thought its definite and developed form was the work of the Church, the belief which it explicates — that in the man Jesus was revealed the divine nature and the spiritual unification of human and divine — was there from the first, was constitutive of the Church. The first question must therefore be about this certainty of

4. Already in Strauss's *Leben Jesu* the separation of Biblical history from the ancient speculative theology is completed. There one can see how a generally accepted opposition of Judaism to the speculative spirit of Greek theology has its roots in the contemporary revolutionary-existential culture. Esp. Section 144, Dogmatic Import of the Life of Jesus.

5. Feuerbach, *Wesen des Christentums*, Chap. IV, on the Incarnation, where is laid down a principle which has come to seem unquestionable: "Hence in God I learn to estimate my own nature; I have value in the sight of God; the divine significance of my nature is become evident to me." Trans. George Eliot.

the first Christians that the historical and existential is not primary but a moment in an infinite divine purpose.

The original knowledge of the Christian revelation, if it was in one way immediate, given through the teaching and the life and death of one man, is in another way mediated, the completion of an historical mediation. So it is spoken of in the New Testament: in the fullness of time the fall and separation of human life from the divine purpose is overcome.[6] In the *Civitas Dei* Augustine would give the form of this historical mediation. Its completeness lies in this, that the moments of the fall — the original adherence to the one God and the laborious human pursuit of finite ends in a presupposed nature — assume the form of a division in the free rational individual or person.[7] Augustine's own conversion to Christianity had been out of this divided subjectivity. He knew that a possible correction — a correction in thought — of this division was the interest of the Neoplatonic philosophy of his time. In Christianity this idea was known as realized.[8]

About this mediation or 'praeparatio evangelii' there are further questions for us than for Augustine and Patristic theology, in that we do not begin the inquiry from a skeptical consciousness of the untruth of a divided, finite knowledge, from the need to find in thought a principle unitive of the division. In contemporary culture instead one retreats from a threatening dividedness of thought to the natural and immediate, as though this is secure and certain.[9] This contemporary assurance and demand that individuals in their natural particularity are ends to themselves, are endowed with absolute rights is no doubt of Christian origin. Originally it was taken for a fact revealed in Christ that individuals in their particularity had part in the infinite divine purpose, had therefore in this relation rights.[10] It is the result of Christian history, as will be shown in the course of the argument, that rights are taken as an immediate possession, attained or to be conceded without condition. From this assumption a mediated knowledge of the Christian religion appears superfluous: theory has gone over to *praxis* and the self-certainty of the existential individual.

Especially difficult and even repugnant to this attitude is a

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6. *Galatians* IV, 4-5.
7. e.g. *Civ. Dei*, XIV, C. XXVIII, on the moving principle of the two cities.
8. *Confessions* VII, C. 8-9.
9. Nietzsche characterized the nineteenth century well as held by a "fatalistic submission to matters of fact." *Wille zur Macht*, sect. 95, trans. Kaufmann. The scepticism which is an essential preliminary to philosophy breaks through this assumption with difficulty.
10. e.g. *Romans*, VIII, 14.

knowledge of the Judaic element in the Christian religion. For in this was the correction and negation of a natural presupposition, of a beginning from the human and not rather from God. Patristic theology approached this knowledge from the side of free subjectivity, its inheritance from Hellenic and Roman culture. In the subsequent courses of Christian history this abstract subjectivity or personality came to be reintegrated with nature. Then in contemporary culture this concrete freedom was taken to be the immediate possession of an existential individuality or to be progressively attained in revolutionary activity.

As it becomes known within contemporary culture that this concrete freedom is not to be attained within these limits, the need recurs to regain a knowledge of the Christian principle in which this freedom originated. To come to this knowledge is not possible unless first the assumption be retracted that there exists immediately a free subjectivity. The Judaic element in the Christian religion is difficult because in it is a radical negation of human freedom, at the same time also the principle and source of human freedom.

However, it can appear at first that this retraction and negation is unnecessary. Without departing so far from nature one may think to discover the foundations of contemporary freedom in a Platonism having affinities with the great religions of ancient India.[11] In Buddhism and Hinduism there is knowledge of an absolute being or unity, of the nullity of the finite in that relation. But the world, as emanated from that principle is taken to be in its natural immediacy. Thought is not opposed to natural particularity, good or evil, but one lives in more unbroken harmony with nature. There is an order of human life in the world, then also a process of liberation from the world, not the work of one life but of an indefinite series of deaths and rebirths, so great is the distance taken to be between the sensible and an inner ideality or universality. The relation of the two for the individual appears in the external necessity of a 'dharma', where natural differences are stabilized in a plurality of castes which there is no practical reason to unite and form into the common freedom of a political community.

If there is refuge in these forms from the destructive power of an abstract technological will, it is at the cost of existential freedom itself. For what is principally to be learned from the ancient religions of the Far East is that for an individuality which would

11. On the logical form of these religions, Hegel, *Philosophie der Religion*, ed. Lasson, Vol. 1, pp. 40-76.

hold thus directly to its particularity there is in truth only an abstract freedom — the movement to an absolute in which all particularity is negated. Only where the nihilistic tendency of far eastern religions is completed in the one creative God of ancient Judaism, from whom all nature receives a dependent existence, can one begin to ask what is the concept of the Christian religion.

A. *Ancient Judaism*

In ancient Judaism the beginning of a liberation from nature which is found in the great Indic religions may be said to be completed. There is no longer the endless process towards liberation from natural necessity, no longer the bondage of immutable natural and inherited differences in the ordering of human life. The individual has assumed instead the attitude of one freed from a Platonic cave to knowledge of the universal, knows the world as created and sustained by a free, self-conscious principle according to ideas. The end to which human life should be directed is a knowledge of this creative principle, of the universal good through which created beings exist and find their appointed goods. The Jewish law in its elementary provisions aims at maintaining a community unified, drawn out of subjection to the passions, to natural powers, through relation to the one God.

The standpoint of this religion is not easily intelligible. It is not to be approached by a pragmatic logic adapted to everyday uses and to the discovery and control of contingent relations in nature.[12] Nor is it enough to have reverted from these interests to knowledge of an Eleatic being. The absolute of Judaism is not simple being or unity. If the world is a nullity in relation to the creative God, it is also thought to manifest his power and goodness through finite goods and principally through the dependence of these on the primary good. There is present in this position a dualism of good and evil, intelligible and sensible, but also the negation of it in the principle. Ideal and sensible being are, as Plato says, only hypotheses, have not their ground in themselves but in the good itself, which "exceeds in dignity and power both being

12. Feuerbach, Chap. XI, ed. cit., "Utilism is the essential theory of Judaism. The belief in a special Divine Providence is the characteristic belief of Judaism; belief in Providence is belief in miracle; but belief in miracle exists where Nature is regarded only as an object of arbitrariness, of egoism, which uses Nature only as an instrument of its own will and pleasure . . . And all these contradictions of Nature happen for the welfare of Israel, purely at the command of Jehovah, who troubles himself about nothing but Israel, who is nothing but the personified selfishness of the Israelitish people, to the exclusion of all other nations, — absolute intolerance, the secret essence of monotheism."

and truth."[13] The good is the universal ground and origin to which thought has referred all being and itself as the knowledge of being. In this Platonism, which was perceived in antiquity to be the philosophical theology of Judaism,[14] the concept of the one creative God is made intelligible.

The negation of all externality and natural necessity in the service of the one God is the source of the wondrous trust and inner freedom of the Jewish and then of Islamic peoples.[15] It is not the subjective freedom of the Stoic, not the consciousness imperturbable in itself against the fatal course of the world. Human freedom here lies instead in the knowledge of the divine creative freedom, in the primacy of this knowledge over finite cognitive and voluntary relations. It is the freedom represented constantly in the Platonic myth of the soul aspiring to knowledge of the ideas, capable of this knowledge and held from it by its involvement in the sensible world, where the resolution of this division is not in the soul itself but objectively in the good.

The unification attained in relation to the good is the beginning and condition of a free subjectivity. But how this unity is the nature and possession of the human individual also in finite relations is not available to this standpoint. In another language it does not belong to this religion that God has a Son. Of first importance in relation to the origin of Christianity is how this limit, that there is not present an actual human freedom, could come to be known as a deficiency, how the desire to overcome it could be formed. To answer this question it is necessary to attend to the historical existence of this religion, how it is constituted in relation to the service of the one God.

Of this consideration there are two parts: first, the form of the older or original Judaism; secondly how this form was affected by an awakening subjective reflection. It is this later form of which it is to be said that Plato provides the philosophical theology. The philosophical interest found in the Judaism of the last centuries before Christ should be thought an intrinsic growth, a receptivity of Hellenic influences which had its origin and need in that religion itself. The religion whose object is the God who can freely give existence to the world, in which the knowledge of this principle, the subjection of human finitude to it, is the highest concern, because it has in it the beginning of human freedom, provides a development of this freedom, even if this be as a subjectivity which

13. *Republic,* 509b.
14. Philo on Moses and Plato, references in Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen,* III, II, p. 393 f.
15. Hegel, *Ph. Rel,* II, p. 98.

does not maintain itself in the end in the face of the divine subjectivity. This religion tends, one may say, to a spiritual form, which is, however, impossible of realization without development of its unitarian principle.[16]

Judaism, though in its idea related to man as thinking, as inwardly free, thus to all men, is the religion of a particular people. Since this people has its freedom not in its natural existence but through its religion, it is said to be 'chosen'. This relation is not immediate: there was an original natural unity with God, then a fall and expulsion from the earthly paradise, the assertion of a particular human will against the divine creative will, then the reception of the people into its peculiar relation to this will and a human service to it through the revealed law. In return for a faithful obedience to the law the Jewish people is promised prosperity and continued possession of a land to dwell in.[17] Primarily natural human interests are given up in devotion to the one true good.[18] Then these interests are restored conditionally. The condition which stabilizes the relation of the two, of the absolute good to the desires of the soul and their objects, is the law.

The tension between the external life and prosperity of the chosen people and their inner freedom and relation to the good is easily known from the historical books of the Old Testament. The recurrent lapses of the people to cults more congenial to a sensuous will, then chastisement and return to obedience the prophets collect into a more stable relation: the sufferings of the Jews in their outward life has for its purpose to show to the gentiles the true and universal divine government. In these prophetic visions there is the beginning of an independent subjectivity, able to refer to itself the fall and return, the good and evil, of the chosen people. Separated from the absolute content of prophesy, this becomes the questioning subjectivity of the author of *Job:* is there indeed for the just the reward of a prosperous life? If the question is in the end answered affirmatively it is only after a sceptical dialectic forces the argument back to the absolute good which is beyond the opposed positions. To be consistent with the argument the conclusion would be that the correlation of justice and earthly rewards had to be abandoned. Instead, having discovered the ground of this conviction in the primary adherence to the one God, the author allows to stand the external correlation which his argument has undermined.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 62, 66.
17. *Genesis*, XVI.
18. Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, *Genesis*, XXII.

A like reasoning appears still more explicitly in *Ecclesiastes*, where out of the sophistic or sceptical experience that just and unjust, wise and foolish fare alike in the world the lesson is drawn that one must hold to the observance of the divine law. The argument has the same defect as in *Job*, that the negative aspect of it is rather lost than accounted for in the conclusion.[19] Since the resolution of the problem is only in the relation of the opposition to God as before their division, the coherent conclusion would be what is found in Philo, that the true Judaism is not to be found in the external life of the people or in Scripture literally taken but in the contemplative knowledge of the One who cannot be revealed truly in what is other than himself.[20]

The philosophy to which Judaism tends when once a free individuality begins to emerge from the common life of the people has its adequate exposition in Plato. In *Republic* the question of Job and the Preacher, made current among the Greeks by the Sophists, whether justice is more than a name destabilized by whoever cares to show the deceptiveness of language, is answered by taking the argument back to the good itself. It is necessary to show that those who assume that there exists on its own an economic community supplying useful goods and desired luxuries are mistaken. If animal communities can exercize their instinctive arts of building, hunting, gathering and storing their food to the limit of their natural need, human desire has an endlessness which must receive its limit from the rational soul. This same endlessness is found in the active, aggressive temper of a ruling class, in the ambiguous mixture of ambition and service to the common good, which not even so extreme a measure as the abolition of private households is sufficient to eradicate. To discover an end in which private and public good are undivided it is necessary to turn to the universal, to the ideas and finally to an object — the good itself — on which hangs all division of the ideas and their difference from the thinking soul.

