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HUMAN REASON AND THE DYNAMIC OF GRACE
A STUDY IN RELIGIOUS EPISTOMOLOGY

by

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PREFACE

The 19th century bore witness to the alleged "frontal attack" of Charles Darwin upon the structures of traditional religiosity. Darwin's theses, as they are recorded for us by Ian G. Barbour in his study ISSUES IN SCIENCE AND RELIGION, were seen to be especially dangerous to the nervous system of an organized Protestantism which was still in the process of salving wounds received in the numerous rationalistic-orthodox-evangelical-pietistic-revivalistic conflicts. These theses, in brief, propound an inherent importance in change---thus being critical of any argument from design; state an organic interdependence of all components in nature (including man!)---thereby striking a blow against the notion of a peculiar human dignity; assert a rule of law to all areas of nature which confronts the church squarely with the problem of what Ian Barbour calls "evolutionary ethics"; finally concluding with the contention that the cipher "nature" includes Man and his culture as well as the birds, and the bees, and the sycamore trees.¹

The purpose of this paper emphatically will not be to analyze Darwinian theory nor will it deal with the character of Charles Darwin. It will attempt instead to show that the so-called "Darwinian Revolution", understood in the prospective of the broad compass of the development of theological doctrine, has provided and may still provide healthy

1. Ian G. Barbour, Issues in Science and Religion (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc. 1966), pp.84-96.

dialogue for Christian Apologetics as have similar "thought revolutions" in the past.

To provide a basis for argument, one may allude to the area of Old Testament theology. As the Yahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomic and Priestly "writer-theologians" were once thought to be chronologically consecutive and reflecting a progressively more refined conception of God and his intercourse with Man, each receiving almost universal acceptance during the time of its predominance, are now, especially since the work of Artur Weiser, considered by the majority of scholars as being virtually concurrent --- each representative of different kinds of tradition which had come together in what Weiser calls the "Israelite Cultural Sphere" as the result (in Weiser's words) "of the different tribes and sections of the population in Palestine joining to form the sacral union of Israel, the people of God".² Just as these several doctrinal-historical-literary strands reflect a particular response or address to a specific situation peculiar to the context of pre-covenantal tribal life, so may the development of doctrine be seen and appreciated on the basis of its own integrity as it responds contextually to a historical situation or prevailing intellectual climate wielding sufficient influence to demand re-assessment, re-evaluation, and refinement.

2. Artur Weiser, The Old Testament: Its Formation and Development (New York: Association Press, 1957), pp.90-91

Firmly convinced that doctrinal development was a process far more complex than the simple stereotype of medieval Catholic accretion and perversion and Protestant repristination, the writer will attempt to show that concurrent tendencies were and are indeed still present in the Church of Christ. As a prolegomenon to his treatment of "Metaphysical Determinism", he simply defers to Noah Webster in declaring the latter half of this designation to mean "the doctrine that everything (including Man) is entirely determined by a sequence of causes" (which may compass a variety of possibilities ranging from the fiat of God, whether it be considered arbitrary or benevolent, to the fiat of an inalterable order which sweeps man along in its tide of evolutionary development), while the former is understood in an equally traditional manner as "the branch of philosophy that deals with first principles and seeks to explain the nature of being or reality (ontology) and the origin and structure of the world (cosmology)".

The term "Metaphysical Determinism" may well raise a question of subtle redundancy. Does not the term "metaphysical" imply determination by dealing with the nature of being or reality while "determinism" supposes a prior cause to a present event? Apart from its erudition, "metaphysical Determinism" is a justifiable and sensible verbal construction if two considerations are presupposed:

First -- That Man sees himself as a "metaphysical" creature who has not simply been thrust out into the physical

world to exist for his allotted three score and ten years only to be confronted with annihilation but is a participant in a drama which may be traceable to a first principle or series of first principles in which his immediate involvement is as necessary as a counter statement to the total symphonic poem.

Secondly --- That Man sees his "determinism" (from without) not as predetermination which has the effect of reducing life to passive acceptance of certain inexorable prior causes thereby truncating human volition to utter impotency but as his destiny (not simply in terms of finis but in the dynamic of telos as well).

"Metaphysical Determinism" taken as a synthesis, may then be defined as Man coming to grips with the "where from - what now - where to" of his existence without falling prey to a metaphysics of pure speculation by affirming his creatureliness -- yet guarding, at the same time, against a rigid determinism by asserting that this creature still has a unique potential to transcend himself and conjecture concerning his beginning, present existence, and his fulfillment and end.

The thesis of this study states that just such a sense of "metaphysical determinism" was present in a variety of concurrent theological expressions involving the dynamic of reason and grace and was present as well in formulations as early as the primitive period of the Christian Church (which, paranthetically, sees the metaphysical first principle as a transcendent Creator -- God, and determinism as the conformation of human will to the will of God) and were refined and

nourished throughout the entire history of the development of doctrine. If one gives due cognizance to the fact such concurrent tendencies were indeed present and influential and that no one theological expression was ever fully accepted as the coin of the realm, such diverse expressions as fatalism, mysticism, nominalism, rationalism, and Darwinism may well be understood as occasions involving the pivotal question of "metaphysical determinism" from which can still emerge a deeper and more significant Christian apology. Should this be realized, all these expressions would no longer be subsumed under the same category as was Darwinism in the preceding century, and cease being likened to the Moorish invasion as potential fatal thrusts to the life and existence of the Church!

CHAPTER I: THE PATRISTIC PERIOD

"For consider, what have the philosopher, the writer and the critic of this world to show for all their wisdom? Has not God made the wisdom of this world look foolish? For it was after the world in its wisdom had failed to know God, that he in his wisdom chose to save all who would believe by the "simplemindedness" of the gospel message. For the Jews ask for miraculous proofs and the Greeks an intellectual panacea, but all we preach is Christ crucified -- a stumbling block to the Jews and sheer nonsense to the gentiles, but for those who are called, whether Jews or Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. And this is really only natural, for God's "foolishness" is wiser than men, and his "weakness" is stronger than men."

I Corinthians 1:19-25
(J. B. Phillips translation)

Rabbi Howard Singer, writing in the January 28, 1967 edition of the Saturday Evening Post on the very provocative subject "Don't Try to Sell Me Your Religion" has thrust a disarmingly honest prick at certain frothy ecumenical bubbles by declaring Judeo-Christian dialogue to be "farcial" and "subtly demeaning" on the ground that "Christianity borrowed at least as much from the Greeks and Romans as it did from the Jews". Behind this rather argumentative cast, the Rabbi is simply stating the truism that the Greek and the Hebrew were residents of two significantly different thought-worlds ---worlds of thought which often shared the same vocabulary yet infusing radically different meanings within similar or identical words.

The English exegete F. F. Bruce summarizes just this

difficulty quite lucidly in two brief word studies on pivotal New Testament terms. Bruce declares the two principal terms vital to the understanding of the relation of Christ to God are "SON" and "WORD" --- he is known both as the "Son" of God and the "Word" of God. The crux of the problem is that this terminology is taken from its Hebraic-Biblical context and undergoes considerable modification when it becomes meaningful currency in the Greek thought-world. The word "Son", in addition to its literal sense of a filial (biological-hereditary) relation, has for the Hebrew a sense of what Bruce calls "moral kinship". To substantiate this assertion Bruce says that Jesus himself used "Son" in just such a context by saying, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called Sons of God" --- reproducing within themselves the character of God.¹ Though it would not be germane at this point to develop an excursus on the expression "Son of God", let us deem it sufficient to say that while many scholars would see an incipient "supernaturalism" in this term as it evolved in the context of the Hebrew mentality, they would be extremely hesitant to see any metaphysical declarations inherent within them.²

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1. F. F. Bruce, The Growing Day (London: The Paternoster Press, 1951), pp. 119-120.
 2. Especially helpful at this point are the articles "Son of God" and "Son of Man" in the Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, V. IV.

The Greeks (and the Romans who emulated them) were inflicted with a "fatal" propensity to philosophize. A notion of a "moral kinship" to a deity was ludicrous to the educated Greek! Even with an elaborate cultural mythology whose personified heroes and villains were quartered in the rarified air of Mount Olympus, a pervasive fatalism dominated the intellectual milieu. No less than Seneca, a Roman imbued with the Greek mentality, said "Fate guides us, and it was settled at the first hour of birth what length of time remains for each. Cause is linked with cause (determinism) and therefore everything should be endured with fortitude. Long ago it was determined what would make you rejoice and what would make you weep --- although the great creator and ruler of the universe himself wrote the decrees of fate, yet he follows them. He obeys forever, he decreed but once."³ Pliny the elder states this even more succinctly when he says "we are so much at the mercy of fate that fate herself, by whom God is proved uncertain, takes the place of God."⁴ Far from the freshman philosophy class stereotype of trying to determine how imperfect a copy the professor's desk is to its archetype in the world of "forms", the erudite Greek was impelled to

3. Seneca, de Providentia 5, 7f. as cited in Rudolf Bultmann, Primitive Christianity (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), p. 149.

4. Pliny, op.cit., Natural History II, 22.

philosophize for far more substantial reasons. Philosophy was for the Greek a study in self-identity and, above all, the reconciliation of the individual with his finite destiny, the equation of which was considered to be wisdom (a point to which we will return in greater detail). When reason experiences a failure of nerve and ceases to be schoolmaster of the will, "evil" is concomitant because it represents a regression to a lesser state of enlightenment, a state at which Man had still not accepted his determinate end. Thus we see the urgency of the philosophical enterprise. Philosophy refines and develops the reason, and the "reason, perceiving what is best, communicates its insight to the will, and the will automatically obeys its promptings".⁵

The Greek, soured and disenchanted by "orthodox" fatalism (to which even Plato and Aristotle succumbed in the estimate of Gilson⁶) and receptive to the kerygmatic preaching because of his sojourn into the mystery religions would give them his own characteristic response to the declaration that Jesus was *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ*. While the Hebrew sought an almost supernatural "man on horseback" to rout the Romans from the promised land and were more interested in pragmatic activity than the nature and character of the one on the

5. Rudolf Bultmann, Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting (New York: Meridian Books 1956), pp. 180-182.

6. Etienne Gilson, Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1938), pp. 6-7.

horse, the Greek, predisposed the philosophy, immediately asked the question "how"? Here a decided metaphysical (instead of moral) emphasis was apparent. "In what sense", the Greeks ask according to Bruce, "did Jesus derive his being from God?"⁷

The term "word" produced a similar difficulty because of the subtle yet decisive nuance of meaning held by the Greek and Hebrew thought-worlds. In Hebrew thought "Word of God" denoted divine activity. Thus Bruce says that it is entirely possible for the Hebraic mentality to declare Jesus to be the "Word of God" because it is to say "that in him God is uniquely and self-revealingly active whether in creation or in redemption."⁸ The Greek, however, had already used the term "word" (logos) in a decidedly different context. "Logos" or "word" denoted the divine principle of reason or order immanent in the universe, (The notion of immanence makes the logos principle readily consistent with our previous discussion of fatalism) from which the newly converted or inquiring Greek or Greek-Jew ("god-fearers")⁹ could equate the metaphysically defined pre-existent Christ.