The question whether there is a true justice which is the good alike of the individual and of a community living according to a rational law has its answer thus in a principle beyond both. The question accordingly takes the form how this principle can be

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19. *Ecclesiastes*, XII, 13-14: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep the commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

20. On Philo's allegorization of the Jewish law, Bréhier, *Philon d'Alexandrie*, 35-61; Judaism as contemplation of the One, in which all predicates are negated, *ibid.*, pp. 69-83.

realized, how it can impart limit to the multiple, divided, endless, which, in the soul or in a human community, has otherwise only an illusory stability and peace properly considered. The polities usually recognized and the virtues which order the soul to them are only a decay and falling away from the good polity in which law and virtue are ordered to the undivided good.[21] But of the reality of justice and the true polity *Republic* treats only generally and obliquely: a people must be elevated beyond private interests to a pure devotion to the law, and the laws themselves must have in them an inner identity and unity of purpose, whose absence in ordinary communities exposes them to sophistic criticism and destruction.

The question how the good polity can exist is treated farther in *Politicus* or *Statesman*. In that dialogue, as in others nearly related to it, Plato has before him the Eleatic conclusion that there is no true finitude but only the One itself.[22] In *Sophist* he has shown how there can be a definite otherness or finitude for a theoretic thought, namely by a limitation of indeterminate difference in relation to an absolute identity. In this way is constituted both an unchanging ideal world of genera and their species and a changing sensible participation of this order.[23] In *Politicus* the same question is asked about a political community: how can its ideal ordering to the good — its constitution — exist in a sensuous will moved by needs and struggling to find a self-relation against them? The answer given is that it can exist in two ways: *either* good government is a theocracy where there is an immediate submission of the passions to the good and the law and constitution defining the relation of human animals to it, *or* on the human side there develops out of the arts or particular applications of a teleological reason a universal political reason, which takes on itself to order the passions to the good.[24] The theocratic ideal has the defect that it has no room for human freedom, for a human participation in the divine freedom which is its principle. To realize the ideal humanly there is need not only of a legislator to disclose the true constitution to a people, but also that the legislator rule, that in him be present the activity of applying the law to the unpredictable variety of particular cases. The ideal human ruler thus does consciously with knowledge what the divine ruler accomplished immediately.

But how does this orientation to the good exist in human

21. *Politicus*, 300d ff.
22. *Parmenides, Sophist, Politicus* have in common that they are about the Platonic 'stoicheia' or elements: Findlay, *Plato*, 210 ff.
23. *Sophist*, 266a ff.
24. *Politicus*, 271c-275a.

passions? Plato answers that in the passions there is a principal division between the passive and the active.[25] Not that the passive is without an active, the active without a passive, aspect. But a disunity and imbalance of these aspects is the source of indeterminateness and evil in the soul and in the state. The principal work of the ideal ruler is to find a synthesis and limit of active and passive powers in the irrational soul. In this way the soul is rendered receptive of the mutual limitation of affirmative and negative which is the logical basis of law as of ideal finitude generally.

This profound consideration of the nature of government, whether and in what ways freedom can be present in the direction of human affairs, has in it the inconsequence pointed to above in relation to Judaism. In the theocratic form there is lacking a consciousness of the discrepancy between the absolute divine good and the desire and search for a natural well-being. Where a knowledge of this difference is awakened and the desire to bring the two together into one relation, this unification is only found possible by suppressing the desire at its source, namely in the tendency to a free subjectivity. In looking for a natural balance of active and passive powers, the legislator-ruler of *Politicus* intends to prevent the emergence of a self-consciousness which, as with the Sophists, should take itself to be their absolute unification.[26] From this subjectivity and an attendant scepticism the escape and remedy is in effect a return to the theocratic relation, but now with the knowledge that an ordered human life can only be sustained in unfreedom. The Platonic state in which are worked out the implications of this conclusion is found in *Laws*. In the state there designed legislator and ruler are no longer one. But only by an imposed orthodoxy can the citizens be saved from lapsing into false opinions about the world, from giving priority to the contingent over the necessary in nature, which can lead to a knowledge of soul and the divine.[27]

The restored theocracy of *Laws* has the same instability as the Judaism of the Preacher. It depends on an awakened self-consciousness which is required to negate itself. Give place to this self-consciousness, and it will dissolve the finite into its abstract elements, into affirmative and negative moments whose unity can be found only in the good itself. Deny it place and human life is separated in its particularity and natural existence from its absolute

25. *Ibid.*, 305e-311c.
26. *Ibid.*, 310d ff.
27. Legal orthodoxy, *Laws* X.

end. Plato has the fullest lucidity about the problem: he has asked how there can truly be anything but the One or the Good; but to this question he finds no sufficient answer, only that contrariety, which is the nature of the divided, is suppressed in the positivity of the finite, its negativity being present as otherness. But this otherness is implicitly contrariety, and shows itself as such at the point where the relation of the finite to the One or Good comes to light. There is not on the side of the finite a unity of contraries, save as a synthesis or mixture, but only in the principle.[28]

The same matter can be spoken of in the concreter context of law. It was known to Plato since his early Socratic dialogues that the legalistic adherence to a particular positive injunction rests on a blindness to the negativity and, at the extreme, contradiction which is also present. The great Sophists were perfectly aware that this was so, and made an art of sorts out of this knowledge. Socrates and Plato find refuge from this art by transferring the problem to the absolute. The Platonic dialectic is a kind of sophistic in the service not of a liberated individual but of the good itself.[29] The interpretation of the law in this view cannot be left to the judgment of the virtuous citizen, but must be done for him by one versed in the good, not the sophistic, dialectic. In this manner of thinking the casuistry of Rabbinic and Islamic lawyers has its origin, where law cannot be separated from its religious ground and must remain the possession of a sacred order. The same is found in Plato's *Laws,* where underlying the ordinary application of the laws is partly the authority of the original legislator, partly a nocturnal council, watchful against the appearance of a radical human freedom, doubtfully corrigible once it knows too much.[30]

This argument is of the highest importance in relation to the origins of Christianity, in that it exposes fully the limits of a Judaic monotheism. The naturalism of a divinely sanctioned attachment to land and a prosperous life in it passes into an abstract legalism. These moments are unified in God, but this unity is not revealed in the creature. What is unspiritual in this religion is negated. There is the principle of a spiritual religion, but of this there can be no development without first a deeper knowledge of human freedom, a knowledge that division, contrariety, necessity are negated not only in the divine principle but also in human thought, in a free subjectivity which is not critical or sceptical merely, as in sophistic, but knows the concretion of opposites, the unity of form and

28. Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* 1071 b.
29. *Ibid.,* 1004 b 25.
30. *Laws,* 961a ff.

matter, as constituting natural substances and subjectivity as the highest substance. But this knowledge has its origin elsewhere, in a religion where this human freedom is presupposed, develops into free political institutions, is brought to light in aesthetic experience and finally in philosophy.

B. *Hellenism*

The ancient Greek religion is as difficult of access to the contemporary student as the Judaic. It is not only that in Hellenistic times this religion had lost its older sense and had become a matter of culture. The long alliance of this Hellenistic-Roman culture with Christianity appears in turn to be dissolved in recent times.

About the relation of Hellenism to Christian theology there have been many opinions. It can appear that through Hellenic philosophy an original, more existential Christianity was transformed into an intellectual system remote from the experience of the Christian community.[31] It is forgotten in such accounts that the idea of an incarnate λόγος, alien to Judaism, has already from the first all the philosophical difficulties of the later theology.[32] If in Christianity this idea could be grasped as completing the Judaic monotheism, as bringing division and concreteness into the concept of the one absolute God, whereby an adequate revelation of the divine nature was possible, it is inconceivable that this development could occur directly out of Judaism. That God was revealable and revealed was rather known first to the Greeks. In the Hellenistic world this knowledge took the form of a radical human freedom severed from its divine origin. There was, however, a point in the discovery of this freedom where it could as well be said that everything was Zeus — that the human went over to the divine — as that the sovereignty of the gods had passed to man. In the older Hellenism, and there only, is it possible to follow the formation of the second element of Christianity, namely of a concrete and adequate λόγος or determination of the one God.

It can be useful to consider first the end of this Hellenic development, where it was given a precise conceptual formulation by Aristotle. One can bring thence to Hellenic religion and art, where the same idea of a free humanity first appears, an objective measure, evading thus the assumptions of a contemporary aesthetic and science of religion. As against the Platonic good, in which thinking goes beyond itself to an inner freedom before

31. Note 4 above.
32. *John* 1, 1.

division and difference, the πρακτικὸς νοῦς is for Aristotle an end in itself.[33] Its finitude is that it operates in that which can be other than it is, in the contingent. The modes of its operation, the ethical virtues, are limitations of contrary affections of the soul, of contrary possibilities of its action. The ends of the practical intellect as thus defined may be realized or may be frustrated; the virtues have in them partially the conditions of their realization, partially their realization depends on contingencies beyond their scope and on the necessary course of nature. To εὐδαιμονία belongs both the ordered satisfaction of human desires in actions according to the ethical virtues and the actuality of the practical intellect itself, which is exempt from the contingencies of the particular virtuous ends. But to the latter it belongs principally, and this thinking activity which is for itself is what it is to be human.[34]

This human freedom is to be distinguished from that of the sophist, who, if indifferent to contrary possibilities, is all the same subject to them, in that he thinks nothing which is beyond their division, is the subject of contraries. The Aristotelian practical freedom is a mode of operation of the theoretic νοῦς which knows that, in thinking beings in the many ways in which they are for it, it thinks primarily itself.[35] Thinking in this account is neither wearied by an empirical endlessness nor does it find its limit in contraries as the end of analysis, but sets before it the unity of contraries as substance and perceives a dependence of substantial necessity on the unmoved self-relation of thinking.[36]

Aristotle's ethical treatises and the *Politics* can only be ambiguous, perplexing and in the end unintelligible if they are abstracted from an underlying theoretical interest. Before there were philosophers the Greeks were accustomed to place their practical life, this as constituted by the relation of free individuals to the substantial institutions of family and political community, in the universal context of religion, of the relation of men to gods and of both to an invincible fate or necessity. The poets taught at once the ruinous consequences of a human hybris that would overreach the due limits of human life and a knowledge of fate which raised heroic individuals to the level of the gods. Ethical and political questions for Aristotle as for Plato are about the form of that limited human good which stays short of the deepest conflict of good and evil. Plato, as shown above, had not discovered how this finite human realm could have a certain separation and indepen-

33. Aristotle, *Eth. Nich.*, VII, 4 and 5.
34. *Ibid.*, 112b31.
35. Aristotle, *De Anima*, III, 5.
36. Aristotle, *Physics*, VII, 9-10.

dence from its absolute foundation, how there could be present in it an actual human freedom which was all the same limited. Nor again had he discovered, what is constantly assumed in the poets and was historically the case, how the family could be thought to have its own end, state and family being neither confused nor the one subordinated to the other. Aristotle is true to the Hellenic tradition in dividing family from state, in finding in both a human freedom stabilized against immediate reduction to an absolute theoretic freedom.[37]

Plato had perceived rightly that the Hellenic family, which had its independent relation to the gods and could expect an unqualified attachment from its members, was the final impediment and threat to the formation of a political community which should know and be obedient to the good and a just ordering of human interests to it. The difficulty he observed is analogous to that experienced generally at the present time between an absolute right of individuals to the satisfaction of their particular interests and the possibility of government not paralyzed by competing and contradictory pressures from the governed. Were there what is called a pluralistic society, it might be thought the problem of a unification of interests need hardly arise. But what is so designated is in truth a society where only a formal unity is sought, such as is amenable to computation, to a logic which only superficially integrates concept and reality. There is then, however, no true community, no consciousness of common and private interest reconciled, but rather of division endlessly extended or a Hinduistic flight from uncomprehended particularity. Plato has before him instead, as observed already, an ordering of particular goods to one supreme good, the formation of a community where particular interests will not settle into independence but be held dependent on the one true good. The abolition of the family for the ruling class he so far modifies in the *Laws* as only to forbid private cults. What is intended by these provisions is illustrated best by Judaic institutions, where a patriarchal unity of family and state can contain and bring back to itself the hardening and isolation of particular interests.