7. Bruce, op.cit., p. 120.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., pp. 120-121.

We may readily appreciate Paul's words in his first letter to the church at Corinth when he assesses the monumental task of making an apology to the world around him. "The Jews ask for miraculous proofs", and/^acharismatic military leader-miracle worker with the aplumb of a Moses and the muscles of a Joshua, "and the Greeks an intellectual panacea" --- a philosophy which would make sense out of the fatalistic non-sense they see about them. The skillful apologist utilizes the thoughts, concerns, attitudes, and fears of the audience who will give him ear. Saul of Tarsus, the former Jewish exclusivist who had the unique benefit of being reared in a fertile Greek environment, seeing the synagogue doors closed to him, turned to those ears who would hear. The rest of the tale is commentary.

There are still a number of well-meaning souls who fervently attempt to reprimatinate in our time a thoroughgoing Biblical theology; free of the cancer of philosophical speculation and terminology. They are to be commended for their fervor if for nothing else because nothing could be further from the truth. Just as many held to the cherished belief that the Koine Greek must assuredly be language from heaven because it was so radically different from the classical language --- only to have their claim rather rudely dispelled when an excavation team found a first century grocery list written in the same "heavenly" speech, so must these Biblical ingenues admit to the fact that variant philosophies and

theologies are indeed present in the New Testament documents and their proto-sources as well before even a feeble attempt at understanding can even begin.

By the time Paul confronted the Gentiles with the proclamation of the gospel, impersonal "fate" had long been personified into the *τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου* of Galatians 4, principally through the pre-Christian phenomenon of Gnosticism which persists in its own peculiar shapes and expressions to our present day.¹⁰ Even Paul cannot but help to be imbued with the speculative religious vocabulary of the world to which he ministered. As they usurped Old Testament traditions and applied them to their own formulations, the Gnostic ~~was~~ Man's situation in the world "as a bondage to the hostile cosmic powers, as a fate brought upon him by the fall of the archtypal man."¹¹ Paul himself uses such an idiom in I Corinthians 15:47ff when he speaks of an "earthly man" and a "heavenly man". No one would deny the effect these thoughts, decidedly Greek in origin, had upon the statement of Christian belief. The notion that matter was inherently evil while the spirit was inherently pure, caused the Greeks to stumble when they even attempted to envision how a God, who by definition was remote from the material world, could function as he was purported to do in the Kerygma. The Asiatic body of ideas called "Orphism" which had been assimilated into Greek thinking, made

10. Bultmann, p. 190.

11. Ibid., p. 191.

it virtually impossible to conceive of the human body and the material world in general as little more than a prison-house.¹² One need only conjecture the effect such a mentality had on the fertile formulations of the Gnostics, and the Docetists who held a more respectable place on the fringe of the orthodox family.

Yet, by the same token, the Hebraic assessment that the material creation, issuing from the hand of an immanent-transcendent creator, was by its very nature good, created no insurmountable obstacle to the declaration that the Divine Word¹³ became flesh. However, the traditional notion of moral kinship (without the effective complement of understanding the full import of the metaphysical implications which were attendant to it) resulted in Adoptionism and Ebionism in which the man Jesus is taken into an exalted "moral-kinship" relationship with the Father in an albeit subordinate position.

Once the growing severance between the Jewish and Christian communities had become final and complete, the progeny of the apostles directed the bulk of their activity to the formulation of a Christian Apologetic. Such an enterprise, according to Adolf von Harnack, had to be sensitive to a variety of conditions. They are, among others:

1. Historical continuity with the Old Testament witness
2. The Universalism of the Christian revelation

12. Bruce, pp. 121-122.

13. Ibid.

3. Rejection of Gnostic schematics
4. A Desire to present Christianity to the educated as the highest and surest philosophy.
5. An attempt to make Christianity rational and giving it a form which appealed to the common sense of all earnest, thinking and reasoning¹⁴ men of the times.

The Gnostic heresy found a staunch opponent in the figure of Tertullian. Yet even in his attempt to repudiate the Gnostic superstructure and affirm an anti-gnostic "regula fidei", he was forced to find recourse in the stoicism from which he had¹⁵ come. Gilson, in his work to which we have previously referred, has developed what he calls "the Tertullian family", having the fellow by the same name as its spiritual father. "In spite of their personal differences", says Gilson, "the species itself is easily recognizable". These points of identification are, among others, a selective reading of St. Paul, a condemnation of Greek philosophy and the absolute dichotomy between religious faith and reason in matters pertaining to¹⁶ revelation. Although he discreetly avoids divulging names, he intimates rather broadly that a man of the ilk of Karl¹⁷ Barth is firmly within this family structure. However,

14. Adolf von Harnack, Outlines of the History of Dogma (Boston: Sar King Press, 1893), p. 117.

15. Adolf von Harnack, History of Dogma, Vol.IV and Vol.V (New York: Dover Publications, 1961), pp. 196ff.

16. Gilson, pp. 10-11.

17. Ibid., p. 8.

the same patristic period bore witness to a man named Clement of Alexandria who, while not having the distinction of having a family named in his honor, dubious as this may be, complimented Tertullian by clearly not finding "philosophy to be the foolishness of the world" but rather as "a gift from God, a means of educating the pagan world for Christ as the Jew's means of education had been the law."¹⁸ Once again, just as Paul's ostracism from the synagogue community, as was the case with the primitive evangelists, permanently altered the idiom and thrust of the Kerygma, the attitude of Clement prevailing over that of Tertullian determined the nature of theological interrogation for the thousand years to follow.

As we, in summary, are mindful of our integrating principle of "metaphysical determinism" while being cognizant at the same time that the characteristic New Testament language idioms and thought patterns did not simply issue forth from the old Testament but underwent subtle modification and, in some cases, radical reinterpretation, we may attempt to contrast the Hebraic and Greek mentalities in light of our pivotal principle. If one were asked to interpret the Hebrew mentality within the context of "metaphysical determinism" his assessment might include certain definite considerations. The primitive Hebraic world view may be considered a-metaphysical in a somewhat narrow sense because personal existence is terminated in death, yet, in a very real way, it is solidly metaphysical

18. Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy - Vol.I
(New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958), pp.276-277.

insofar as it sees itself vitally and intimately related to the transcendent first cause. It also has left its permanent mark on the Christian proclamation within its constant dramatic parable of a gracious God and an ungrateful people. The dynamic of choice associated with the Hebrew was to become crucial to the Kerygma which then addressed itself to the disenchanted pagan. Were we to enumerate perversions for which the Hebrew would be held accountable, the one which would be paramount would be that of peculiarity, the rebellion against any form of universalism by dogmatically contending that God is our Father to the exclusion of all else.

The Greek world view with its fatalistic determinism proved to be fertile soil for the Kerygma because it shows within it the opportunity to master the fates by their incorporation into the metaphysical figure who was at the focus of the proclamation. The monumental alteration the Greek thought-world underwent was accepting the discovery that God is not indifferent but can be empathetical and compassionate without compromising his holiness and transcendence. Their shortcoming lay in their pervasive willingness to subject God to sterile categorization instead of plumbing the full implications of his personal address.

An analysis of "metaphysical determinism" in the patristic era, could issue forth in nothing save a paradox --- a paradox of freedom, especially in the Pauline sense, in which the

person to whom the good news is given experiences his greatest sense of freedom (from a fatalistic determination) when he makes himself transparent to that which God deposes that he do. Where the Greek, or, for that matter, Gnostic expositions heavily emphasize a flight from the material world, the Christian proclamation, reflecting the Hebraic soil in which its roots are imbedded, affirms the goodness of the material creation. While the Greek mentality constantly speaks in terms of dualism whereby the spiritual principle resident within the body is warned not to capitulate to the material-evil world,¹⁹ the Christian declares that the world becomes "evil" only insofar as Man attaches himself to the mutable good, attempting to attain life by his own efforts, until he, in Bultmann's words "becomes....²⁰ a victim of transitory reality". For, in the final analysis, the Christian sees no cosmological dualism of good and evil. This will be of decisive importance in future formulations of the nature of "sin". The material world does not extend its bailing hooks and attempt to ensnare him and drag him to his doom but affords instead the opportunity for him to express the vicegerency God always intended him to have.

19. Bruce, p. 122.

20. Bultmann, pp. 192-193.

CHAPTER II: THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

When Augustine, who may be colloquially called the first theological "giant" of the medieval period, entered into the arena of apologetics, it became abundantly clear that the attitude of Clement would prevail. Yet, it should be admitted with the same abundant clarity that the motives underwriting the apologetic task, as a result of pressures from without, experienced a revision of principle which was at once slow and deliberate while being historically inexorable at the same time.

The apologetic endeavor directed to the non-Hebraic world developed a means of expression which adhered like a chrysalis to the primitive preaching. While its function may have been salutary in the beginning, we shall see that it gradually became a peculiar stumbling block when it caused men to quarrel over its external structure while they forgot that a vibrant life was enclosed within it. As this first pressure was basically internal and self-engendered for purposes of comprehensibility, a second pressure, external by contrast, played just as determinate a role in altering the Christian apology. This "pressure", very simply, was the political transformation of the Christian Church from a clandestine sect to the "RELIGIO LICITA". A raging debate could be undertaken over whether this constituted a "pressure" or a lack of pressure, justifiable recognition or a failure of nerve. In any case, the apology ceased, for all intensive purposes, to fervently

justify its existence and settled down to the rather comfortable task of defining and refining its mode of expression. We, by no means, assert that the only thing remaining for the church to do was to engage in some mild tea party polemics for nothing could be further from the truth. We do, however, see a vast difference between a struggle for acceptance, and, in some cases, survival in an alien environment and a "family quarrel", vitriolic as it may be, in which the orthodox segment has its predominance challenged periodically by a somewhat more enthusiastic second cousin. Yet, as in the case of the "first pressure", this too was salutary insofar as it produced greater depth of understanding by challenging the accepted formulation and thereby causing it to be more exhaustively defined or re-defined.

The system of Augustine, at first glance, seems to follow the spirit of Tertullian as opposed to that of Clement for it is clearly, to borrow Windleband's phrase, "a metaphysic of inner experience". Windleband equates this expression, which he feels typifies the Augustinian position and has "beatitudo" as its goal, with the "socratic postulate that the possession of truth is requisite for happiness."¹ This sounds more than vaguely reminiscent of the urgency of philosophy for the classical Greeks. Ian Barbour equates the foundation of the

1. Wilhelm Windelband, A History of Philosophy - Vol. I
(New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958), pp. 276-277.

medieval tradition (of which Augustine may be considered a pillar) with the Platonic and Aristotelian emphases with the notion "that there must be a reason (Barbour never clearly elucidates the meaning of "reason" in this context) if the world is not irrational".² It would be tempting to align Augustine's motivations, as does Windleband, with those of the classical philosophers who attempt to answer the "where from-what now-where to" of their metaphysical determinism, and to generalize them, as does Barbour, into those factors which are supposed to be constitutive of the medieval milieu. If such be the case, the only thing separating the figure of Augustine from those of his precursors would be the expansion of the transcendent "first cause" concept, because of a legitimate Hebraic influence on the Christian community, to include fatherhood and filial relationship. This would then mean that little or no change has been effected in methodology (as some vocal critics of the medieval thought-world are jealous to emphasize)^{2a} and, at best, only a nominal change was undertaken in the area of sentiment and terminology.

It would then be extremely interesting to compare this mentality with the position of a scholar of no less repute than Etienne Gilson who goes so far as to see Augustine as the pivotal figure of a second unique family in the history of Christian thought. Gilson reminds us how Augustine, in his

2. Barbour, op.cit, pp.17-18.

2a. A. Wolf, A History of Science, Tech. & Philo.

Confessions had failed to reach truth and faith by reason alone and how he arrived at the monumental discovery "that all the rational truth about God that had been taught by the philosophers could be grasped at once, pure of all errors, and enriched with many a more than philosophical truth by the simple act of faith of the most illiterate among the faithful"³. This expression has within itself the curious distinction of sounding like both Thomas and Luther --- as well it might! Gilson continues, saying "from that time on, Augustine was never to forget that the safest way to reach truth is not the one that starts from reason and then goes on from rational certitude to faith, but, on the contrary, the way whose starting point is faith and then goes on from revelation to reason"⁴.

The mysteries and the marvels of the human spirit pervades the thought and piety of Augustine. Although, as Reinhold Niebuhr rightly points out, Augustine's statements "are not derived solely from the insights of the Christian religion. They are so remarkable because he was able to exploit what mysticism and Christianity, at their best have in common."⁵ Man, in feeling his "inadequacy (a sense of rigid determinism) reaches out",

3. Gilson, op.cit, pp. 16-17.

4. Ibid.

5. Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man - Vol. I (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1941,), p. 157.

in Copleston's paraphrase, "to an object greater than himself,
an object which can bring peace and happiness"⁶ --- the know-
ledge of which leads to beatitude. What prevented Augustine
from postulating that which would be tantamount to a nirvana
concept was his ability to perceive this as having a linear
quality --- an ongoing search for this beatitude --- never
fully realizing it this side of eternity (which in itself pro-
vides a point of demarcation with classical fatalism-engendered
philosophy). The human mind for Augustine is man's singular
badge of his uniqueness --- so unique in fact that he virtually
equates the human mind with the Imago Dei.⁷ One would be in
difficult straits to find a figure in whose thought the "where
from-what now-where to" of metaphysical determinism is more
exhaustively treated than Augustine. Memory, he asserts, is
a paramount function of Man's unique ability for self-trans-
cendence.⁸ The only factor which saves Augustine from a
Platonic mysticism is the abiding belief that human life points
beyond itself yet cannot convert itself into that "beyond"
because this equation epitomizes the very nature of "sin".⁹

6. Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy - Vol. 2
(New York: Image Books, 1962), p. 66.

7. Augustine, "Detriniate XIV,4,6." as quoted in
Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man - Vol.I
op.cit., p. 155. ✓

8. Niebuhr, p. 156.

9. Ibid., p. 158.

In light of the Pelagian controversy, which precipitated certain definite questions concerning the role of the human reason in the salvatory process, Augustine portrayed man's metaphysical drama as wholly within the grace of God. Grace, according to Augustine, is *praevenient* (having the power to withdraw man from his sinful condition), cooperative (which alone renders man capable of earning merit and, above all, irresistible). The result of this process then is "justification" --- the transition of the sinner from the impious to the pious state as a result of grace coupled with merit.¹⁰ It is curious to see Augustine placing the initiative strictly in the divine dimension (consonant with later Reformation tradition) while at the same time laying the foundations of what will become the normative Roman Catholic position of justification (grace coupled with merit).

Since the system of Augustine was, in great measure, one of reaction to heretical (non-orthodox) tendencies within that specific historical period, his concept of nature reflects his reaction against the Manicheans to whom he had previously belonged who were characterized mainly by their dualistic world outlook. In order to assert the supremacy and singularity of God, and emphatically avoid the postulation of a dualistic schema, he described evil as "privation" (which Copleston attributes to the Neo-Platonic Plätinus¹¹ --- but which is in concord with the New Testament in rejecting an absolute dualism)

10. History of Dogma-Vol. IV and V, op. cit., pp. 205-209.

11. Copleston, p. 100.

which later became normative for scholastic philosophy as a whole.

The most conspicuous debt Augustine owes to Platonic and Neo-Platonic formulation, however, is inextricably bound up within his principle of self-transcendence. How may the human mind which in itself is temporal affix itself to the eternal? Augustine retorts with his doctrine of illumination. Because of the fact that the human mind is changeable and temporal and the eternal, must by definition, transcend it --- therefore, the only way the mind is capable of apprehending what it is, is through the assistance of an outside source.¹² What Thomas was later to consider an aspect of simply God's creating and conserving activity, Augustine deems to be a separate and unique function of God in his gratuitous action to man whereby he transcends sense experience and perceives eternal truths under the action of a Being who alone is necessary, changeless and eternal.¹³

Due to the fact that this paper purports to be no more than a historical survey to substantiate a central argument, the second major figure to be considered in this chapter is St. Anselm of Canterbury. Anselm provides intriguing material for study because of his fidelity to the Augustinian tradition and his captivating proof for the existence of God which defies a contradiction little short of logical positivism. Firmly within the tradition of Augustinian internalism, Anselm advanced his famous proof of God's existence as that which affirms " God is

12. Ibid., pp. 78-79.

13. Ibid., pp. 81-82.

than which no greater can be thought". This argument was then severely attacked by a Monk named Gaunilo, who contended that an idea does not presuppose extramental existence and that Anselm had made an illicit transition from the logical to the real order. To this objection Anselm tendered the reply that God being absolute perfection must exist by necessity.¹⁴ Anselm in no way depreciates that which can be known sensibly, as Augustine would agree that eternal knowledge is perceptible through experience,¹⁵ but contends that eternal truth is only knowable through its cause --- God. Therefore, an idealism of the Platonic variety persists though Anselm was, at the same time, instrumental in laying the basis for the realism of a rediscovered Aristotle and a Thomas.

Brevity once again permits us to take a leap of some two hundred years in order that we may round out our picture of the medieval period by considering Thomas and Bonaventure - its two culminating figures. The Epistemology of Thomas is thoroughly realistic in character. In contrast to Platonic epistemology (exerting a decided influence on Augustine and later Bonaventure) affirming the priority of thought and the facility of thought to engage in extension and which, finally, most posit a first cause, a "super ens" valhalla of "forms" in order to codify (by the Socratic doctrine of recollection) this subjective apprehension of the external world, Thomas sees a dynamic encounter between the perceiving subject and the object to be perceived. Both subject and object are rendered "substantial" when the one per-

14. Ibid., pp. 184-185.

15. Ibid., p. 81.

ceives the other and internalizes and objectifies it. Thomas declares the action of the subject not to be merely intelligible (in an empirical, receptionistic sort of way) but "superintelligible". Man's rational faculties thus have the ability to codify and generalize (specifically in the domain of species and genera) as well as the previously mentioned abilities to internalize and objectify. Yet, as in the case of Platonic epistemology, a further refinement must be presumed to spare it from becoming mere phenomenology. Thomas accomplishes this alteration with his doctrine of "subsistence". Man's ability to engage in super-sensible, superintelligible determination does not reside in his innate ability to generalize stimulus-response patterns, but in the fact that he has been created and "subsists" through the grace of God. Here Thomas comes closest in approximating a "metaphysical determinism" as a gracious dispensation from God. God thus created within man not only the ability to perceive sensibly but also put within man an active principle of knowledge which enables him to intuit that which he receives.¹⁶

The analysis of Jacques Maritain is extremely helpful at this point when he compares a Thomistic orientation to education with that of Platonism. He contends that Thomas, in "de Veritate", would repudiate the idea of E-DUCCO --- drawing out of the pupil knowledge already preexistent within him through the development of the power of recollection --- while, at the same time, carefully qualifying the Aristotelian concept of the "Tabula Rasa" by adding that the subsistent God-given power of

16. Jacques Maritain, Existence and the Existent (New York: Image Books, 1948), pp. 20-91.

of intuition imposes a dynamic and a direction to the learning process which ultimately will lead to man's rational development. 17

We see within Thomas' realism an "openness" to the natural order where "man thinking" is not a cognitive animal subjectively fostering meaning on that outside of him nor a passive receptor of sense impressions, but a rational creature given the ability to literally "drink" in all of nature in its variedness and multiplicity by his subsistence in God. In his determination of whether God may be known through the natural order, Thomas begins his treatment of nature and grace by saying that "although we cannot know what God is --- we can use the effects of God" 18 and "just as other sciences do not argue to prove their own principles, but argue from their principles to prove other things which the sciences include, so neither does this doctrine argue to prove its principles, which are articles of faith, but argues from these to prove other things". 19 Here Thomas must make, if I may presume to borrow from Kierkegaard, "a leap of faith" by accepting as an initial premise man's subsistent identity to God in much the same way as Platonism affirmed the priority of form --- and thus must part company with the positivists who concur with his epistemology on the horizontal dimension but are loathe to enter the vertical realm.