What Plato would evade as destructive of any stable peace in human affairs, namely that there should be two equal and opposed relations to the highest good, occurred in fact among the Greeks, being indeed the essential structure of Hellenic institutions. Homer had presented in the *Iliad* a conflict of individuality and heroic virtue which could not be resolved until there was awakened in the

37. Aristotle's concept of the family, *Politics*, I, 3-13.

principal hero a knowledge of the nullity of both, that love and friendship and the pursuit of honour, these and the gods themselves, who sustained these goods and conferred them on mortals, were comprised in an underlying fate or necessity. The finitude of human desires and goods being thus revealed, it was possible for the hero to return to them, to live within an ordered finitude. In this relation human goods were known to the hero as a mixture of good and evil. He who sought them inordinately brought to light the contrariety in them, experienced their contradiction as the extreme of human evil, and knew its resolution only as implacable necessity.[38]

This is another knowledge of necessity than is found in Plato and in Judaism. There it appears as a recognition of human impotence, of the division of human from divine, then as an elevation of thought to the knowledge of a creative divine self-consciousness beyond the opposition of being and truth. Necessity is not in this view the end of the argument, where nothing remains but to acquiesce in what cannot be otherwise, but is transitional to an inner freedom in the knowledge of the one God. In Greek religion, necessity appears as beyond the definite intentions of the gods, as destroying the relation of human and divine subjects. But there is also present here implicitly a more developed relation of human and divine than in Judaism. Achilles is not, as with Job, simply restored in the end to his former happiness, but in returning to his virtue is also freed from its finitude. It remains that he should know the division of universal and particular in human interests not simply as negated in fate or necessity but as contained in a purified relation of human and divine subjects.

Plato brought against Homer and the other poets that they showed the gods as the cause as well of evil as of good, also as taking on themselves an immediate and deceptive human form.[39] These are true objections by a Judaic measure but mistake the nature of the Hellenic religion. To know with Job the one God, the absolute good, is no doubt a higher knowledge than Achilles attains, but is at the same time less developed on the human side. The Olympian gods are themselves so far more Christian than the one Judaic God in that there is in them an actual unification of divine and human, not the principle only of a unification. The goods which the gods bring about in human life are mixed with evil; virtue is bought at the price of life, the political good with the ruin of family. But the gods stand back from human strife and the

38. *Iliad*, 24, 525-33.
39. *Republic*, II, 378e - 383c.

failure of their own purposes, know the fatal connection of good and evil as beyond their definite purposes but not beyond themselves. For the Hellenic gods, no less than the one God of Israel, are known as free subjects. They are not natural forces invested with a superficial subjectivity. Subjectivity is their nature, and the moving spirit in this religion is to discover a relation of humans as free individuals to this divine subjectivity. With this discovery vanishes the sensible individuality of the gods, the love and seduction of mortals and other such offensive manifestations.[40]

If the *Iliad* brings to light out of the struggle of war the conflict of virtue and life, fate or-necessity as the true and primary object, the *Odyssey* shows the truth of the family to lie in the same object. It is necessary to the enlightenment of Achilles at the end of the *Iliad* that his seeming freedom to choose between winning glory at Troy and returning to a happy life in his family be removed, as is done through the death of Patroclus. Between him and Achilles was a friendship having like obligations to those among members of a family. To Patroclus dead and departed to the potentiality of Hades Achilles has the inescapable obligation of revenge. He returns to his political obligations to the Greeks first as to the only means of revenge. His return restores to the Greeks the unity and undivided favour of the gods they had sought for vainly since the beginning of his quarrel with Agamemnon. His savage mutilation of Hector's body and the sacrifice of Trojan prisoners provoke the resentment of the Olympians. Achilles' choice has now the objective form of a conflict between the Erinys of Patroclus and the Olympian gods. The resolution is not that of the *Oresteia,* where Athena and the Areopagite court determine the honour due to both. Here Achilles and Priam are raised momentarily above the division of family and state, but not so that this inner unity is known as a subjectivity which can order the relation of individual to state.

That inner principle underlying the division of individual life from the common political good, as this division is presented in the objective form of a difference of divine powers, is what the poet means by fate or necessity. That this is implicitly subjectivity or free individuality is more easily discerned in the argument of the *Odyssey,* which is directly about the individuality the *Iliad* treats of not for itself but in relation to strife and division in the Greek army, to the sources of unity and order of a political community. Odysseus in a way knows well the end which moves him to return

40. As shown, for example, in the relation of Creousa to Apollo as treated in Euripides' *Ion.*

home against every obstacle. Penelope likewise knows in a way why she continues to resist a misalliance with one of the suitors in the face of their depredations and the practical certainty of Odysseus' death. In another way the end is unknown and has to be defined by the course of the argument. The domestic good is assumed to be different from that sought in the common enterprise against Troy. But if it lie in the satisfaction of the living individual as against the universality of honour, may the hero not be spared the labours of many years and the unfailing hostility of Poseidon? With Calypso he can enjoy a natural immortality, the good of the Biblical paradise. Among the Phaeecians he is offered the enjoyments of civilized life. With such goods the wise hero cannot be contented, but is guided homewards by Athena herself. The Hellenic family has its ground not in nature but in thought. The final evil with which the restored family has to contend is the Erinyes of the slain suitors. But Zeus and Athena cause an oblivion of the lust for revenge among their relatives, whereby peace is restored between them and Odysseus.

The conclusion of both the great Homeric poems is in general the same: between the desire of honour, the universality of fame, and the saving of one's individuality there is at the extreme a destructive conflict, of which there is no actual resolution in human life. There is liberation from it only by participation in the inspired knowledge of the poet who can bring forth from himself the fatality of human life, in this freeing himself from it. This knowledge Achilles can enter into, but only then to return to the pursuit of honour, whose nullity he has already experienced. In the *Odyssey* there is, however, the difference that this inner liberation is shown to be the nature of the family, is so far actual and enters into human life. It can appear curious that in that poem Odysseus should be led by Athena, not to the various exercise of his resourceful spirit, but to an inactive domestic tranquillity. But then, as the poet knows, the ground of intelligence is in the inwardness and potentiality of memory, before the dividedness of Odysseus' clever sophistic wit.[41] The correction of this division he finds in Penelope, and to that Athena directs him in his return. This good Odysseus can only enjoy by the intervention of Zeus, who restores a political order between him and the relatives of the suitors. To this end he does not appease the Erinyes but causes them to be forgotten. In the argument of the work the political order remains, as said, in the background, is presupposed; the

41. On the whole relation of Athena to Odysseus, Sophocles' treatment in *Ajax* is most instructive.

particularity which asserts itself against it is negated at the point of extreme opposition — in the Erinyes of the suitors or with Odysseus in relation to the virtue of Penelope.

The Homeric muse thus presents an actuality of divine ends in human life and also a knowledge of the limits of those ends. Before this imagined world and its principal division into Olympus, the realm of the gods, earth, the field of contingent human purposes, and Hades, the resting place of the dead, is the muse which brings it forth from the depths of memory. This moving spirit of the whole does not itself appear, while those who hear the poems are referred beyond the action of men and gods to fate as the truly actual, and to a potentiality before division as the substance of the family. The poet has articulated and given a total context to a human desire to come to oneself out of change and mutability, not only to a formal law, but to an ἦθος, to law which is not abstract, but the end and moving principle in the passions. But he has directed this desire for an actual freedom also beyond it to a self-relation which is inward and potential only. Out of this contradiction and the desire to dissolve it in an actuality adequate to the potentiality can be understood the further course of Hellenic poetry. It suffices for the present purpose to attend to tragic and comic poetry, peculiarly the creation of the Athenians. This is the poetry of an ordered community where family and state are assumed to constitute one whole, where a θεωρία of their division is possible, a subsumption of it under their unity and a knowledge of this as the one true actuality into which pass the multiple divine and human purposes and fate or necessity itself. Of this actuality one poet will say

> "And in all this action there is nothing that is not Zeus"
> (Sophocles, *Trachiniae,* 1278)

another, what seems altogether opposed,

> "All that was Zeus's of old now is our hero's alone; Sovereignty, partner of Zeus on his throne, now is forever his own."
> (Aristophanes, *Birds,* 1752-3)

In these opposed ways, which Plato saw to complete each other,[42] tragic and comic poets overcame the distance between myth and self-conscious reason, between fate and freedom, human and divine, discovering thus the ground of a spiritual religion. The tragic poet presents an action in which the spectator,

42. Socrates and Aristophanes on comedy and tragedy at the end of *Symposium*. The proof that the two forms have a common principle was given in the dialogue in the twofold relation of Socrates to Diotima and to Alcibiades.

experiencing both sympathy with heroic agents and fear before the fatal course which leads them to destruction, is purged generally of passions responding to the division between the purposes and suffering of the heroes and remorseless fate, is awakened to a knowledge of his freedom. In tragedy the agents at most come to the point where they know their fate as themselves, where their suffering is converted into a movement from themselves in which they are no longer deceived by a hidden negativity or error implicit in their virtue, their character. The comic action begins instead with a vulgar subjectivity which has fallen away from virtue and the fatal consequences to which it is liable. As Aristophanes tells in *Symposium*, the comic agent is the result of division from a unity to which he would return.[43] This return is a purgation of his immediate individuality, of his vulgarity, to an individuality which is the subject of the original division. Tragedy shows thus an assimilation of human to a universal, divine self-consciousness, comedy rather the human pole of the same relation.

Aeschylean tragedy, if one take the *Oresteia* to realize best its full intention, is content to resolve the extreme division of state and the Erinys of the individual, which has its existence in the family, in a subjectivity present in the state, in an Areopagite court inspired by the wisdom of Athena. The Athenians, contemplating the fate of Agamemnon and its consequences, might learn what was in the blind passion for conquest and military glory, the violation of family which lies in it,[44] of the madness which pursues political action unpurged of the lust of private vengeance,[45] how there is political reason which transcends and can order the division between abstract law and the profoundest offense to the heart, to the sacred right of the Erinyes.[46] Out of that reason can come a reconciliation of thought and feeling, of political man with nature, not an immediate unity with nature but a concretion which has come out of the deepest division. This reason which can arrest the fatal necessity in which unthinking human action finds itself caught they learn from Aeschylus' presentation, how they might participate in it through reverence for the Areopagite court, the guardians of established law, the remnant of an aristocratic constitution giving way to democratic equality.[47] There is room for tragic poetry which can discover also to the many who are prone to put their judgment before traditional authority that their nature is

43. *Symposium*. 189d ff.
44. *Agamemnon*.
45. *Choephoroi*.
46. *Eumenides*.
47. Aristotle, *Ath. Resp.*, 25

this concrete self-conscious reason.

The Orestes of Sophocles has no need to be acquitted by a court or to be exiled, to be excommunicated for a time from the political community. His matricide is not only authorized by the Delphic god, is not only in principle pure as the due exercise of his kingly office, but is also through the perfect collaboration of Electra at the same time the work of the family spirit, of an undefiled, undivided Erinys.[48] In an action which thus unites the sacred right of the individual, the right of the dead in the potential existence of Hades, with the active reason of the political community, the Athenian spectator could find no guilt. Where Euripides supposes instead a debased Electra, sunk into selfish interests and forgetful of a simple obligation to the spirit of her murdered father, so direct a liberation of Orestes is not possible.[49] Even when the Areopagite court has acquitted him, he is presented in another Euripidean play as only abstractly free, as subject to possession by a wild animality, which has still to be united with his rational soul.[50] Of this unity he becomes capable through his sister Iphigenia, she perforce the priestess of a barbarous cult in which the lives of captured strangers are sacrificed by her hand to Artemis. From this involuntary savagery she is inwardly free, purged in it from resentment against her own sacrifice to the same goddess, intended by her father but frustrated by divine intervention. Thus reconciled she desires to return home, which she accomplishes with her brother, who has been freed not only from the external negation of his animality by sacrifice to the goddess, but inwardly also through the humanity of his sister.

The logic of this tragic purgation appears nowhere more completely than in *Oedipus Coloneus*. Presupposed in its argument is the ruinous fatality which drove the wise king in the earlier play to discover his birth and inexpiable offenses against his parents, to blind himself, cutting off the sources of a knowledge found useless to him, and to impose on himself permanent exile from Thebes.[51] The spectator of that play had contemplated not only in the one man the simultaneous ruin of kingly power and of family but also his active inquiring intelligence coalescing with the prophetic vision of the blind Teiresias. There is the beginning of a

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48. Sophocles has no need of a following play to complete the argument: Orestes in exacting vengeance is in the very act freed of guilt. Cf. the final comment of chorus.
49. Orestes at the end of Euripides' *Electra* must suffer exile and purification.
50. *Iphigenia in Tauris.*
51. *Oedipus Tyrannus.*

self-consciousness which knows fate or necessity as not alien to itself,[52] and there *Coloneus* begins. The wanderings of the blind Oedipus have led him to the sacred grove of the Eumenides at Colonus, where he senses he is called by the gods to end his life. His daughters have served as guides to him, his relation to the visible world. Through the argument of the play there is formed in him a self-direction; a passive, inspired knowledge of his end is converted into an active movement to it, a voluntary passing to the gods. To this movement the impediments are his pollution, his sin against the Eumenides, and the collapse of his once confident political intelligence, the elements of the fate which destroyed him. What is known incipiently from the other play must here become explicit to him, that this fatality does not fall outside his self-consciousness.