Interestingly enough it is within this article that the first fissure develops which will eventuate in the Catholic-

17. Charles A. Fecher, The Philosophy of Jacques Maritain (Westminster, Md: The Newman Press, 1953), pp. 281ff.

18. Summa Theologica, IQ.1, Art. 7.

19. IQ. 1, Art. 8.

Protestant rupture. Thomas asserts that "sacred doctrine does not make use of human reason...to prove the faith, but to clarify certain points of doctrine. Since grace does not supplant nature, but perfects it, reason ought to be the servant of faith in the same way as the natural inclination of the will is the servant of charity".²⁰

Thomas epitomizes the classified Catholic position by seeing man at variance with what God intended him to be because of the "peccatum originale", but sees not radical cleavage and distortion of the human personality as do the later reformers. As to whether or not God's existence may be proven save by revelatory act, Thomas once again says the existence of God may be demonstrated²¹ by his effects. He then continues his development by exhibiting five proofs (which have been previously qualified) for God's existence (excluding any insight into his nature as loving father) which are sensible to the rational faculties alone (a predisposition of faith not required) which we will once again allude to in our treatment of St. Bonaventure.²² God's existence is for Thomas self-evident --- however seeing his activity as gracious, loving and personally directed to us still belongs in the realm of faith.²³

20. Ibid.

21. IQ.2, Art. 1

22. IQ.2, Art. 3

23. IQ. 20 ff.

In any discussion of reason and revelation in the system of Thomas, this discussion is conjoined with the expression "Praeambula Fidei". Barbour, in his Issues in Science and Religion, regards this to mean that "reason....is an important preamble to faith (for example)...it can establish some theological truths, including the existence of God"²⁴. Barbour continues in his observation that in the thought of Aquinas "revelation is necessary because the most important theological truths are not accessible to reason."²⁵ Within the translation of praebula fidei this view is most certainly possible. "Fides" as a feminine noun may be translated either as a dative (as Barbour does) in which reason is the legitimate preamble to faith or may be translated as a genitive (as Thomas actually does) to produce the far more dynamic concept of the priority of faith to rational activity. Just as the dative usage exposes Thomas to the stereotype of the reason functioning in happy autonomy until it needs a slight assist from God, the genitive preamble of faith to reason provides copious material for fruitful theological dialogue. Thomas readily admits that "there are some truths which the natural reason also is able to reach"²⁶ (as we have discussed previously) yet, in the five classical "proofs" he declares at the same time if "the knowledge of God were solely that of the reason, the human race

24. Barbour, p. 20.

25. Ibid.

26. Thomas Aquinas, On the Truth of the Catholic Faith - Book One: God (Garden City: Hanover House, 1955), p.63.

would remain in the blackest shadows of ignorance"²⁷ and warns "not (to) intrude...into the divine secret, do not, presuming to comprehend the sum total of intelligence, pledge yourself into the mystery of the unending nativity; rather, understand that these things are incomprehensible"²⁸. With this mentality, Thomas does lip service to the methodology of the Pseudo-Dionysius, John Scotus Erigena and the school of St. Victor while effecting a qualitative break with what Gilson calls the theologism of the early Middle Ages by maintaining "that Revelation is a self-sufficient and self-contained order of truth, whose ultimate foundation is divine authority alone and not the natural light of reason"²⁹.

In "Prima Secundae", Questions 82 and 85, Thomas delves into the essence of original sin. The Thomist definition of sin is wholly consonant with his earlier assertion concerning man in his incorporation in the natural order. He views sin as "habitual" --- not in the sense which inclines a power to act (which would seem consistent with the reformers equation of sin with radical rebellious pride) but in a second sense of habit defined as "the disposition by which a composite nature as well or ill disposed in a certain way."³⁰ Here Thomas

27. Ibid., pp. 67-68.

28. Ibid., p. 76.

29. Gilson, p.78.

30. 12 ae, Q.82, Art. 1

amplifies, in his own unique way, the Augustinian definition³¹ of evil as privation (assumed from Plotinus) by saying that³² sin is much more than this --- "it is a corrupt habit". Once again, Thomas, as did Augustine, conjoins the two "thought-worlds" spoken of in Chapter I, by introducing the element of personal rebellion in what otherwise would be considered mere deficiency in personality. The difference between actual and original sin is of primary importance insofar as "actual sin is the disorder of an act" while "original sin is the dis-ordered³³ disposition of nature itself". The cause of sin is deemed to be "the privation of original justice, which took away from man³⁴ the subjection of his mind to God".

In his analysis of man in his relationship to God, Thomas speaks of the "natural good" which may mean three things:

1. The constitutive power of nature--together with the properties consequential to them.
2. The inclination to virtue.
3. The gift of original justice.

Within this deliniation Thomas explains "the constitution of human nature is neither destroyed nor diminished by sin. The gift of original justice was totally lost through the sin of our first parent. The natural inclination to virtue, finally,

31. Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy, V.2, Part 1 (New York: Image Books, 1962), p. 100.

32. 12 ae, Q. 82, Art. 1

33. Ibid.

34. 12ae, Q. 82, Art. 2

is diminished by sin --- hence, although nature itself is not changed by any alteration in its voluntary action, its inclination is changed in respect of its direction to an end".³⁵ He says further that there is a natural inclination to virtue which is diminished but not taken away and goes so far as to say that there is a "certain good, with its mode, species, and order which belongs to the very nature --- that is not taken away by sin nor diminished by it."³⁶ (A possible precursor to Luther's "Justitia Civilis"?).

We may make an appropriate transition from the treatment of nature to that of grace by alluding to Thomas' Treatise on Grace which makes the assessment that in a state of corruption, man falls short of what nature makes possible.³⁷ Human nature is not so entirely corrupted by sin as to be deprived of natural good altogether. As we have said earlier, man confesses that he subsists in God --- that he was created for a supernatural end which the Catholic Encyclopedia defines as "the intuitive vision of God...the enlightenment of the (human) intellect by a positive revelation of God...Divine Grace illuminating and strengthening the human facilities and sanctifying by which human nature is elevated to a higher mode of activity".³⁸ In the state of "pure nature" (which we would define as affirming

35. 12 ae, Q. 85, Art. 1

36. 12 ae, Q. 85, Art. 5

37. 12 ae, Q. 109, Art. 2

38. "Nature", The Catholic Encyclopedia, V. 10 (New York: Robt. Appellton Co. 1911), pp.715 ff.

our rational facilities while being bound by the contingencies of physical determination) Thomas declares that "man needs a power added to his natural power by grace in order to do and to will supernatural good --- but in the state of corrupt nature he needs this for two reasons, in order to be healed, and in order to achieve the meritorious good of supernatural virtue."³⁹ He asserts almost to the point of redundancy that "to love God above all things is natural to man --- the reason for this is that it is natural for each thing to desire and to love something --- we must understand that a nature cannot be incited to an action which exceeds the proportion of its power --- but to love God is not such an action --- this is natural in every created nature".⁴⁰ When in the state of "corrupt nature" man falls short of this desire of his rational will ("which through corruption seeks its own private good")⁴¹ unless it is "healed" by the Grace of God.

Thomas then begins to fathom the question of the relationship of grace to merit and good works --- seen as such a point of contention especially in Catholic-Lutheran polemics. The will of man must be prepared for good works by grace (which alone is the principle of meritorious works). God's "help" (grace) is needed in two specific ways:

39. 12ae, Q. 109, Art. 2

40. 12ae, Q. 109, Art. 3

41. Ibid.

1. As "mover" --- the primary force which impells us to seek our supernatural end.
2. As "direction" --- which keeps ⁴²the goal of our existence constantly before us.

Once again sin is affirmed as being "nothing more than to fall short of what befits man's nature" ("and a man in the state of pure nature could avoid this"). In this state of "corrupt nature" a man needs grace to "heal his nature continually, if he is to avoid sin entirely. In our present life this healing is accomplished first in the mind, the appetite of the flesh being not yet wholly cured."⁴³ (It is interesting how such a position may easily give theological credence to a doctrine of voluntary celibacy). A man's "healed" reason can prevent "mortal" sins (defined by the Baltimore Catechism as having the power of depriving the soul of "sanctifying grace") but his "lower appetites still eventuate in "venial sins" (defined by the same source as a "less serious offense which does not deprive the soul of sanctifying grace, and which can be pardoned even without sacramental confession").⁴⁴ It is further declared that man needs God's Grace in two ways:

1. As a "habitual gift" by which his corrupt nature ⁴⁵may be healed (which is later defined as an infusion of "habit" in the soul --- an endowment

42. 12 ae, Q. 109, Art. 6

43. 12 ae, Q. 109, Art. 8

44. Ibid.

45. 12 ae, Q. 109, Art. 9

of forms and powers inclined toward super-
natural good.)⁴⁶

2. As motivation to act⁴⁷ (defined in the same
later portion as man's mind helped to know,
will, and act).⁴⁸

The thoroughgoing Thomist would take violent exception to the Lutheran who regards the doctrine of "justification by faith" his own particular "doctrine by which the church must either stand or fall". Man is truly "justified by faith" in the scholastic system. "Justification" is defined by Thomas as the "transmutation" of the sinner from a state of injustice to a state of justice.⁴⁹ However, it might be well here to use an analogy from the Biblical disciplines to maintain a clear picture of the two alternative concepts of "justification" which do, in fact, exist. One may say that the classical Protestant (Reformation) concept of "justification" is akin to the aorist tense in Greek --- signifying completed action wholly through the gracious activity of God while the Catholic position more closely approximates the imperfect tense whereby action though begun in the past continues in linear development and exerts its influence in the present.

The word "schema" may be deemed unfortunate because neither Thomas nor the Thomist in any way attempt to substan-

46. 12 ae, Q. 110, Art. 2

47. 12 ae, Q. 109, Art. 9

48. 12 ae, Q. 110, Art. 2

49. 12 ae, Q. 113, Art. 1

tialize or deliniate the activity of grace other than for the purpose of understanding and explication of the affects they produce. Why and how God chose to be active among men remains as awesome and ineffable to them as attempting to fully understand the trinity. Yet we must guard against reading in too great a similarity because Thomas is very explicit in saying that "God does not justify us without ourselves, since when we are justified we consent to his justice by a movement of our free will. The movement is not the cause of grace, but the result of it".⁵⁰ Throughout the explication of this doctrine God moves man in the context of his free will and with all who are capable of being so moved, God infuses justifying grace in such a way that he also moves the free will to accept it. Even in the sacrament of Infant Baptism, God is said by Thomas to "move the infants to justice by moving their souls".⁵¹ Thus the activity eventuating in "justification" may be summarized by Thomas in the following way:

1. Infusion of Grace (prior to all activity of man --- although considered subsequent from the human dimension.
2. Movement of free will toward God in faith.
3. Movement of free will to recoil from sin.
4. The remission of guilt.⁵²

50. Ibid.

51. 12 ae, Q. 113, Art. 3

52. 12 ae, Q. 113, Art. 6

In what will regretfully assume the character of a brief epilogue after considering merely two subdivisions of the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas, we shall compare him to his one notable contemporary --- The Seraphic Doctor, St. Bonaventure. Both see philosophy to be the hand-maid of theology and both see themselves as a spiritual and intellectual heir of St. Augustine. However, the one factor which separates the two men more clearly than any other --- and which profoundly colors their theological systemization is Bonaventure's reticence to abandon Platonic categories contrasted to Thomas' openness to the recently rediscovered realism of Aristotle.

The classical Augustinian proof for the existence of God --- which Copleston calls "The Proof from Thought" --- may be termed as both covert and a priori. When the two doctors of the Church speak of an "implicit knowledge of God", Bonaventure remains solidly within the tradition and sentiment of Augustine by recognizing a "virtual knowledge of God, a dim awareness (of a divine presence) which can be rendered explicit without recourse to the sensible world".⁵³ Thomas, however, harbors definite misgivings concerning the "Augustinian-Anselmic-Bonaventurian" progression of argument and seemingly anticipates the objection of the positivist by saying:

"neither can it be argued that God exists in reality, unless it is granted that that than which nothing greater can be conceived exists in reality, which is not granted by those who suppose that God does not exist".⁵⁴

53. Copleston, op. cit., p. 284.

54. I.Q. 2, Art. 1

Previously we have said Thomas declared "we cannot know God"
55
.....save in his effects. Yet he, in Copleston's words,
"admitted an implicit knowledge of God, but by this he meant
that the mind has the power of attaining to the knowledge of
God's existence through reflection on the things of sense and
56
by arguing from effect to cause". Thus, in each of his five
proofs for God's existence, Thomas never varies from the pro-
gression of the external manifestation to the reality of the
one who renders this action volitional and purposeful which
demands simultaneously a breach of logic and a leap of faith.

The second point of consideration concerning which
Bonaventure and Thomas are at variance is the doctrine of
"illumination". Copleston considers its inception by Augustine
as a Christian alternative to recollection in classical
Platonic and somewhat less than classical neo-platonic thought.
57
It is obvious that both terms presuppose an a priori assess-
ment of the knowledge of God. Bonaventure sought recourse in
the doctrine of illumination when confronted with elucidating
his definition of truth as "Adequatio Rei Et Intellectus".
Since no created object is immutable, all sensible objects are
perishable and the human mind itself fallible --- assistance
was required from without to apprehend the existence of God.

55. I.Q. 1, Art. 7, op.cit.

56. Copleston, p. 284.

57. Ibid., p. 80.

Thus the illumination theory came to the rescue; the existence of God is perceived inwardly and in a way which transcends both the sensible and reasonable faculties.⁵⁸

Thomas, however, sees the doctrine as an unnecessary accretion on a theological schema. Since God makes his presence known and felt in the sensible world and man has been given the ability to intuit such knowledge originally by God's grace --- such an addition is clearly superfluous. Thomas here displays his Aristotelian "realism" while Bonaventure clings to what is basically a Platonic orientation to man and the world around him. Ultimately the system of Bonaventure, with its Platonic predispositions, would admit an element of despair in attempting to perceive God acting in the tangible, material world and view a qualified notion of metaphysical determinism only in terms of the freedom a supersensible illumination could afford from it. Thomas, by contrast, (were we to retain the simile of "freedom") would virtually equate his doctrine of "subsistence" with what we have designated "metaphysical determinism" and, in so doing, see with St. Paul that man's greatest freedom rests when he makes himself transparent to the determination of God.

58. Ibid., pp.316-317.

CHAPTER III - PRELUDE TO REFORMATION

The New York Times Sunday Magazine featured an article with the intriguing title "American Philosophy is Dead" (April 24, 1966). In an extremely readable way, Dr. Lewis Feuer documents the decline and fall of a discipline whose regal status once stood second only to that of theology to little more than a word game played by a handful of dilettantes. Thus, in "American Philosophy is Dead", we see the transition from a William James, who refuses to "accept the agnostic rules for truth seeking", to a Josiah Royce, who deems "the highest expression of philosophy" is a covert "reflexive curiosity" to a Sidney Hook, who equates metaphysics with "an indulgence in fancy", finally to a Ludwig Wittgenstein, who completely repudiates the utility of metaphysical presuppositions and reduces philosophy to "grammatical investigation".

If we accept Noah Webster's principal definition of "philosophy" as "the study of the processes governing thought and conduct", we can easily observe the emasculation of philosophy, the aforementioned period, from a metaphysically grounded pragmatism to a linguistic analysis offering little or no insight into the governance of thought or conduct. Dr. Feuer describes his study as "the decline of philosophy from a Golden Age to an academic cult and restricts this phenomenon to a hundred year period. We would take

exception with the declaration that the "golden age" ended with William James if Webster's definition of philosophy is taken as normative. In place of the foregoing assertion, we offer the suggestion that philosophy's "golden age" came into full fruition with St. Thomas Aquinas --- that in Thomas "the study of the processes governing thought and conduct" achieved its fullest expression as a true conjunction of faith (as the ultimate ground of conduct) and reason (as the ground and basis of thought),¹ thereby effecting the most comprehensive treatment of metaphysical determinism qua divine gratuity, and that all subsequent developments either directly or indirectly contributed to philosophy's degeneration into a word game.

G. K. Chesterton's excellent paraphrase of Thomas' answer to his critics (both past and present) states with brilliant clarity the Thomistic position on the conjunction of faith and reason:

"To be brief...I do not believe that God meant man to exercise only that particular, uplifted and abstracted sort of intellect which you (my opponents) are so fortunate to possess: but I believe that there is a middle field of facts, which are given by the senses to be

1. Josef Pieper, Scholasticism (New York: Pantheon Books, 1960), p. 162.

the subject matter of the reason; and that in that field the reason has a right to rule, as the representative of God in man.²

Stated as simply as possible, it is by no means self-evident to man that his rational-cognitive faculties represent an indwelling manifestation of God. This discovery, according to Thomas belongs to the "Praeambula Fidei" --- the declaration that the acceptance of divine revelation by an act of faith logically presupposes the knowledge that a God exists who is capable of revealing himself, knowledge³ then which can be gained in abstraction from theology. Man thus, as an activity of body and soul together, has the ability to apprehend the particular and intuit the "potentially universal element contained implicitly within it".⁴ Following in the tradition of Augustine, Thomas declares that there is a plurality of ideas in God since he knows each individual thing to be created and that this has the character of an "exemplary form" which may be known by the individual intellect in abstraction from the particular which it apprehends⁵ (not in the Platonic sense of being

2. G. K. Chesterton, St. Thomas Aquinas (London: Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., 1943), p. 22.

3. Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy - Vol. 3 I (New York: Image Books, 1963), p. 23.

4. Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy - Vol. 2 II (New York: Image Books, 1963), pp. 109-110.

5. Copleston, V. 2, pp. 78-80.

a less perfect copy of the formal --- but in the Aristotelian sense of the particular having within itself enough of the character of the universal to make it comprehensible to the intellect).

John Duns Scotus may be considered to be the first contributor to what Maritain calls "the blackest stain on philosophy"⁶ (a philosophy of existence without essence.) Anne Fremantle, employing a quotation from D.J.B. Hawkins' A Sketch of Medieval Philosophy says:

"Duns Scotus denied the distinction between essence and existence, because neither accounted for the individuality of real things...things (which) exhibit a principle of individuality, a thisness which is not reducible to any other factor. The singular adds an entity over and above the entity of the universal. Consequently the apprehension of the universal is not the complete ground of an apprehension of the singular adequate to the whole knowledge of the singular."⁷

In this same volume there is a further quote from Father Christopher Devlin, who ingeniously compares the mind in Thomas to "a limpid and motionless pool in which both the

6. Jacques Maritain, Existence and the Existent (New York: Image Books, 1956), p. 15.

7. Anne Fremantle, The Age of Belief (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1955), p.183.

nature of the surrounding objects and the movements of the heavens can be clearly discerned" until Scotus raised the complaint "that the pool fails to represent...the secret entrance and exit by which there is a continual influx and drawing off of the water without which it could not remain fresh and sweet."⁸ The human soul then "is not co-extensive with reason and understanding" but finds that its intellectual powers have been extended to the fullest yet without satisfaction until a "higher faculty is brought into play".⁹

Thomas and Scotus are also at variance in their treatment of the powers of the soul. Aquinas places the intellect's quest for the true to be a prior and nobler concern than the will desiring beatitude.¹⁰ The intellect is concerned with the apprehension of the good while the will is concerned with the special empirical forms assumed by this good.¹¹ However, consonant with his more transitory conception of the activity of the soul, Scotus reverses Thomas' order and states that it is the will which is ever directed toward the good as such while the understanding (intellect) has to show in what the good consists in a particular case.¹²

8. Ibid., pp. 181-182.

9. Ibid.

10. 12ae, Q. 110, Art. 2

11. Wilhelm Windleband, A History of Philosophy - I
(New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 331.

12. Ibid.

Scotus' loudest objection to Thomas lies with the latter's declaration that the mind (soul) only "knows" in abstraction from the avenues of sense impression --- that, outside of divine revelation, the soul is dependent upon these vehicles for its apprehension of the external world from which it then may abstract and perceive the inherent formal or universal character infused in a given thing by God. Scotus sees an inconsistency in Thomas' analysis insofar as (according to Scotus) dependance on an organ of sense infers a bondage to the organ. In fact, he goes so far as to say, in true Platonic fashion, that the best argument for the immortality of the human soul may be drawn from the intellect's independence of a corporeal organ.¹³ In an articulate restatement and refinement of the classic Franciscan position Scotus bypassed the reality of the natural creation itself, and thereby took away the certainty of man's cognition of it.¹⁴ Like Karl Barth's resounding "Nein", Scotus answers Thomas by asserting that what faith tells us about God's work or redemption and grace can in no way be made intelligible to reason because "there is no rational argument for those things that belong to faith" (ad ea, quae fidei sunt, ratio¹⁵ demonstrativa haberi non potest). Thus, in an attempt

13. Copleston, ^{op.cit.} V. 2, pp. 265-267.

14. Pieper, p. 146.

15. Ibid., pp. 142-143.

antedating the Neo-Orthodox movement by some 600 years, Scotus sought to protect the holiness and transcendence of God but, in doing so, struck the first blow which would eventually discredit the scholastic synthesis and thereby divide what was a conjunctive unity of faith and reason into a realm of faith and a realm of "intelligible reason".¹⁶

The final blow which sealed the demise of scholastic synthesis was not thrust by Scotus, but by a younger Franciscan brother named William of Ockham. In the same spirit as Duns Scotus ("because God is absolutely free, everything that he does and effects has the character of non-necessity").¹⁷ Ockham laid great stress on the Christian doctrines of divine omnipotence and liberty. He deemed these doctrines unsafe unless the Greek notion of the metaphysic of essences could be eliminated from Christian theology.¹⁸ Ironically, the arguments he uses to protect Christian theology from Greek contamination sound deceptively like the Greek philosopher Carneades, whose logic impelled him to say the existence of God is by no means self-evident and therefore defies reasonable proof.¹⁹ When Aquinas spoke of the objectivity of real species and essences in the mind of God, Scotus countered by saying what Thomas considered "real" distinctions in essences or universals were merely "formal" in character.²⁰

16. Ibid., p. 145.

17. Ibid., p. 140.

18. Copleston, V.3, p. 61.

19. Bertrand Russell, A History of Western Philosophy (New York: Simon & Schuster 1945), pp.238.

20. Ibid., p.62.

Ockham, however, in his insistence to protect the purity of Christian doctrine, repudiated the conception of "Divine Ideas" because God would then be limited in his creative act²¹ by the eternal ideas or essences.

It is precisely within William's jealousy to protect God's infinitude, omnipotence and transcendence, that he unwittingly becomes the founding father of the totally a-metaphysical modern "word game". While this would not be the proper place to go into profuse detail concerning Williams' logic, two of his most salient points should be considered --- the first of which being the power of God (the conception of the divine Fiat) and the second being the integrity and comprehensibility of the individual thing which is perceived (the notion of Absolutism).