That Oedipus is already reconciled with the Eumenides is beyond the piety of the Attic elders who make up the chorus of the play to understand. Time and exile are not enough to obliterate the memory of his offenses, but only the oblivion of Hades, to which he is turned. In that relation, in the pure inwardness and potentiality of his soul, he is free from the fate that has driven him restless in his exile. He is able to subordinate fate and necessity to a consciousness of his freedom and regard his sins as suffered rather than done.[53] That this is so Theseus can accept from him, who has himself descended to Hades and returned, knows the relation of the living individual to the potentiality of death. If one compares this play with *Antigone,* Oedipus has here such a knowledge as Creon in that play might have attained, if upon his ruin he had discerned the principle of the family piety maintained against him by Antigone. He would then have corrected the abstractness of his active political reason and come to know its origin in an immediate relation to the oblivion of Hades.

It remains that Oedipus should be seen as freed also from the division of reason from nature and individuality in the political community, from that division which had been his own ruin. His sons contest the kingship at Thebes, the one on the natural principle of his prior birth, the other on the rational principle of general approbation by the people. The impossible device of an annual alternation of the two in power having failed, Polyneices raises an army against his country and his reigning brother. The resolution of the conflict, the ground on which the opposed principles might be reconciled is to be found in Oedipus. The

52. *Ibid.*, 1455-58.
53. *Oedipus Coloneus,* 266-7.

brothers compete for his favour, for possession of his person, though neither had thought to put a term to his exile and restore him to a place in his political community. The brothers in this show themselves ignorant of the condition of peace between them, namely an absolute respect for the undivided unity present in the family. It is not so, as Plato would reason, that the family is the origin of faction and disunity in the state. Nor is it true that the best state is the most unified where division has been suppressed in the highest degree.[54] The poet shows instead through his Oedipus how the state can sustain a difference of general and particular interests, if this difference be known as derivative, as from a prior unity in the family, as able therefore to be given up in the state and not maintained unconditionally. Oedipus invokes destruction on his sons who are incapable of this wisdom and have in themselves no basis of reconciliation. To Theseus who has known why to respect him, has given him citizenship and place of burial in Athens, he can impart the highest political wisdom, the secret of true kingship, which can tolerate and encourage diversity without losing itself in faction and an ungovernable plurality.[55]

This enlightenment Theseus can only fully receive at the moment of Oedipus' death, which he alone witnesses. Though between Oedipus and his daughters there is a perfection of family virtue, perfect devotion requited by a love equal to it, they cannot accompany him all the way to the place of his death. The nature of his death is not to be known in that immediacy of family love. For in it Hades and Olympus are as one, oblivion and the intelligence which knows fate and itself as prior to it. To speak of Oedipus' departure as death Theseus knows to be inappropriate.[56] It is rather death and resurrection undistinguished. To Theseus is given an intuition of the unmoving principle which moves in the extreme division of human life, to which humans are related through their fundamental institutions, the end into whose self-relation is dissolved even fate or necessity. This knowledge it would be impossible for Theseus to communicate to the citizens of his state. The ordered life of political and domestic communities rests on the difference of family and state, of Eumenides and Olympian gods, of finite ends and overpowering fate. These differences at the same time vanish into a unity of human and divine. The spectator is led thus to a freedom beyond the limits of his religion and institutions, in which he can no longer find full

54. Aristotle, *Politics*, II, 2.
55. *Oed. Col.*, 1643-44.
56. *Ibid.*, 1647-55.

satisfaction, but has need to discover an order in which there will be place for this free human subjectivity.

In Sophoclean tragedy there thus appears a resolution of the problem and fundamental interest of the ancient Hellenic religion: the division between a concrete unity of human and divine ends or, its historical equivalent, of institutions and individual freedom, — this and the loss of these goods in a fatality stronger than divine and human purposes. Here fate or necessity is shown as only the appearance of an infinite divine freedom. This argument returns to the one God of the Hebraic religion, to whom the true human relation is now no longer immediate but mediated by the difference of human and divine. This difference is lost, however, in the result, which, with Aristotle, one may express thus, that God's knowledge is not of what is other than himself, since then it would be of the divided, of the base as well as of the good, but a higher knowledge in which the divided and other has become self-knowledge.[57] This result is only so far distinguished from the Christian concept of God that there the other and finite has not only receded into the divine self-knowledge but develops out of it, having through this reversion become adequate to it. For this development to become revealable it is also necessary that on the human side the disparity between a self-knowledge originating in this older Hellenism and a content inadequate to it should be experienced as a scepticism and loss of nature.[58]

What in the tragic presentation appears as a negation of the difference between human and divine is in the comic rather the formation of a rational human individuality or personality, the humanity of the Hellenistic-Roman world where will be felt in due course a need of the Christian religion and a dissatisfaction with its seemingly more plausible and natural rivals. The comic poet, as said already, assumes a vulgar individuality which seeks its private good, is in conflict with the ethical order, is, as the poet openly declares in the 'parabasis', no other than the ordinary spectator himself.[59] The purgation effected by this poetry is not through the relation of the 'demos' to heroic characters of greater than ordinary virtue but directly of itself. The same content as in the tragic purgation is here referred to this ordinary individual as its subject. One who brings to Aristophanes' comedies the characteristic assumptions of contemporary culture will find there some mixture

57. Aristotle, Met., XII, 9.
58. Treated further in relation to Roman-Hellenistic culture.
59. In the comic parabasis the action of the play passes into direct relation of poet to spectator.

of censorious conservatism and pornographic indulgence. It is thus forgotten that there was not at that time a subjectivity so assured of itself that it could live thus in an opaque plurality of interests. There was no principle present which could sustain a radical opposition of virtue, of adherence to the ethical order of family and state, and the instincts of a mob democracy. The incomparable interest and importance of this comedy is that, complementing tragedy, it could reveal this principle of free subjectivity or personality.

The dividedness and the desire to reconstitute a former unity which Aristophanes in *Symposium* declares to be the nature of ἔρως — to be human nature — appear as a breaking away of particular interests from the common end to which the citizens were formed by the old virtues, as this division and a movement in the individual to return to the former unity. Plato describes a like movement in *Republic,* the inevitable course of corruption of the good state to the extreme point of a tyrannic individuality, in which the primary desire of the good in the soul is obscured by illusions but remains. This division of the soul from its true end one can regard as a corruption, but also as the formation of individual freedom. For the free individual or person is he who has in himself his relation to the good and his finitude and difference from it. Plato knew this individuality in the superficial form of sophistry, as a relation of the division in its pure abstraction to the individual, a knowledge of himself as measure of the being and negativity of all things. Whether as an assertion of sensuous immediacy or as a universal rhetorical art, sophistry did not know the Socratic desire of the good, of the return to unbroken unity. To Plato it was as though division and otherness should not have been, but only the good. If in image and language and not conceptually, the comic muse shows better than either the relation of individual to the good or undivided.

The comic purgation begins with the lapse from virtue, with trivial and divided characters, then awakens in the spectator the knowledge this dividedness is absurd, that is, contradictory and a nullity. The poet may bring about this purgation through a content itself close to his own purpose, as when he sets against each other the Socratic analysis and search for the universal and the tendency of this criticism to dissolve ordinary virtue. The spectator of the *Clouds* assuredly misjudged Socrates, but through him might be purged for the moment of his own self-serving abuse of reason. A better subject of the comic art is the demagogue who promotes an aggressive public policy to make a career for himself, the confusion of justice and private motives in Athenian judges, of the love of

peace with the self-interest which generates war and faction. For in these characters are combined the terms of the division which in *Clouds* are distributed between Socrates and those who would abuse the lessons of his 'phrontisterion'.

Of all the surviving comedies *Birds* exhibits most fully the nature of this purgation, the disclosure of an individuality freed from the division between an abstract good and its more confined interests. When the Athenians first contemplated the action of this play they were engaged in the greatest and most ruinous of their follies, the conquest of Sicily. To adhere to the advice of Pericles and fight a limited war with the Lacedaemonians, which they could prudently expect to win, supposed a virtue in their rulers which knew its limits, which respected the ethical order of family and state. In this enterprise the 'demos' showed itself to be wholly possessed by the divided spirit which would get beyond its division by indefinite aggression and expansion. In these circumstances the poet makes the people in the whole scope of their political life subject of his comedy. The chief characters of the piece, a plausible talker and his gullible companion, themselves thus fully in the spirit of this society, cannot bear its oppressive business. They would find for themselves instead an animal life where desires could be satisfied without the complications of human society. In this they revert to the primitive presupposition of Hellenic religion and its ethical order to a veneration of natural powers, irrational vitality, which one learned from Hesiod and other poets had been succeeded by other gods, and last by the Olympians. In comic form this beginning of the action is equivalent to the pseudo-aristocratic Nietzschean reaction of a Critias or a Callicles to Athenian democracy. In *Birds* it appears as an inarticulate, immediate individuality, in flight from the dividedness — the 'nihilism' — of society but able when developed to comprehend it, to be free of its endless otherness.[60]

The fanciful bird-city which those unlikely heroes found has need of arts they left behind, but has in it, what Athens lacked, the power to correct the ensuing corruption, to expel or discipline immigrants come for the same reasons as themselves. Having separated themselves from the divided life of Athens, they are capable of a knowledge of the division, are no longer merely in it. When war breaks out between the new city and its nature gods and the Olympians, the first defector to them is Prometheus. How is it to be taken that Prometheus, who had gone over from the Titans to

60. For an exact and detailed exposition of *Birds*, an unpublished Dalhousie thesis by P. D. Epstein.

the Olympians, from irrational brutality to divine reason, should now defect to the nature-city and its gods? Not assuredly to bring blessings to mankind through the arts, for what Aristotle will say of τέχνη, that its end is in the product and not the maker, who therefore is unfree, had long before been expressed in the Prometheus myth: the divine liberator of the human race from immediate dependence on nature was himself bound in the chains of necessity from which he was only freed by submission to Zeus, to the πράξις which is its own end.[61] A merely technical society divides men from nature and cannot restore the unity it has broken; there is not a common end of reason and desire present but an endless expansive striving towards it. From an Athens which had fallen from political virtue into just this division the founders of the bird city had fled. If Prometheus will join them it is not to be bound again, but because he will find the arts there and the desires they stimulate and serve, immediate individuality and reason united.

In the bird city there is not only a liberation from Promethean necessity, from the contradiction of freedom and servitude in the arts, but also from the necessity stronger than the purposes of the Olympians. For what is it that a war between men and the gods ends with the transfer of sovereignty to Peisthetarios, to the ordinary Athenian? It is not a victory of nature over reason, of nature gods over the Olympians. The war is with all the gods; the ambassadors who come to treat for peace with men represent both the barbarous nature gods and the Olympians, and with them is Heracles in whom human and divine are united. It was an old story that Zeus would be cast from his throne by a son stronger than himself; that, warned by Prometheus, he avoided this overthrow by giving up a design of marrying Thetis. In the offspring of this marriage nature and self-conscious intelligence would be more adequately united than in the Olympians or in the sons and daughters of their casual alliances with mortals. Sophocles can present the human and mortal in Heracles as transfigured into the divine.[62] But for the comic poet he is then only a bastard son and not true heir to Zeus: he is not as individual divinized. In this comic war the implicit unity of nature gods and Olympians in Heracles is explicated, and for the spectator in Peisthetairos, and so in himself.

The nature of the old comedy is perhaps still more evident in the last surviving plays of Aristophanes. It may be said that the

61. So in Aeschylus' Prometheus trilogy.
62. Sophocles, *Trachiniae*, at the end.

revolutions which, following the Sicilian expedition, destroyed beyond repair the balance of traditional virtue and democratic freedom which Athens had enjoyed for a time, left a public no longer tolerant of a criticism sparing no folly. That the comic muse is thus responsive to social opinion and not rather formative of it has in it sociological assumptions of later time. After *Birds* had shown the Athenians a free subjectivity underlying all the content and primary distinctions of their religion and public life, what remained for this comedy to do that would be more than repetitious of the same? The genius of Aristophanes found material still, but of another kind. Tragedy, the other form of the Dionysiac theatre, could itself be treated comically. Both dramatic forms bring to light a relation of human individuality to the divine subjectivity of the Olympians, prior to necessity and the finitude of their purposes. But this is an inspired knowledge which neither poet nor those enlightened by him can take with them from the theatre to ordinary life. This same knowledge as separated from an aesthetic embodiment had become the possession of pure thought is what the Greeks called philosophy. To make the tragic movement from man to god subject of the art which knows how to relate the divine to man is to go some way towards this philosophical separation. In *Frogs* Aristophanes weighs against each other and submits to the judgment of Dionysus (the subjectivity the Attic poets knew how to clarify from a Nietzschean immediacy to its true nature) the objective direction of Aeschylus' tragedy and the Euripidean tragedy which can approach nearly the subjectivity of comedy.