In his protection of God's "otherness", William begins with an analysis of Thomas' five proofs for the existence derivative from experience and arrives at the judgment that these arguments may be "probable" but not certain because²² they are not logically conclusive. The proof from motion is deemed inconclusive because we cannot establish with certainty that A is the cause of B in any other way than actual experience; the proof from finality also is rejected because it cannot be proven that individual things act for ends which justify God's existence (or, in other words, to prove a teleological character in the world); the proof

21. Ibid., p. 93.

22. Ibid., pp.93-94.

from efficient cause also meets the same fate because "it cannot be proved by the natural reason that God is the immediate efficient cause of all things, but also that it cannot be proved that God is the mediate efficient cause of any effect"-, the proof from infinite regression of causes is also dispensed with because you would have to presuppose God's existence which clearly may not be done in actual experience. To be brief, it is impossible to know God as an immediate and sole term of the act of knowing; furthermore, it is impossible to know God in his simplicity; finally God may only be known in a connotative way (principally through the traditional Via ²³Negativa developed by the Pseudo-Dionysius and John Scotus.

Continuing his effort to protect the prerogatives of God, William goes so far as to state that God could produce in us, if he so desired, the intuition of a non-existent object as well as eliminating the mediation of any given secondary ²⁴cause if this were his pleasure. He remains consistent as he transposes his theological presuppositions over into the area of ethics. According to William, God can do or will anything that does not involve logical contradiction. Whereas Thomas states "it is due to God that created things should fulfil whatever his wisdom and his will ordains and ²⁵that they should manifest his goodness", William declares

23. Ibid., p. 98.

24. Ibid., pp.76-77.

25. I.Q.21, Art. 1

that adultery and fornication may not be legitimate parts of the moral order simply for the fact that God has forbidden them --- thus the ultimate reason behind any given moral law is not from a necessity on the part of the giver but purely on the basis of divine fiat.²⁶ Yet, interestingly, William warns against license in the man-to-man encounter because it is contrary to "right reason".²⁷ Thus, he appears to delineate between the activity of divine inauguration and affairs on the human level. One almost gets the feeling that he is reading the "two kingdom" ethic in which man is both saint and political animal simultaneously. Josef Pieper describes this tendency in William as "a paradoxical dichotomy which became a virtual model for the period following him" --- a paradox which demanded the appropriation by faith of the divine fiat while submitting to the guidance of "right reason".²⁸

The second area in which William left his indelible mark upon philosophy concerned the determination of the particular and the universal. He rejects the moderate realism of Aquinas, who saw the universal individuated in existence in favor of a position sounding deceptively like that of David Hume. William apprehends in particular some single objects intuitively or abstractly (caused by the object--

26. Copleston, V. 3, p. 117.

27. Ibid, p. 119.

28. Pieper, p. 145.

or by a predisposition from a former act). "A second act produces universals and second intentions (something not left there before/^{it} is left behind in imaginative faculty mediated by the intuitive cognition of particular sensation)".²⁹ However, William is extremely careful not to equate this with the object being perceived (as does Thomas, who states that all human cognition is of the universal insofar as the material object in abstraction constitutes the universal)³⁰ but considers it to be "a predisposition inclined to imagine a previously sensed object".³¹ He denies the Thomistic notions of "superintelligibility" and "subsistence" in his epistemology by stating that "there is no unitary, unvaried or simple thing in the multiplicity of singular things nor in any kind of created individuals, together and at the same time --- (therefore) since the universal and the singular are numerically one --- one does not include a greater plurality intrinsic to things than does the other".³²

However, the notion of the universal is by no means discarded. William appropriates this concept into his logical system in an albeit subordinate position. He bypassed Scotus'

29. William of Ockham, "The Individual and the Universal", Treasury of Philosophy ed. Dagobert D. Runes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955), p. 872.

30. Copleston, V.2, p. 109.

31. Ockham, op.cit., p.872.

32. Ibid., p.874.

"Objective-formal" distinction dilemma simply by asserting that it was of no major consequence --- and in much the

same spirit declared that the notion of a universal was also of secondary importance because it is to be considered merely as an act of understanding --- a way of conceiving or knowing real things.³³ Copleston assesses Ockham's position as having the tendency to split the world up into "absolutes" --- distinct entities which are wholly dependent on the fiat³⁴ of God and between which there is no necessary connection.

It is precisely within this mentality that William is the last creature in the old aeon and the harbinger of things to come. All who had preceded William held that the creature had a real relation to God --- though God's relation to the creature was mental. This was deemed impossible by Ockham's "Absolutism" in which relations are capable of analysis only when consistent of two existing "absolutes". While we affirm by faith that God created and conserves his creatures, he is (in modern parlance) "wholly other" and in no way must admit to a necessary relation.³⁵ As his predecessors spoke of knowing man only as he was subsistent to God, William spoke in disapproval insofar as this would relegate the study of the world and its creatures to an inferior position.

33. Copleston, V.3, p.69.

34. Ibid., p.80.

35. Ibid., p.81.

But if the individual thing is deemed an "absolute" it may³⁶ be studied without any reference to God. By this declaration, William was the first to throw open the myriad of "absolute" things which constituted the "world" to what later would be known as scientific investigation. *and secularization*

Were we to assess the results of Ockham's attack within the totality of our study on what might be considered a scholasticism of a "golden age", we would acknowledge a logic whose universal class concept need no existential import because it is simply a "term" to describe a conglomerate of individual things, an ethic which for all intensive purposes might exist autonomous of any metaphysical foundation, and an embryonic empiricism seeing an integrity open to investigation once again free of any presupposition of metaphysics. Yet, we must remember that all this was undertaken by William, not because he was a village atheist or an intellectual agnostic, but because he was a devout Franciscan who desired to free the statements of faith from the danger of philosophical contamination. One cannot help but wonder if William's reaction to those who championed his use of the "razor" and elaborated his empiricism without acknowledging his dependence on a free and omnipotent God would not be the same as that of Paul Tillich when he was told by the radical theologians that he had fathered the "death-of-God" movement? William of Ockham had remained loyal to the Franciscan

36. Ibid., p.83.

tradition as he laid utmost stress on "knowing" God directly without recourse to the sensible world by attempting to show the futility of such activity. The only questions which remain to plague theological inquiry to the present day is the legitimacy of the disjunction of faith and reason and whether this bifurcation is to be lauded or scandalized, and does this not, in fact, represent a misunderstanding of what we have defined as proper metaphysical determinism by having inherent within it an incipient desire to flee from the created world which the Bible tells us legitimately mirrors the personality of God in favor of some higher gnosis? The period of the Reformation, to which our present chapter has served as a prelude, will mirror in even sharper relief the "afterglow" of the golden age of philosophical-theological expression with an emancipated vitality colored with a very slight, but ever present, tear of lament.

CHAPTER IV -- THE VIA MODERNA

When William of Ockham declared that "absolutely nothing could be proved about God in the light of natural reason, not even his existence",¹ he, for all intensive purposes, left reason a stranger on the shore while faith cast itself out to sea liberated from the concrete material world. In the words of Gilson, the late Middle Ages was "called upon to witness the total wreck of both scholastic philosophy and scholastic theology as the necessary upshot of the final divorce of reason and revelation". To substantiate his argument, he points to the Imitation of Christ of Thomas a Kempis as a "late medieval protest against the vanity of all philosophy" especially when the latter declares "I am he who exalteth in a moment the humble mind, to comprehend more reasonings of the eternal truth than if one had studied ten years in the schools".² The Christians caught in the wake of the scholastic disintegration, and equally disenchanted with the traditional forms of Franciscan mysticism, sought refuge instead in an embryonic pragmatism which emphasized what they envisioned to be a practical and workable Christian life. One particular expression of this type of experiment was

1. Etienne Gilson, Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1938, pp.86-88.

2. Ibid., pp.88-89.

the "Brethren of the Common Life" among whose students and adherents was a young man named Desiderius Erasmus who epitomized in his work the battle cry "away with philosophy and back to the Gospel".³ Such motivation, borne by an honest dissatisfaction with what was deemed to be a scholastic house of cards, and coupled by a recently invented printing press, laid the foundation for what many consider to be the re-discovery of the Bible and what we may consider the corresponding re-discovery of the Hebraic thought-world which had long lay subordinate to the Greek.

All the aforementioned factors, given the added impetus of an incipient nationalism, prepared the stage for the successful performance of a Martin Luther where previously a John Wyclif had been posthumously condemned and his ashes cast to the winds and a Jan Hus burned at the stake. As a child molded by all these varied influences, not the least of which was Ockham's "razor" and political theory whose bases were a virtual magna carta from papal and empire domination, Luther effected what many modern scholars now call a "Copernican Revolution".⁴ Philip S. Watson, one of those scholars holding to the "Copernican Revolution" expression, contends that religious formulae long bound in an anthropocentric, egocentric vocabulary (due to an excessive dependence on the faculty of reason) were in turn freed by

3. Ibidl, pp.90-92.

4. Philip S. Watson, Let God Be God (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1947), p. 33.

Luther with his corresponding emphasis on the divine initiative.⁵ Firmly within the Ockhamist tradition, Luther sees men "serving God for His own sake, simply because He is God" without any thought of (anthropocentric) "ethical attainments".⁶ He evidences a further consistency with post-Thomastic opinion when, in his exegesis of Isaiah 9:1-6, he declares that "the prophet rejects the natural light of reason, showing it to be mere darkness: for if we had light within ourselves, the Gospel need never have shone upon us. Light illumines, not light, but darkness."⁷ Reason is further seen as "belonging to the flesh --- and so blind that it can neither see nor know the things of God" and is, in the last analysis (as Frau Hulda) equated with "arrogance".⁸

It would be intriguing to conjecture the response of Luther if he understood Aquinas' treatment of the "preambula fidei" in Book I of Summa Contra Gentiles as well as he purported to understand the critics who followed Thomas. Luther declared reason to be an ineffectual organ of knowledge in the "spiritual kingdom" and saw instead the only

5. Ibid., p. 34.

6. Ibid., p. 46.

7. B. A. Gerrish, Grace and Reason - A Study In the Theology of Luther (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 12.

8. Ibid., pp. 18-19.

reliable guide to be the revealed Word of God.⁹ Although we would be quick to admit that Thomas and Luther arrive eventually at markedly different conclusions, could not their initial premises be considered virtually identical? Even though Thomas' theology draws him to a conclusion in which he describes "science" as "assensus to reason" and "faith" as "assensus to revelation" and the further declaration that "faith" and "science" are two distinct species of knowledge,¹⁰ a prolegomenon seeing Revelation as "a self-sufficient and self-contained order of truth, whose ultimate foundation is divine authority alone and not the natural light of reason"¹¹ contains nothing inherently within it to which Luther could object.