In *Ecclesiazusae* and *Plutus* the separation is completed. The one, as in Plato's *Republic,* equalizes the division of male and female, bringing to light a common rational subjectivity. The other discloses a rational freedom through the contingency and necessity of economic life. Of the latter a commentator observes, "The stately Parabasis is gone; the beautiful lyrics which elevated the whole performance into a higher and purer atmosphere have altogether disappeared; the great historical personages, literary and political, the poets, the philosophers, the demagogues, the generals . . . have faded not only from his own satire, but almost from the very recollection of his audience: . . . the performers might almost be treading, so to say, the boards of some provincial theatre."[63] Truly said, save the last point: *Plutus* belongs still to the Old Comedy in that it does not yet find matter for comedy in the complications of private life. The interest of the piece is how nearly

63. B. B. Rogers, introd. to *Plutus,* Loeb, Vol. III, pp. 361-2.

explicit is the subjectivity which, once established and presupposed, will invite the comedy of Menander and his successors.

Towards a knowledge of Christianity it is of the highest importance to distinguish this older Hellenism from the subsequent Hellenistic-Roman culture. In the former, there is discovered a relation of man to God which is not mediated, as in Judaism, by a simple negation of all the finite but by taking the finite into an infinite spiritual relation. In the universal Hellenism of the Roman Empire one has the result of this discovery but no longer the way to it. A spirituality is attained with the loss of an older content, the need of a content adequate to the new principle. The older Greek religion, the imagery of the arts, institutions which required but could not contain free personality, all this passed into an immediate spiritual unity of human and divine. The transition became, however, the object of a philosophical thought which freed it from the instability of language and imagination, which knew nature and human finitude, their difference from and relation to God, through categories or pure distinctions of thought.

From the above argument easily emerges the standpoint of the Aristotelian philosophy, as also its relation to the Christian religion. The original Aristotelianism is neither, as is congenial to contemporary criticism, an empiricism contaminated still with a mythological remnant, especially in its theology and psychology, nor is it the Neoplatonic Aristotelianism which in its various forms was an invaluable servant to Christian theology for many centuries. It could not be the former, since there was not then a reason so well settled into finite interests as to see the principal questions of an older philosophy as mythical, linguistic, speculative in a bad sense; to take as standard a mathematicized logic which had lost the power to discriminate categories; to look for a knowledge of the soul through its powers fragmented and frozen into various empirical attitudes. The interest of that time was to discover a humanity which could stand in relation to God, which did not show itself in the end a nullity in religious and practical experience. In what is called philosophy in recent times this independent humanity, though always assumed, remains mostly unknown. To Neoplatonism Aristotle provided a finite or discursive moment which receded into an intuitive unity, itself categorially indeterminate, not as originally determined to be self-knowing as against knowledge through other categories, spoken of therefore by preference in the abstract categories of being and unity. Here again the spirituality in which the Aristotelian philosophy ends is assumed, but abstractly and not as in the Christian religion.

Plato, asking what it was for sensibles to participate the ideas, was led to the conclusion that the two worlds were related in the good itself, prior to their distinction. The difference of ideas and sensibles being once assumed, what appeared to be a relation of the two dialectic could always show to be illusory, to be rather an endless otherness.[64] Himself unsatisfied with that result, Plato supposes as well as divine thinking whose activity combines the undivided and divided principles, produces an ideal world and a sensible image of it.[65] If in this way he would show the good to be actual, the actuality is not by this account its nature but posterior to its undivided unity.[66] Aristotle was not alone among the first Platonists in seeing that a revision of principles was necessary.[67] Some might think to find an actuality of the undivided principle in ideal or qualitative number. Here however the dyadic principle was presupposed: in these numbers its endless divisibility should be arrested, not shown as derived from the undivided. Others instead therefore abandoned the ideas and would treat all that was posterior to the good as in truth quantitative, as number. Here there was indeed continuity or self-identity and endless divisibility, not the two as activity. The thinking which regarded the continuity and discretion of quantity was only more obviously external to its objects than Plato's divine intelligence.[68]

The impediment which divided the good from creative divine activity Aristotle saw to be the common assumption that everything finite was composed of contraries.[69] No further advance was possible unless what thinking knew as other than itself was comprehensive of contraries. The νοῦς knows first the categories. The accidental categories it knows as related to substance, which, while remaining itself, is capable of contraries. The categories are for νοῦς a being in thinking which it thinks itself.[70] Its self-knowledge is not immediate only and before division, but also a mediated knowledge. The categories are genera, prior to, but susceptible of, division and contrariety. In the categories thinking knows itself, knows self-relation and division as making one whole. The accidental categories integrate these

64. So the hypotheses of *Parmenides* are to be understood.
65. Criticism of Parmenides in *Sophist*.
66. Aristotle, *Met.*, XII, 6.
67. Speusippus and Xenocrates contributed to the Aristotelian criticism, the one by reducing the ideas to quantity, the other by attempting to express them through the category of quality.
68. Aristotle on mathematical number, *Met.*, XIII, 2-3.
69. *Physics*, I, 5.
70. *Met.*, IV, 2.

distinctions imperfectly as successive or as abstractly related. In substance thinking all but has possession of itself: form and matter are nothing but potencies to their relation; the difference of individual and universal falls within their relation. To this category the others tend, on it they depend, since only with substance do division and connection of the divided appear as moments of an intrinsic activity.[71] Asking therefore whether there can be a science of all the causes — such a science as that of Plato's creative divine intelligence — Aristotle answers that there can be such a science, if substance is the first genus of being to which the other genera are related. Only in substance does it become thinkable how the creative activity can unite the formal and material conditions of a teleological production, and not rather be dissipated in the endless divisibility of matter.[72]

But the doctrine of categories is only the beginning of Aristotle's universal science. The categories are prior to division, to the distinction of true and false. But is this distinction to be thought a determination of the categories, of this first realization of the good, or does it fall to a finite knowing subject? Plato's demiurgic intelligence is said to create the visible world looking to the κόσμος νοητός. But what is this intelligence? Not the νοῦς which turns from its relation to the ideas to the good which is prior to that relation. It is rather the thinking of a world composite of the good and divided principle. If it is shown in *Sophist* that negation or otherness belongs as well as being to this world, this is in the end only the negativity of a dialectical reflection, an untruth which dialectic disengages from truth in its analysis of the composite.[73]

Aristotle asks whether the primary science is of the principles of demonstration as well as of the categories, whether logic comes under its consideration or is only the abstracted general form of the methods of the several special sciences. Is there only the attitude of an empirical understanding, which Aristotle recognizes to be appropriate to φυσική, in its several parts, or is this a secondary and derivative attitude? The question is of the highest importance if one would know how Aristotle came to think there was a φύσις or intrinsic moving principle in all things, whose operation was analogous to the productive arts. For this is a knowledge which appeared also in later times to exceed the limits of scientific inquiry. If Aristotle can discover the presence of an unmoved mover in all the genera of nature, that is because division and

71. *Met.*, VIII,6.
72. *Met.*, IV,3.
73. *Met.*, 1089a15-32.

syllogism, as well as the categories, are for him the form of what is other than the divine self-thinking. Through this logical form the demiurgic intelligence remains one with itself in the specification of natural genera and their actualization in individuals.[74]

Through this logical form the theoretical understanding knows itself one with its objects. But the creative divine intelligence is not theoretic only. Nor, again, is it productive in the manner of the human arts, which suppose an appropriate matter and where product is separated from producer. Nor is the divine freedom that of the practical understanding, which, though its own end, has for its content contingent purposes, which can as well be realized as frustrated. As the poets already taught, God knows the necessary as himself. Aristotle asks how it is possible there should be a universal science of all natural genera. His answer is that all genera are related to the prime entelechy through the same principles — form and matter or form and privation —, that the variety of species in a genus, the manifold differences of individuals are all comprehended in the same relation to the unmoved mover or divine self-consciousness. This relation is manifested in the total activity of the genus; e.g. in the rest and movement of the four elemental bodies, the continuity of the genus in their unfailing generation out of one another.[75]

The φύσις or moving principle, through which, for example, the corruptible elements seek their place, is part of this total activity. As with the arts, this φύσις moves on condition a body is in a certain state. Its spontaneity is conditional; having come to rest, it receives from another its power to move again. If one asks how God renews the finite powers operative in a genus, sustains its actuality, the answer is that he moves as desired, as end. The sense of this answer is that the difference of nature from God, the separation and need which is the origin of desire and movement, is divinely caused: the desire animating nature is of the end from which it has fallen. The recurrent movement in all genera is through stages, by which the division of rest from movement is converted into the divine actuality where rest and movement are one.[76]

The inner unity which is before division in the category of substance is imparted to individuals by the divine causality. The demiurge of *Timaeus* in giving actuality to the ideas is impeded by

74. Aristotle, *Physics* II, where the argument has passed from the discussion of substance as unitive of contraries in the previous book to the determination of φύσις and causality.
75. *Met.* IX, 6-8.
76. *Met.* XII, 7.

an external necessity; the products of his work are a mixture of reason and necessity. The Aristotelian teleology realizes its end without hindrance, combining absolutely the determinate genus with all the material conditions of its realization. In its product the divine intelligence is reflected into itself, the contrariety of the genus which appears in the difference of form and matter being negated in the individual. In this result division and mediation have passed into the self-identity of the individual substance. In this self-identity Aristotle finds at the same time a realization of the Platonic good and the surest principle of finite knowledge.[77]

If nature is thus one with the divine causality in its first production, it is also divided from it. If one ask the reason of this division of the product from its causes, the answer is that one has here only the first entelechy, immediate unity of cause and caused. Their difference appears as a separation of the effect from its causes. The early Greek philosophers had not distinguished nature from God. With Plato began a separation of nature, but as a falling away from the undivided principle. Aristotle's nature, as comprehensive of division, has present in it the absolute actuality. The relation of the finite substance to the divine thinking is, however, at first abstract or immediate: the negativity which belongs also to the relation is concealed as the στέρησις or privation which is an element with form in its composition. This negativity then appears as the external involvement of the substance, a dividedness and otherness distinguished from its self-relation. The φύσις or inner moving power of the substance is its effort to overcome this division and regain its simple self-identity.[78]

But in this natural movement the impulse or desire of the substance is only partially appeased. Its full relation to the unmoved mover is not disclosed therein. Most revelatory of this relation is the movement of the heavenly bodies. While all natural substances have present in them a creative self-consciousness, with the heavenly bodies this relation is not obscured by a manifold externality and contingency. These bodies remain ever self-related, difference only occurring in their circular movement to be immediately negated in the uniform relation of centre to circumference. If these bodies thus reveal an unmoved mover as their principle, they also fail to show its nature fully. They are many and externally related to one another, moving and moved. Only the cyclic movement of the heavens shows this negativity as

77. *Met.* IV, 3.
78. *Physics* III, 1.

reciprocal, as the division and necessary connection of one movement. So regarded the substantiality of the heavenly spheres is nothing but a self-identity which is just as well privation explicitly present and actual as well. In this contradiction the unmoved principle is known as comprehending in its self-consciousness all the difference of the heaven from itself.[79]

All the genera of nature have this same structure. The argument shows them in the end to be a nullity, to pass into the divine self-consciousness. God is spoken of as the highest substance, besides whom there are the many natural genera. God and nature are different, but then the independence of nature is found to be in truth, as in the Hellenic religion, the fate or necessity which is the form of its relation to God as free self-consciousness.

To this reduction of nature to God in the full disclosure of its negativity there is found one exception.[80] The true division of God from himself which can stand in free relation to him is the rational soul. Aristotle's science of the soul begins, as do his other natural sciences, as a search to define the genus in its first or immediate form. The soul which lives merely, without sensation or thought, is distinguished from other natural forms as the active principle of an organized body. A plant in this view has already a certain freedom from natural necessity: there is in it not the abstract self-relation merely of the simple body, nor is it a mixture and harmony of simple bodies, but the differentiation of its parts and functions is resolved into one end. The plant is an end to itself at the same time as it is bound to its vegetative processes without such separation as would permit a sense of itself, of its self-relation, and of something other than itself.[81]

The development of this principle is very different from that of other natural genera. There the self-identity which the substance at first sought to maintain passed to a discovery of necessity. Here the development is of a concrete teleology, unconscious of itself and having its activity immediately in the maintenance and growth of its body, to a self-conscious activity knowing its external relations and embodiment as itself. The powers of the soul which appear in this development are not faculties of a substance but the unfolding of the substance itself.[82] Each of the principal distinctions is the whole substance, less and more explicit to itself.

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79. *Met.* XII, 8-10: reduction of the independent celestial movers to one primary mover.
80. When the whole argument of *De Anima* is gathered together to the conclusion implicit from the first, this is evident.
81. Vegetative soul, *De An.* II, 4.
82. *De An.* II, 3.

These distinctions reduce to two, which contain the rest: the soul seeks to know, to find itself in what is presented to itself as other; and to move, to initiate from itself its relations to another. The end sought in the whole development is to overcome the contrariety of these desires. While these cognitive and appetitive powers are divided the soul, though betraying even as vegetative an incipient freedom, is subject to necessity. The resolution of its contradiction is not in God only, as with other substances, but also in itself.[83]

It is enough for the present purpose to indicate the course of this resolution as it occurs in the rational soul, in the soul which has attained to spontaneous activity, as knowing and as practical, and does not react only to changes in its sense organs and its body generally. In its 'epistemic' or scientific thinking the soul knows the content of sense and imagination as comprised in its concepts, its division and reasonings. This content it has received into itself as potential. Its thinking is then the explication of this potentiality, so that in the end even the individual thing is known primarily as the subject of logical contraries, as that about which demonstrations are made. The active νοῦς which has thus related all its content to its self-consciousness as principle may be spoken of as breaking in upon the soul from without.[84] It is the manner of Aristotle's science to regard the higher thus from the side of the lower, which the argument shows as passing into it. It is only necessary to attend to the structure and movement of the whole argument to know that Aristotle only provisionally measures the higher thus by the lower.

Of the practical νοῦς Aristotle is able to say that it is its own end, is free in its labour to conform the world of its particular interests to its freedom, especially through the common work of domestic and political institutions. Of the evils attendant on this laborious freedom there is nothing to be added from this Hellenic standpoint to what the poets have taught. Practical freedom has for its definite content contingent purposes, which may or may not be fulfilled. The virtues which relate these ends as stable attitudes to the practical νοῦς mediate between extreme possibilities. There is a negativity latent in virtuous actions, which the poets have shown comes to light fatally in heroic characters. The logic of this fatality is given in Aristotle's treatment of practical understanding.

The νοῦς as practical is free, is for itself, does not, as technical reason, lose its activity in an alien product. This freedom is natural in Aristotle's sense: that to which the soul tends, which it acquires

83. *De An.* III, 9.
84. *De Generatione Animalium*, 736a28.

actually by the ethical virtues and the prudence which can resolve conflicts among them in the light of the πρακτὸν ἀγαθόν as such. This common human good has its reality in the political community. There is a common rational work each is an end at once to himself and to others, is purged in a true παιδεία of the deceptions of the passions and of partial virtues. But this virtue in a Creon or an Oedipus betrays its finitude in an opposition to the family. Considered in relation to the soul, this is first the opposition of φρόνησις to what one may call natural feelings, the unformed feelings of the individual, presupposed in his education to virtue. When virtue attains its completion in practical thought, this immediate presupposition stands out against the universality of that attitude. This natural individuality has its rational good in the family, which if it be called the natural community as against the state is among Greeks a free community.[85] The individual belongs to both communities, but in relation to them is exposed to a profound division in himself. In this division appears the limit of practical freedom, where it confronts a necessity in which the individual can only find himself free by returning to a theoretical attitude.[86]

How do natural feelings, the natural individual, and practical wisdom belong to the one soul? Taken simply as other than practical wisdom, the affronted feelings of Antigone or Haemon appear as unformed youthful passions, not yet subject to rational control. But the soul, if it is not to succumb to the experience that its practical freedom is abstract and illusory, has need to bring before its view both attitudes, to know them as in one relation belonging to itself. As theoretical, it knows itself through the division of thought and sensibility. It can likewise find itself in the division of the practical soul, in the knowledge that sensuous and rational desires are one power. Practical thought, in that it can order and choose among ends, knows this unity, but abstractly: this unity is realized in a plurality of ends. But these many ends, as realized, may be compared in their logical form with the celestial spheres: there is in them a negativity which corrects the appearance that they are self-identical and freely executed; they are found in their consequences to limit and impinge on one another.[87] The soul is constrained to discover how they are compatible, not destructive of one another. How, as Plato asked, can the soul find peace in itself? In Aristotle's formulation, how is

85. *Politics* I, 13.
86. *Eth. Nich.* X, 8.
87. *De An.* III, 11.

the unmoved mover, τὸ πρακτὸν ἀγαθόν, related to the moved mover, that is, to ὄρεξις or desire?[88] The answer to this question can be seen in an immediate form if one ask how the soul, human or animal, moves its body. It is insufficient to answer with Plato that soul can move bodies because it is self-moving. In the movement of animals there is an alternation of rest and motion in the limbs, a reciprocity in which appears an unmoved self-relation of the animal.[89] The thinking soul is similarly unmoved in the movement of desire, when this is freed from every particular content and known as bringing forth from itself an alternation of positive and negative moments. The practical soul, like the theoretical, comes thus to the knowledge that its particular interests, the world of its desires and realized ends, is the possession of its thinking self-consciousness. Unmoved mover and desire are one actuality in this relation.

Aristotle's science of the soul reverts at this point to its beginning. In the course of the argument the unconscious organic life of the vegetative soul was shown to pass into a division of the soul from its body and natural environment. Then this division in the sensitive and imaginative soul was found to be comprehended in the theoretical self-consciousness. The practical soul finally could sink into the immediacy of animal desire and unite that immediacy with its rational freedom. Through these stages the soul has not separated itself only from its embodiment, as was sought in the Platonic philosophy, but has found in its universality and the immediacy of its embodiment and externality one actuality.[90]

In the conclusion to which the Aristotelian philosophy comes the standpoint of the old Hellenic religion no longer remains, but has passed into the relation of human individuals, freed from division and necessity, to a God who knows himself in natural necessity. The divine thinking which comes thus to itself out of nature is then intelligible to itself, is its own object, in a thinking which in division and difference is not subjected again to necessity, but goes over to an otherness adequate to itself.[91] So likewise human life in the result, being unified out of the extreme division of universality and natural immediacy, does not revert to this division. In going over to life and nature it has an otherness and finitude which in its development is found to be a form of its original self-identity and not an alien necessity or fatality.

88. *De An.* III, 10.
89. *De An.* III, 10; *De Motu Animalium.*
90. *De An.* III, 12-13.
91. *Met.* XII, 7-9.

The concept of God to which Aristotle comes is an incipient knowledge of what will afterwards be called the Trinity in Christian theology. Nature and humanity are comprehended in this concept. Plato in *Timaeus* had sought to explain the creation of nature as primarily the construction of soul by divine intelligence looking to an ideal model. Nature is thought to be the intelligible world, not as for thought, but as universal life. Aristotle has come to this same concept of nature and its origin. He has made it intelligible — what the demiurgic intelligence is which, regarding the total idea, creates soul and all nature as its image; what again the image is, namely, the otherness or difference of the divine thinking as divided from it; how man in turning from nature out of desire to know the divine idea does not therein fall into division between his universality and particularity, but rather finds these moments unified in his individuality.

But this knowledge was mediated by the Hellenic religion and the dividedness of human life in the Hellenic family and state. Without this mediation the conclusion, as formulated by Aristotle, was no sooner attained than it became unintelligible. Already to Aristotle's first successors his philosophy had become problematical. Between the standpoint of the conclusion and the way to it Theophrastus finds a gulf he does not know how to bridge.[92] To Strato nature appears a mechanism severed from the divine mover.[93] The need is felt by these Perpatetics of a new development from the concrete spiritual standpoint which came into sight in Aristotle's conclusion. The beginning of this development is not, however, with them, but is made by the Stoics and the other Hellenistic schools. In Stoicism the unification of divine and human, the reduction of a dispersed plurality of genera to one living nature, which Aristotle had come to, appears in the immediate form of a pantheism. In this collapse human freedom is no longer a speculative knowledge of life and thought as concretely united, but abstract personality, the self-identity of the individual maintained against passion and particular interests.

In Stoicism and the other schools there is such a collapse and incapacity for philosophy as occurred again in the nineteenth century and is still the form of contemporary culture. Then, as afterwards, there was the illusion that a rational freedom undivided from nature was attained, or else might be attained by

92. The urgent problem of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics:* πότερα συναφή τις καὶ οἷον κοινωνία πρὸς ἄλληλα τοῖς τε νοητοῖς καὶ τοῖς τῆς φύσεως, ἢ οὐδεμία

93. Strato accepts a separation of nature from God (Zeller, II, II, 904 for surviving evidence as to his doctrine.)

the domination of an abstract thought. Plato and Aristotle became as unintelligible to this standpoint in its several forms as are the philosophies of the older modern period to contemporary schools. But in antiquity this natural concreteness was felt in due course to be rather division and loss of nature. There emerged out of it the need to know what it thought to have possession of more directly, as in more recent times thought was to be superseded by 'praxis', which in turn is experienced as a need of thought. So regarded, the Hellenistic philosophies can be thought the beginning of an intrinsic development of the new standpoint in which Aristotle ends his inquiry. The first Peripatetics, one may say, are paralysed and cannot move because they do not know their principle in an external and sensuous form, out of which they might come to a mediated knowledge of it.

But this development is not to be looked for so long as the subjective freedom of Hellenistic culture remains nostalgically attached to older forms even when it has freed itself from them. Alexander indeed and his successors establish empires to which Greeks and Hellenized barbarians belong rather as individuals and as cosmopolitan than as Athenian or of some other 'polis'. It is the Roman people who make a new beginning with this abstract freedom, for whom it is the principle of their religion and of their domestic and political institutions. The Roman conquest and domination of the other Meditaerranean peoples has the immense importance of giving reality to the abstract practical spirit already present in Hellenistic culture. In this way the implications of this standpoint are made known and felt, not in language and education merely, in what we call 'culture', but as historical reality. Somewhat similarly it may be said that the implications of the contemporary technological society are only truly known in its Marxist form. The adequate mediation of the concrete spiritual principle, of which there was a first and passing vision in the Aristotelian philosophy, the argument will show to occur in Christianity. A consideration of Roman religion and institutions can reveal how a desire of the Christian revelation and a capacity for it came into being.

C. *The Roman res publica*

The Roman religion is in certain respects similar to Judaism. In both there is a preoccupation with external goods at the same time as absolute submission to the authority of abstract thought. The Jewish law as the command of the one God is of its nature universal, but the peculiar possession of the chosen people, who can expect by its careful observance to prosper in their external

interests. The relation of the faithful obedience to the law to prosperity is to be sought in God. Humanly the two may be separated beyond comprehension, as with Job. In the Roman religion the relation of the two is made explicit. There the service of the supreme god is through devotion to a universal human end, the 'res publica' to which all particular interests are to be sacrificed, not in inward piety only, but by obedience to a magisterial authority. This service of the state the Romans call piety; the hero of the Roman epic is the 'pius Aeneas'. In piety there is demanded of the individual an abstract unification of ends. Many and even trivial ends are also divinized, are seen to have in them a relation of man to God in which he knows himself as free self-consciousness. These many ends are not comprehended in the one political end, but rather subjected to it. The necessity which was above the Greek gods is here the externality and constraint experienced in this utilitarian relation. The limit of this religion and of the Roman state is that the individual should free himself of this necessity, should know himself as a free person possessed of rights.

In the Roman religion there is not that division of state and family, of political virtue and natural affection, found in the Greek religion. Nor are Roman institutions patriarchal as with the Jewish people, where the state can be regarded as an extended family. The individuality capable of both the domestic and the political relation in the division and contrariety of the two, which in the end was discovered among the Greeks, is present in Roman religion and institutions. Though with the Romans family and state are strongly separated, there does not occur between them the conflict of opposed religious principles, of Eumenides and Olympians. There is one principle of both institutions, namely the subjectivity of magistrate and 'paterfamilias'. How state and family are related, the logic of essential collisions between them, cannot be presented within the limits of Greek tragedy.

The *Aeneid* is of all writings the most instructive on the nature of Roman religion and institutions. The poet knows perfectly that his subject, namely the fulfilment of Roman history in the Augustan empire, cannot be treated epically in the manner of Homer without altering profoundly the concept of the gods, of fate or necessity, of the relation of humans to the one and the other. His subject comprises the domestic as well as the state religion of the Romans. A divided epic treatment of private and public life, as in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, would not be possible where the common ground of the two has become explicitly known. There is not only the fatal connection of the two institutions which the Greek tragic poet knows how to reveal, but the root of this fatality in self-conscious

freedom is already discovered, is the principle in Roman institutions. The Roman poet does not have to disclose a self-conscious principle, an unmoved mover, beyond all the finite, but can present a subjectivity for which fate and necessity are not beyond it but occur in the fulfilment of its purposes.