B. A. Gerrish, in his study Grace and Reason - A Study in the Theology of Luther, is quick to point out that Luther's misgiving concerning any conjunction of faith and reason is inexplicably tied to his ethic of the two kingdoms.¹² "The Error of the Schools", insofar as Luther was concerned, lay in the confusion of these two kingdoms ("commiscuerunt politica cum ecclesiasticus") or, expressed in yet another

9. Ibid., p. 20.

10. Gilson, op. cit., pp.72-73.

11. Ibid., p.78.

12. Gerrish, p. 8.

way, "the error of the sophists is that they substitute¹³ civil righteousness for Christian righteousness". Might it not be that, at this point, William of Ockham's emphasis on the independence of temporal power, as contrasted to the traditional notion of the "Civitas Dei" being ad hoc to the "Civitas Hominibus", and his insistence that the people be free to settle their own form of government,¹⁴ cause a sense of confused loyalty within Luther and thereby produce this element of inconsistency? Even though he would repudiate any notion of an analogia entis by declaring that "the natural knowledge of God is wholly God-given", Luther makes what Watson calls a "concession" to the traditional theologia naturalis by assuming a priority of this natural knowledge in assessing that "there could be no religion without it" nor, for that matter, "any argument about God himself".¹⁵ Though the Image of God be destroyed (Solid Declaration I, 10), man, with all his powers, including reason, has some knowledge of God.¹⁶ The "light of grace", declares Luther, by no means¹⁷ extinguishes the "light of reason". Watson sums up this

13. Ibid., pp.73-74.

14. Copleston, A History of Philosophy - Volume 3, op.cit., pp. 130-131.

15. Watson, p. 84.

16. Martin Luther, A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. ed. Erasmus Middleton (London, 1807), p.213.

17. Watson, p.87.

difficulty by saying that "when Luther decries reason, he is not attacking the faculty of logical thought --- but is attacking the use men make of this faculty in matters pertaining to religion".¹⁸ In summary of Luther, we would not verge too far into error should we say (with due cognizance of the intellectual and political milieu in which Luther labored) that his intent was to underscore a notion of sin as radical rebellion instead of variance from a norm, and, in so doing, paint the ante fidem and post fidem states of man in bolder relief than even Thomas had done.

We now progress from the rhapsodic inconsistency of Luther to the monumental, almost symphonic hyperconsistency of John Calvin. At the expense of a mixed metaphor we may further compare these two giants by likening the theology of Luther to an "impressionist" painting which must be studied from every possible angle to determine all the intricacies of form and coloration while Calvin, with the aplomb of a classical painter, presents a schema which may be awesomely comprehensive to the eye but immediately apparent to the mind and spirit as something lacking any dark stops open to interpretation. Reinhold Niebuhr, in the first volume of The Nature and Destiny of Man, provides for us some helpful insights to this contrast between Luther and Calvin by portraying the former as being caught up in a passionate crusade to "re-establish the Augustinian doctrine of original sin against the semi-Pelagianism of Catholicism that all his interpretations of the

18. Ibid., pp.88.

Image of God are colored by his eagerness to prove, whatever
the Image is, it is now lost".¹⁹ Niebuhr accuses Luther of
being "so inexact that his thought is not very helpful in
interpreting the real import of the Christian conception of the
Image of God".²⁰ He concludes his critique by saying that
Luther veers dangerously close, because of the theological
emphases he is jealous to protect, to "obscuring insights
into the dimension and the structure of the human spirit".²¹

Gaunt, phlegmatic Calvin appears to be the utter anti-thesis of the bombastic Luther (at least in the assessment of Erik Erikson and John Osborne) who blunders forth a theological pronouncement only to be forced to bite his lip and offer copious qualification. The Institutes of the Christian Religion may be justifiably accused of having a literary style barely superior to a metropolitan telephone directory, compared to the almost Boccaccio quality of Luther, yet never does the reader doubt the argumentative direction in which he is being taken nor fail to appreciate the theological fabric which is being woven before his eyes. Unlike his German counterpart, who had to resort to allowing the legitimacy of the human reason enter via the rear door once he had successfully barricaded the front, Calvin begins his study of the nature of man by declaring that since the beginning of the world there has never been anyone "totally destitute

19. Niebuhr, op.cit., p. 160.

20. Ibid., p.161.

of religion, it is a tacit confession, that some sense of Divinity, is inscribed on every heart."²² Calvin, in fact, goes so far as to say "the worship of God is --- the only thing which renders men superior to the brutes, and makes them aspire to immortality."²³ It is within this context that Calvin first departs with what we have implicitly defined as Luther's "frontal" position, when he declares "that seed, which is impossible to eradicate, a sense of the existence of a Deity, yet remains; but it is so corrupted as to produce only the worst of fruits".²⁴ As he proceeds to "God's Manifestation in the World", Calvin (as Luther) harkens back to Thomas (as opposed to Ockham) when he states "God's essence indeed is incomprehensible, so that his Majesty is not to be perceived by the human senses; but on all his works he hath inscribed his glory in characters so clear, unequivocal, and striking, that the most illiterate and stupid cannot exculpate themselves by a plea of ignorance".²⁵ Calvin thus joins Thomas and Luther in saying that man has a due sense of metaphysical determinism by seeing God active in the effects of nature and cultural intercourse in comparison to a thinly veiled quasi-Platonism with its

22. John Calvin, A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion, ed. Hugh T. Kerr (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1939), p.7.

23. Ibid., p.8.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., p. 10.

alternate illumination theories. However, the contrast between Calvin and Thomas --- and Calvin and Luther, especially when confronted with a doctrine of ubiquity and an explanation of the Lord's Supper, would be a voluminous study in and of itself! "Reason", in Calvin's words, is deemed to be "a natural talent (incapable of being) totally destroyed, but is partly vitiated so that it exhibits nothing but deformity and ruin --- some sparks continue to shine in the nature of man, even in its corrupt and degenerate state, which prove him to be a rational creature, and different from the brutes because he is endued with understanding".²⁶

In a certain sense Luther and Calvin put forth a refinement to what we previously defined as the fullest flower of metaphysical determinism which we have epitomized in the Thomistic synthesis, yet in an equally real sense buttressed the "modern way" set in motion by William of Ockham. Both figures admit a knowledge of God through his effects, whether they be called "mirror of his works" or the "larva dei", yet would hesitate to postulate a metaphysic of essences as does Thomas. Where Aquinas put forth an objectivity of real species and essences, only to have Ockham repudiate such an objectivity as a non-Christian invention with no place in Christianity,²⁷ Luther devised a "kingdom on the left"²⁸ in which a sense of civil righteousness was entirely possible

26. Ibid., p. 48.

27. Copleston, Vol. 3, Part I, pp.62-63.

28. Luther's Works, Philadelphia Edition, III, pp.254-57.

without any apparent notion of God, and Calvin a humanity, who, when confronted by God's effects chose in his depravity to "set up dreams and phantasms of our own brains; and confer on them the praise of righteousness, wisdom, goodness and power, due to him"²⁹. Thomas' metaphysic of essences issued forth directly from his "praembula fidei" (which Copleston defines as "the acceptance that divine revelation³⁰ logically presupposes the knowledge that God exists") and was rudely taken to task by the logic of Ockham. Since, in the estimate of William, no cogent proof could be offered for the existence of God, theology and philosophy must by necessity be considered autonomous disciplines.³¹ Theology, as Ockham envisioned it, by its very character is restricted to "concepts about God"³² bearing little or no relation to his secularity which antedated Cox's utopia by some six hundred and fifty years.

Luther and Calvin both acknowledged a praembula fidei, though not directly employing such an expression, while witnessing at first hand the decisive effect of Ockham's "razor" on the secular beard. A justifiable emphasis on a notion of radical sin was deemed a necessary corrective to what the Reformers considered a one-sided interpretation of

29. Calvin, p. 12.

30. Copleston, op.cit., p. 23.

31. Ibid.,

32. Ibid., p. 99.

the theological doctrine of Man. This emphasis caused a yet further emphasis on the reason's inability to function without the presupposition of faith. All these factors, coupled with a secular world come of age, provided a surprisingly receptive audience for the Reformers --- an audience seeking an autonomous national state, autonomous logical and scientific methodologies, and ultimately a man who fancies himself to be autonomous of God.

CHAPTER V --- THE AGE OF REASON

Calvin, as he spoke of the self-evident quality of the "clear representations given by God in the mirror of his works", seemed more than mildly disturbed when he said, "in the present day, there are many men of monstrous dispositions, who.....will not say that they are distinguished from the brutes by chance; but they ascribe it to nature, which they consider as the author of all things, and remove God out of sight".¹ The fact that the reformer could speak of "many men of monstrous dispositions" would provide better than a slight indication of the secular world's appropriation of the "Via Moderna" even at the beginning of the 16th century. A further indication of the changing temperament to which the Christian apologist was forced to address himself can be seen in the work of Phillip Melancthon, who served as Calvin's counterpart in the Lutheran camp. Melancthon attempted to infuse a sagging Thomism with a new viability by declining that "divine revelation is addressed to the reason and the intellect" because it is solely within the nature of this address that "man is separated from the beast". He firmly places himself within the tradition of Thomas in

1. Calvin, op.cit., p. 11.

contrast to Scotus and Ockham by seeing the priority of intellect to will within the mechanics of the salvatory process.²

The post-reformation era may be well classified as an almost frantic attempt to maintain the integrity of a "praebula fidei" in a world which deemed itself sufficiently come of age that it no longer felt logically compelled to consider Genesis 1:1 as a prime axiom. It must be admitted at the same time, albeit ironically, that genuine religious motivations contributed to this movement of emancipation. Ockham's logic sought to protect the sovereignty of God while Luther's two kingdom ethic attempted to render human life intelligible after his merciless assault on a semi-Pelagianism --- yet both the nominalist logic and the two kingdom ethic inadvertently found themselves appropriated by those without the church as well as within. Ian Barbour, in his previously cited work, points out quite incisively just how these religious concerns illumined the path for an autonomous science. Science reacted to institutional religion³ by propoiting an "interest in nature for its own sake".

2. Jaroslav Pelikan, From Luther to Kierkegaard (St.Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), p.28.

3. Barbour, op.cit., p. 45.

Here incipient science repudiated what Paul Tillich calls the "ontological principle (in which)....man is immediately aware of something unconditional which is the prius of the separation and interaction of subject and object, theoretically as well as practically".⁴ Then, as now, the Scientist, in refusing to admit a praebula fidei or metaphysical determinism, simply harkens back to Ockham's logic in seeing a transcendent first cause as being irrelevant and unnecessary when one could posit an infinite regression of finite causes with equal facility.

The second and third contributions of religion to the growth of science, according to Barbour, are not so much reaction to a position of faith as they are an actual agreement in principle. Barbour states "the doctrine of creation implies that the details of nature can be known only by observing them".⁵ One need only turn to the previously cited paraphrase of Thomas by G. K. Chesterton to realize how deeply imbued such a sentiment had become in theological expression whether it be the "mirror" of Calvin or the "mask" of Luther. Yet, without the preamble

4. Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture (New York: Oxford University Press 1959), p. 22.

5. Barbour, p. 46.

of faith which presupposes a subsistent identity in God, such observation emerges little more than the empirical investigation of cause and effect. The final contribution, which Barbour classifies as "an affirmative attitude toward nature"⁶ suffers a similar fate as the one preceding it. While St. Francis and St. Thomas see an inherent integrity in nature, they are quick to point out that a preamble of faith is necessary in a Creator to preclude a deification of either nature or the method by which it is studied. Once again, if one omits the initial premise of God he must be willing to accept the risk of a positivism which can produce an unbridled optimism or an inexorable despair (which we shall witness later in our study).