The Roman Jupiter is not Zeus, who is impotent to control the fatal course of human events but must sorrowfully give up cherished purposes. Fate is instead only the form and process of fulfilment of Jupiter's will. He is not to the other gods the first among equals but exercises over them an 'imperium' to which in the end they must bow, even if, as Juno in the poem, they invoke against it all passions, good and evil. The human embodiment of this absolute will is not an Achilles, conscious of the conflict of virtue and mortality, but the triumphant consul or, most completely, Augustus, in whom, after vanquishing his enemies and bringing to an end a century of civil discord, all military and civil power is effectively united. To a contemporary culture, where the λόγος of Christianity is largely contracted either to 'praxis' or to intuitive immediacy, the preparation of it in Roman religion and institutions is not easily grasped. What is there the principal and moving interest is likely now to appear only abhorrent, unnatural and beyond belief. But in Roman authors is expressed the desire to overcome nature and mortality, not abstractly as in Judaism, not theoretically as in Greek religion and philosophy, but in history and external reality.

The labours of Aeneas as those of Heracles are ascribed to the hostility of Juno or Hera. One might look for a similar conclusion to the argument of the *Aeneid* to that of Sophocles' *Trachiniae* or of Euripides' *Hercules Furens*. The differences are very instructive. The former of these Hellenic works ends in the apotheosis of Heracles, his death and divinization being simultaneous.[94] The Heracles of Euripides survives the extreme labours of his descent to Hades, his madness and the murder of his children, to enter painfully at the end into a rational benevolence, where the destructive conflict of virtue and natural individuality is brought to rest.[95] Vergil's hero descends likewise into Hell, but is not on his reascent afflicted with madness. He is rather from that point in himself exempt from Juno's rage. Her continuing hatred works instead through the Latins and their allies. Through Allecto, the spirit of mad unreason, she inspires the Latins to refuse alliance with the Trojans contrary to repeated signs of the divine will.[96] The Latins

94. Sophocles, *Trachiniae*, at the end.
95. Euripides, *Hercules Furens*, 1313-1429.
96. *Aeneid*, VII.

in the poem live still in rustic simplicity. Their religion is of Saturn and other nature gods, not of the free, dominant will which is Jupiter. It is they, and not Aeneas, who are subject to a wild confusion of purpose, where they are unable to acquiesce in the divine right of Aeneas to rule, but must suffer a reduction of their natural will to the point where they know submission to be necessary and liberating.

Aeneas in his wanderings carries the Penates with him.[97] He is not an Odysseus returning home to Penelope, and then also to the ancient Laertes. His wife, by whom he would be attached to Troy, is lost there in the sack of the city. As founder of the Roman race, he is appropriately subject to the authority of his father Anchises, whom he carries from the burning city.[98] The family for him is centered in this paternal relation.

After the death of Anchises in Sicily, Aeneas is not at first capable of the paternal authority which falls to him. He is distracted at Carthage by an alliance with Dido, founded on nature and passion, which obstructs his pious obedience to the plan of Jupiter, that he should found a people able to rule themselves and others by reason and law.[99] Superficially considered, his separation from Dido is like that of Jason from Medea. But in the cold Stoical reason which dismisses Dido there is not calculating ambition, but pious acceptance of a still inarticulate movement to a principle of rational freedom.

In the following book he approaches some way to the knowledge of this principle.[100] In the funeral games on the anniversary of his father's death Aeneas and the Trojan men, honouring the dead hero, are turned to the sources of human authority in Hades. But they are powerless in this relation to restrain the rebellious desire of the Trojan women to end their wanderings, to settle in Sicily. For them, as for Antigone, family piety has its existence among the living in the natural love of women for those closest by blood, a pure devotion of the living to the implicit eternity of the dead. Roman domestic piety should exist rather in a living individuality itself freed from nature. The Trojan women would live in an Hellenic piety in Sicily. This being refused them, they can be instigated by Juno to burn the fleet. In this contest between family piety and political reason there is not mutual destruction but victory for the state.[101] But to consolidate that victory and to know

97. *Aeneid,* II, 717 and elsewhere.
98. *Aeneid,* II, 767 ff.
99. *Aeneid,* VI, 949-54.
100. *Aeneid,* V.
101. *Aeneid,* V, 654 ff.

the principle in which it is grounded Aeneas must make his descent to Hades.

Aeneas learns from Anchises, not what was necessary merely to a homecoming, as did Odysseus from the ghost of Teiresias, nor what was needful towards finding a promised land in Latium, but the whole fatal source of Roman history to Augustus.[102] His journey through the underworld to Anchises among the purged spirits in Elysium prepares him to receive that account. As in a Platonic myth all the corruptions imprinted on the soul by an irrational life are exposed to him, and the purgation of the passions by which some are made capable of a just and benevolent life. Aeneas comes to know the nature of the soul, the opposition of good and evil in it and the 'amor fati'[103] as its primary desire, which moves it to desire to cross over from the living to the kingdom of Dis, and thence, when all passions and beneficient interests have sunk into the pure potentiality of Lethe, to return again to the labours of mortal life. In this knowledge is seen the true sense of the Roman 'patria potestas', the relation through it of the individual to the inner divine principle which sustains the division of reason and sensibility. In the language of the ancient Greek religion Anchises departed would be called a 'hero', protective of the living as Theseus and Oedipus at Athens. But here the nature of the protection is more explicit: Aeneas, having learned fully what is in his piety to the Penates, is thereby made capable of founding the Roman state. For this work is nothing else than to make of Trojans and Latins one people in whom uncorrupted nature and political reason will be united. Family and state have the same end, namely the knowledge that fate, the necessity which, as well in the realm of Dis as in that of Jupiter, ever annuls the division of natural will from reason, — that fate is not alien to human freedom but the process in which it is realized.

The vision of Roman history Aeneas receives from his father is expressed in the language of Stoic pantheism. Returning from that dreamlike inspiration to his political task, he both carries with him and has forgotten that knowledge.[104] It is with him as the end to which in the contingencies of human life he must find his way with the ambiguous guidance of signs and oracles. The end of his labour is to establish a people who will in the fulfilment of their history

102. *Aeneid*, VI.
103. *Aeneid*, VI, 313-4; 745-51.
104. *Aeneid*, VI, 894-900. Aeneas emerges from Hell by the ivory gate, by which pass false dreams. In this way the poet explains how the hero, instructed by his father, is all the same exposed to the uncertainties of empirical knowledge.

realize a benevolent Stoic humanity. Aeneas as founder of the Roman race has to fuse together into one the elements of this people. These are first the passivity of an original garden, an idyllic state, of which the poet had written already in his *Eclogues*. The second element had been the subject of his *Georgics*, an austere life in the laborious agricultural arts, where luxury and an indefinite proliferation of desires were unknown. With these qualities of the Latins is to be combined the ruling will of the Trojans, itself purged from the passions by acceptance of family discipline and adherence to the primary political end. Against the formation of this people, who should not aspire only to a peace, such as the Judaic prophets announce, but should impose peace on the nations, Judaic prophets announce, but should impose peace on the nations, Juno will incite, first, all the evil passions of the soul. The fallen or evil state is the individuality which, involved in its passions, would make itself its end as against this system of utility. As her final weapon will remain the reluctance of the Latins to submit their rustic independence, with its multiplicity of ends, to the political reason which knows the one primary end, the resistance of Saturn to Jupiter Capitolinus.

By these forces Juno animates the Latins and their allies against the Trojans.[105] She incites first among them a wild bacchanalian folly, the beginning of subjective freedom, preventing thus the conclusion of an alliance of Latin and Trojan, which the wise Latinus knows by many sign to be the inevitable will of the gods. This spirit has to be subdued in the Latins before they will be capable of a stable political will, such as they will receive when they are one people with the Trojans. The defeat of the Latins is at the same time their education, a purgation of the passions. After this spirit has been defeated, there remains the deeper and more settled opposition of Turnus, the revolt of nature against the authority of abstract reason.[106] Amata, wife of king Latinus, is unable to follow him to this extreme and kills herself. His ally at the end is his sister Juturna, a nature spirit, between whom there is the same immediate sympathy as Achilles received from Thetis, his divine mother. In the Hellenic religion the Olympian gods wrested sovereignty from the older nature gods, who, if banished to Tartarus, had still their relation to humans in the opposition of natural feeling to reason and political virtue. Saturn and the other primitive nature spirits of the Roman religion will be integrated differently with the higher gods. As in the family so in the state

105. *Aeneid*, VII.
106. *Aeneid*, XI.

religion, nature is to be subjected rigorously to an abstract sovereign reason, to be preserved and given place on that basis.

Likewise the political education of Aeneas and the Trojans is incomplete until they have taken into themselves the powers which Juno directs against them. The Roman hero, returned from the underworld and forgetful of the knowledge there received, might be compared with the Oedipus who was destroyed by his disregard for the instinctive prophetic vision of Teiresias. In the Roman religion this moment of unformed intuitive feeling is present, but firmly under the authority of the magistrate, who can use it for the purposes of state. The poet therefore has Aeneas initiated into this primitive wisdom by the Arcadian Evander settled on the site of the future Rome. Evander knows both this unformed religious sense and a freedom from it in the simplicity of rustic life, where particular human ends are realized and laboriously maintained against the opposing forces of the natural environment. In this life, which Vergil has celebrated in the *Georgics,* there has not emerged a subjectivity which has become its own end and set itself against these particular ends. It is the tendency to this subjectivity — to an individuality which can free itself from the dutiful life of the farmer and the citizen soldier and give itself without scruple to its immediate interests and desires — which Aeneas, like an old Roman aristocrat, must be able to recognize and suppress when it makes its appearance among the people. What Evander has shown him, Aeneas makes his own in the war with the Latins.[107]

In the first part of the war, where the Trojans are beseiged in their camp, Aeneas, thus inwardly prepared by his visit to Evander and allied with him, confronts the blind strength of Dionysiac fury. This subjectivity has its complete embodiment in the sadistic tyrant Mezentius.[108] Aeneas is not, like the Pentheus of Euripides, destroyed by a spirit more concrete than his own. Tyranny was for Plato the extreme point in the corruption of the good polity, where the destruction was complete and a new beginning necessary. At that point a negativity or otherness had appeared which the state could not contain. The Roman state has a greater stability. Against its ends a plebeian individuality, concerned with its everyday interests, has the same impotence as is felt now by a like individuality against an uncontrollable 'technology'. The individual who knows himself more than finite ends is powerless against them, is made the servant of his own creatures. Why this is

107. *Aeneid,* VIII.
108. *Aeneid,* VII; X.

so becomes plain in a further consideration of the Roman state.

In the second part of the war,[109] where the Trojans advance in turn to besiege the Latin capital, Turnus is moved neither by his former Dionysiac unreason nor by any prudential reflections but out of despair. If the Jewish people were promised a land of their own in return for obedience to the one God, in Turnus is expressed the despair of the conquered peoples who had to surrender to the Romans the independent possession of their lands. Aeneas in the final battle is like Achilles who could not rest until he had avenged the death of Patroclus on Hector. But Pallas is not to Aeneas the Patroclus whose friendship Achilles esteemed above his duty to the Greeks. He is the son of Evander, the faithful Arcadian ally, who has wisely submitted to the Trojans. The Olympians found it necessary that Hector should die by the greater virtue of Achilles. The necessity to which Turnus succumbs is the implacable political will of the founder of the Roman race. In contemporary language there is here the relation of an existential subjectivity to the utilitarian objectivity of a Marxist society. The further development of the relation of individual to state among the Romans is therefore peculiarly instructive.

The *Aeneid* celebrates the Augustan principate as a renewal of the golden age. The sense in which this is true, and not rhetorical adulation of an imperial patron, has been indicated. To the Christian, Christ is the second Adam, in whom an original animal life in unbroken unity with nature and human reason in its whole capacity for good and evil are brought together. The Roman poet shows these elements to be more strongly combined in the Roman republic than among other nations: the subjectivity which with Jew and Greek is awakened by the logic of their institutions, and leads beyond them to a higher contemplative life, appears to have a practical satisfaction in Roman institutions. There is here, one might say, a 'praxis' beyond theory. But the limits of the system are already conspicuous in Vergil's account. Aeneas, to be capable of his work, must attain to an independent subjectivity, and Turnus must either come to this same radical independence of all natural attachments or be destroyed. The argument of the *Aeneid* is that the Roman 'res publica' is for this subjectivity a sufficient end, that indeed there cannot be a higher end which might be preferred to it. But in this argument the negativity in this end is neglected, the evil which the individual also experiences in it. The principate itself, which appears to Vergil the perfection of the republic, imposes also a reflection on this negativity. The dominant class in the state are

109. *Aeneid*, XI.

made to feel their impotence, to know the universal practical end of advancing the power of the republic as also their dependence on the whim of an imperial master. In relation to the same end the highest freedom and the deepest debasement and servitude are experienced by the senatorial class in the first century of the principate. The logic of this experience is the same as that of a later time, when humanity and the revolution appeared a sufficient end and was ever found instead to be destructive of personal freedom. What comes to light in this is the inadequacy of external ends, even the most comprehensive, to subjective freedom.

Among the Roman multitude this inadequacy appeared as a disintegration of political and domestic institutions, as a loss of interest in the state and a preoccupation with immediate satisfaction. The nature which had been constrained and brought into the service of the political good was released. Political and domestic virtue appeared abstractions, though there was lacking then the psychology which could designate their rejection as 'liberation'.

This corruption of Roman institutions is to be seen as intrinsic to them. The Roman order appears in the *Aeneid* as resting on a concrete spiritual principle, which can be spoken of in the language of Stoic pantheism. Human freedom in this view is to have its end not in external goods only but in the universal creative λόγος. But there is here the same difficulty as in Marxism and other contemporary forms, that an underlying universal reason in which men would be delivered from alienation, at home in the world, has its realization in the external ends of a practical attitude, in which individuals can find either an abstract, repressed freedom or a limitless pursuit of contingent goods.

Out of this experience was formed in antiquity a criticism and rejection of the practical standpoint as primary. The individual might attempt to find his freedom in Stoicism itself, holding to the principle of the practical attitude and regarding the unreason he met with everywhere in the actual course of life as a foolishness which should not be. One would in this way maintain a positive relation to the practical world. This attitude informs what is best in Roman literature of the silver age. A deeper reflection is found in the Sceptical philosophy, which virtually knows the corruption as a dividedness in the soul itself, as an independence which is also, in all human arts or definite purposes, an incorrigible dependence and alienation.[110] The Sceptic still holds, like the Stoic, to his

110. On the nature of ancient scepticism, Hegel, *Gesch. Phil.*, I, II, D; for its difference from more recent scepticism, D. K. House, unpublished Liverpool thesis on Sextus Empiricus.

abstract freedom, but has in fact exposed this freedom as contradictory and unstable. The same result would be everywhere evident in contemporary 'praxis' but for the residual momentum of an empiricism which can regard its logic as arbitrary without knowing this to be scepticism.

The scepticism of the Roman Empire is to be distinguished from the sophistic which greatly occupied Plato's attention, against which he and, more definitely, Aristotle could show how knowledge of true being was possible. The principle remains the same: a subjectivity conscious of its own infinity, as knowing the distinction of being and not-being related to itself. The scepticism of Protagoras and Gorgias had for its object the language of persuasion, of the assembly and the courts, or else was merely formal and without a determinate object. To this scepticism Plato could oppose a dialectic able to discover in the good an objective principle of the finite. Against Aristotle's science of the finite, which knew the extremes of finite division as united in substance, and therein stabilized, this formal scepticism was of no effect. The later scepticism has power over Aristotelian science for the reason that its principle is implicitly the concrete subjectivity which Aristotle had shown to be the highest genus of substance. The Stoic or Sceptic who places the good in ἀταραξία or tranquillity of mind has freed himself negatively from the alienation of involvement in external ends. He falls short still of what Aristotle knew, that there is an intelligence which is its own end as comprehending the being of its objects and its own division. But, reflecting on its own dividedness and contradiction, and the contradiction of possessing its objects and being lost in their externality, this subjectivity discovers again an ideal world and knows the genera of that world as in its thinking self-consciousness. The nature of the practical Roman spirit only comes to light in the Neoplatonic idealism which can again regard the outer direction of intelligence to a presupposed sensible world as a subordinate attitude. In Judaism the interest of humans in worldly ends belonged to a fallen state, unless it were corrected by obedience to the law and knowledge of the one God beyond finitude and division. In this relation the opposition of good and evil, as of being and not-being, is not seen as intrinsic to human nature but rather as a separation from God which ought not to have been. The restored relation of man to God, as already treated above, entails in this view a negation of difference: human finitude and individuality is without ground in the one God. From the Hellenic religion and the philosophical theology which developed out of it was derived a knowledge of God as comprehending

division, and of man as related to God through the difference and unity of his sensuous and rational being. In this result, one might say, the restoration of the fall is not abstract but inclusive of human individuality. In Roman religion and institutions this concrete attitude, in which the older Hellenic religion and philosophy terminate, would be realized practically. But this practicality appears in the end as the way in which an implicitly concrete subjectivity comes to itself, overcoming both the negativity of external ends and its own dividedness. Fall and return, good and evil, appear thus as not external but rather as constitutive of a concrete nature. It can be said therefore that in the Roman religion the preparation for the Christian religion is complete.

2. *The Kingdom of God*

The scepticism in which the Roman religion ends, if negatively it is an alienation from the world of finite interests in which this religion has its reality, is also the possibility of a spiritual relation of man and God in which their difference will be contained. In the Judaic religion there was the knowledge that the true relation of man to God was beyond the finite, in the knowledge of the one transcendent God. The Hellenic religion sought a finite unity of human and divine, and came at the end to a purified spirituality in which the natural and finite was comprehended. The Roman religion was a conflict of this infinite spirituality with a universal worldly end, where finally this end appeared as a pure negativity, as the separation of purposive activity, the relation of purpose, means and realized end from all content. Out of this purgation appears then as the underlying truth of this religion the infinite spiritual relation which is its own end.

This result may be taken, as in Neoplatonism, as the immediate, intuitive relation of the self-consciousness which has freed itself from finite distinctions to the One, this known negatively as beyond division and finitude. But in Judaism there was already present a knowledge of God as thus beyond all finitude, and of a separation of man from this transcendent One. In relation to the Judaic God, this self-consciousness has not to overcome its own dividedness but its separation from God. The negation of division has the objective form of a development of the one God to the concept of God as concrete subjectivity.

The creativity of this principle is not, as in Stoicism, of a world whose finite content is ever lost in the process of its return to the creative principle. Nor again is God the initiator of a world where the creature dissolves in the face of its transcendent creator. The creature is instead the manifestation of the creator, in that division

and finitude is a moment of its triune form. The creature is thus not exposed as a nullity only to a sceptical thought, but is the object of a thinking which knows it as true, as disclosing truly its idea or concept.

Man in relation to this principle is neither divided from what he knows as his true end nor does he seek it in the immanence of practical activity. His finitude and need is rather a difference in which his infinite good appears, an otherness which is not for itself but manifests its origin without dissolution into it. The developed concept of God in this new religion is as the Trinity, as a thinking which knows the λόγος by which it creates as equal with itself in its absolute difference. The true relation of man to this principle is through a thinking which knows it as the origin and end in which human finitude subsists.

That God was revealed in Christ has no meaning within the original Judaism, since the one God is not such as to be revealed in any creature. In Neoplatonism knowledge of the One is mediated by the universal procession and return. There is a spiritual relation of human and divine, but at the point where division is transcended and passes into intuitive unity. In the Christian religion the mediation is not thus evanescent, but division and difference belong to the spiritual relation itself. This doctrine can be seen by Christians as the fulfillment of Judaism and found implicitly in the Old Testament. There the fall of man from an original animal perfection is related, but, as also in the Roman religion, is thought to be corrected by submission to a law, by establishing the difference of a good and an evil will. As against this abstract correction Christ is for Christians the second Adam, in whom the division between the law and the natural will is comprehended. The law is to be fulfilled, and not replaced by the unreason of an immediate individuality. As in the Aristotelian psychology, man is at once an immediate, sensuous individual and universal; these moments, taken separately, are abstractions. As one with himself in the radical division of nature and thought, Christ is the full and adequate revelation of the God who is neither simple unity only beyond division nor limited by any presupposed being, but knows all that is different from him as himself.

This religion is announced as the Kingdom of God. It does not exist humanly as the political reason of the Roman state, nor as a Jewish theocracy, as the authority of a law which should be antecedent to human reason. Nor, again, is the Kingdom of God thought to be revealed in an anarchic will, which holds to earth and nature against abstract thought. The ruler appropriate to that attitude is the 'Fuhrer' or 'charismatic' individual. The divine

government spoken of in the Gospels is rather the relation of the individual collected out of division to concrete unity to the Trinitarian God known as the principle of this concrete individuality. In this relation all institutions and human authorities become a matter of indifference, since they pertain to those to whom power, wealth and other external goods are a care, as having independent being.

The proof of this divine kingdom could not be in words only, or in the thought only of the philosopher who knew what was true in Hellenic polytheism, but in the life and death of Christ. For thus the negativity and evil of human life, at the extreme the separation of man from God, and the negation of this separation, the concept of the Kingdom of God, could have the form of fact, of immediate, empirical proof. The factual proof is proof only for those who knew its mediation in the teaching of Christ: it is for the Apostles proof of what they received in the universality of language. That word and fact together express the unity of the concept, the truth of the teaching, is the knowledge of Christ which had absolute authority for the Apostles and through them for the Church. The Church knows the life and death of Christ only by report and on the authority of the Apostles. The externality and incorrigible uncertainty of this knowledge of fact it completes by presenting to the community of believers the total doctrine of the God whose concept is to be revealable adequately in the man who is the universal λόγος, who dies and is risen, whose unity with the Father the Church participates as the Spirit which brings it to its true nature.

The ancient Church knew no institutions other than itself which could be called Christian in more than an ancillary sense. But this ancillary relation was not easily discovered with the institutions which most nearly occupied the same ground as itself, namely the universal empire, whose λόγος also was thought to exist in one man. The Church might be indifferent to political ends or might apologetically commend the virtue of its members to the state. The state might persecute or tolerate the Church. It was evident after some centuries that the practical and political virtue of the Roman state was not alien to the Church, but a human reason requiring to be completed by an ampler Christian reason. The state could in turn find support from the Church, such as neither the merely practical spirit of its official religion would afford nor the many religions of the nations, which were not capable of a secular political will. In this Augustinian solution, as it may be called, the illusion is dispelled that the Church can maintain another and purer virtue than the world. The 'civitas Dei' and the 'civitas

terrena' are inextricably involved with each other. But it lies in the concept of Christianity that this separation of an ancillary human reason and work from the divine work could not persist. The 'civitas Dei' and the 'civitas terrena', if they stand in this external relation, must the one draw to itself the primary interest of Christians, the other corrupt the Church and draw it again into the realm of finite ends against which it was originally constituted. Partly the desire to be free of this division had its satisfaction in a monastic life, where worldly interests could be renounced at their root by giving up family, the competitive work in useful pursuits, the illusions of personal freedom. But participation in the Christian good through this ideal life must be abstract. There was lacking to it what the Christian knew to have been realized in the life and death or Christ: external immediacy, need, the evils of the fall, were not there rejected but revealed as one substance with the universal.

To the Church the formation of a secular life which would be neither ancillary to it nor abstract has ever been difficult to understand and accept. But the moving cause of a Christian secularity is in the Christian belief itself, the desire of an 'intellectus fidei', not theoretic only but also active. The root of this desire is in the difference between the revelation itself, the divine idea in its absolute concreteness, and the representation of it in language and image, in the participation in it sacramentally. The 'intellectus fidei' seeks an assurance which would not be historical only, not in sacramental reconciliation only, to which is opposed the experience of common life. Christianity was revealable originally in the completion of an historical mediation, where it could be known as actual, in the unity of thought and external reality, in 'the Word made flesh'. Word, image and sacrament are the likeness of an original, which they may truly express, but not give certain knowledge of it.

What then are Christian institutions? It must remain for another occasion to give more than the general concept of them, as this emerges from the whole argument. Family, economic society, state can be thought Christian so far as they have a spiritual form, have their end not in external goods themselves, but in these as the appearance of an idea or concept. One will thus say that when the ideality of monastic life loses its abstractness and becomes the end and moving form in those goods which the monk renounces, then there is a beginning of Christian institutions. 'Civitas Dei' and 'civitas terrena' begin to have a common Christian end when an emperor directs all orders

Ut pax sit et concordia et unanimitas cum omni populo

> Christiano, inter episcopos, abbates, comites, iudices, et omnes ubique seu maiores, seu minores personas; quia nihil Deo sine pace placet, nec munus sanctae oblationis ad altare, sicut in evangelio ipso Domino praecipiente legimus . . . Diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum . . . In hoc enim praecepto discernuntur filii Dei et filii diaboli; quia filii diaboli semper dissensiones et discordias movere satagunt; filii autem Dei semper paci et dilectioni student. (Caroli Magni Capitulare Ecclesiasticum, Anno 789. *M.G.H. Leges*, I, p. 63)

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(Part 2: The History of Christian Institutions will appear in a subsequent number of 'Dionysius')