If we may "read between the lines" of the theologians of the period we may grasp the threat scientific methodology posed to the church. The orthodox father Hollaz appeared to be sufficiently agitated at this growing mentality that he refused to accept the classical position that there is nothing in the intellect which is not first in the senses. When Hollaz speculated concerning a remnant of the divine image which persisted after the Fall, he

6. Ibid., p. 47.

quickly observed that such a remnant would not be dependent upon the senses.⁷ The traditional argument and rationale for the most notorious product of the century following the Reformation, the verbally inerrant Bible, as one of a necessary counterclaim to Papal infallibility may well merit closer scrutiny if we be sufficiently cognizant of the growth of scientific methodology. While the Roman Church had a definite polemical instrument in its venerable tradition, it would be well to remember that the infallibility of the historical pontificate was not officially dogmatized until 1870.⁸ The doctrine of plenary inspiration, which had an effect tantamount to turning the witness of God's activity into a sacral recipe book, created a source of ultimate authority serving as a Protestant appositive to the Pope --- but which, in effect, created a counterclaim to a pervading empiricism. Werner Elert, one of the most comprehensive historians of the Reformation period, ascribes this phenomenon as growing out of the fear that the "possibility that doubt as to the reliability of the Biblical witness (by exposing them to the same rigors of methodology) endangers faith". If a

7. Pelikan, ^{op.cit.} p. 66.

8. Jaroslav Pelikan, Luther the Expositor (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), p. 73.

doctrine of inspiration were evolved leaving God the sole author of Scripture, the Bible would contain only "words of God" and therefore, by definition, "binding doctrine".⁹

The inerrant Bible, as an apologetic device, was more than a mere antidote to Papal authority. It represented an attempt to place the validity of the Christian witness on a newer and more secure foundation after its earlier bases were, as we have seen in Barbour's summary, preempted by forces outside the religious community. However, it contained within it certain incipient dangers which its adherents have never successfully been able to defend. The "Paper Pope" of the orthodox period allowed himself, albeit inadvertently, to be allied with Ockham's nominalistic logic insofar as it assigned this infallibility to the realm of faith and in so doing (in Copleston's words) "snapped the link between metaphysics and theology"¹⁰ by assigning to faith an absolutely supreme truth capable of apprehension without the mediation of the sensible world. While such a mentality by no means was the

9. Werner Elert, The Structure of Lutheranism (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), p. 108.

10. Copleston, Vol. 3, Part I, p. 24.

major factor in the development of philosophical idealism, it would be erroneous were we not to admit the influence it wielded especially on a Lutheran Kant or Hegel. This same depreciation of the knowledge offered by the sensible world is not without its dangers. Gustaf Aulen points to just such a danger in a verbal inspiration doctrine when he says "that it degrades the act of God in Christ. The event of Christ loses its dominant position; it is no longer the standard by which everything is measured, or the divining rod which guides us to the springs of living water."¹¹ While we would not dispute the implications of Aulen's argument at this point, we would simply wonder if the plenary inspiration of the Bible as an apologetic device does not do violence to the central affirmation around which all apology proceeds --- the incarnation of God in human history.

Such Protestant tendencies were not without parallel in Catholicism. As early as the inception of the 15th century, a full hundred years before the Reformation, Nicholas of Cusa declared God to be the "coincidentia oppositorum" which Copleston defines as "the synthesis of

11. Gustaf Aulen, The Faith of the Christian Church (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1960), p. 68.

opposites in a unique and absolutely infinite being".¹²
He continued to say that the lowest stage of human knowledge was sense-perception and reason, though qualitatively higher in facility, could at best only "conjecture" concerning what it has received. What ultimately is needed in Nicholas' system is "intellectus" --- a superior activity of the mind which reveals and makes comprehensible¹³ what sense-perception and discursive reason cannot fathom. Such an incipient notion which (as the Augustinian-Franciscan illumination theories) carries within it more than a mild suggestion of independence and autonomy of the mind was fated to undergo a variety of expression and refinement in future philosophical inquiry. A child of Jesuit education, Rene Descartes, effected a thought revolution of no mean proportion when he decided (owing to the pervading scientific empiricism) to doubt everything that could be doubted, for to doubt, in a sense reminiscent of¹⁴ Nicholas of Cusa, was to think. Salvation from complete

12. Copleston, ^{op.cit.} Vol. 3, Part II, p. 41.

13. Ibid., p. 43.

14. Lewis White Beck, "Editors Introduction" as cited in Immanuel Kant, Prolegomena To Any Future Metaphysics (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1950), p. IX.

doubt came only from what Windleband calls his "Augustinian argument of the Reality of the conscious nature¹⁵ or essence" which enables him to retain his philosophic optimism as well as his "neo-Anselmic" proof for the existence of God. The pervasive tendency which Windleband later calls "the mechanistic despiritualisation of¹⁶ nature", which was influential in molding the Cartesian system of Descartes, was instrumental as well in calling forth a reaction from a younger Catholic contemporary named Blaise Pascal. Paul Tillich lauds Pascal as the "first existentialist" insofar as he represented a "protest against...man as object". This response of Pascal, in Tillich's estimate, grew out of the admission that "reality as such has ceased being meaningful to¹⁷ man". Were we to place this remark within the context of the argument we wish to develop, could we not say that what began as an incision by Ockham's razor into the classical expressions of the interdependence of

15. Windleband, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 391.

16. Ibid., p. 403.

17. Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture, op.cit., p. 46.

philosophy and theology had now finally effected a complete severance of the two? Metaphysical inquiry no longer returned by definition to a dictum of faith but rather attempted to plumb the depths of what appeared to be, because of the dissemination of Newtonian physics, an autonomous, mechanistic world machine. If one were to accept such a world view with complete credulity and still cling to a notion of a transcendent first cause, he could postulate a machine designer, as Foigny first did¹⁸ in his book Terre Australe Connue published in 1676.

This approach, known popularly as "Deism", repudiates (in spite of its apparent similarity to) the classical proofs for God's existence for the very same reason that the facial features of Henry Ford could not be inferred from observing the front end of a "Model T". A declaration of faith in a first cause, a prime mover --- even if he should assume the benign demeanor of a little old watchmaker --- still retained an aura of intellectual respectability because too many dark corners remained in a god-autonomous cosmology for lack of sufficient alternative theories to explain them.

18. L. Charles Birch, Nature and God (London: S.C.M. Press, Ltd., 1965), p. 13.

Perhaps the most inventive and comprehensive reaction to the tendencies of both Empiricism and Cartesianism was embodied in the figure of Immanuel Kant. Responding to the inquiries of Descartes and the English Empiricist David Hume, Kant asked "whether such a thing as metaphysics¹⁹ be even possible at all." "If (metaphysics) be a science", asks Kant, "how is it that it cannot, like other sciences, obtain universal and lasting recognition? If not, how can it maintain its pretensions, and keep the human mind in²⁰ suspense with hopes never ceasing, yet never fulfilled?" He praises Hume for his attack on those who accept autonomous reason as an almost religious principle yet questioned very critically Hume's conclusion which rendered reason "nothing but a bastard of imagination, impregnated by²¹ experience". Having exposed the weaknesses in Descartes and Hume (within the limits of subjective thought and extension, and passive reception of sense perception without any verifiable necessary connection), Kant offered an

19. Immanuel Kant, Prolegomena To Any Future Metaphysics (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1950), p. 3.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid., pp.5-6.

alternative to the legitimacy of metaphysical knowledge by attributing it to "pure understanding" and "pure reason"²². Man thus did not perceive an extension of himself nor was he passively pelted with sense perceptions; he contained a priori within himself the ability to foster order and coherence upon a separately existent external world. Kant believed, in much the same way as Chesterton's previously cited paraphrase of Thomas, "that there is a middle field of facts, which are given by the senses to be the subject matter of the reason".

A somewhat more unique response to the dilemma imposed on religious thought by "scientifism", insofar as it was the product of a theologian, was given by Friedrich Schleiermacher. Where Kant put forth subjective idealism employing "pure understanding" and "pure reason", Schleiermacher advanced a notion of "feeling" --- the point in the human ego where "willing" and "thinking" are still one. It is at the point of "feeling" that the Absolute or Divine is disclosed to man or, in the words of Emil Brunner, this "most individual and subjective element of our nature is the place where the principle behind the world is revealed"²³. Brunner continues in his assessment

22. Ibid., p. 13.

23. Emil Brunner, The Philosophy of Religion (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1937), p. 43.

by saying that "by being identified with feeling, religion attains an independent standing as mystical experience side by side with science and morality".²⁴ God is thereby removed from the arena of the sense-reason debate by presupposing him within the realm of an indefinable. Though we would in no way depreciate the insight of Schleiermacher, we would only wonder if his attempt did not have virtually the same effect as the inerrant Bible of Orthodoxy and the little old watchmaker of Deism by removing God from the field and placing him safely outside of the concerns which demand attention within the "secular" area of existence. Georg Hegel, in a source no longer available to the author, once took Schleiermacher to task by contending that his dog "felt" and he himself preferred some alternative claim to man's uniqueness. While Schleiermacher's reduction of the sense of God to the human synapses did relatively little to restore in man a cognizance of his metaphysical determinism which we have previously defined, insofar as it would lead to his meaningful integration into and appreciation of the physical world, it did represent a decided advance over the formulation of William Paley's Natural Theology which, though concurrent with Schleiermacher (1802), simply gave deism a Christian baptism.

24. Ibid.

While the contingencies of scope and space once again limit our treatment of the time following the Reformation and antedating the publication of The Origin of Species, we may render some provisional conclusions concerning this period. Once the conjunction of faith and reason as it was known in its classical sense had been shattered, it became incumbent to find a suitable and workable substitute for coherent thought in the separate realms of church and society. Since the world no longer engaged in Thomas' "conversio ad phantasmagoria", nor could it see any value in postulating Luther's two kingdoms when one would do very nicely, neither was it imperative to seek out the effects of God in a natural order which functioned as a well-oiled machine, God ceased being the necessary initial premise and began being considered as an accretion from a bygone day demanding little other than polite veneration. Several unique attempts were undertaken to infuse this "initial premise" with a somewhat greater measure of respectability --- not the least of which were notions of plenary inspiration of the Bible, Cartesian and Proto-existential reactions to empiricism, attempts at en rapport with science through a deistic cosmology, a subjective idealism --- albeit strongly anthropocentric, and a "feeling" of the absolute. They all

shared one common trait insofar as they jealously strove to protect a uniqueness in the human personality which set it qualitatively apart from the rest of nature. All, in addition, were further buttressed in their endeavor because those aforementioned dark places still remained in a God-autonomous cosmology. In the year 1837, a young man set sail on H.M.S. Beagle to engage himself in intensive biological study. While he was by no means the first to undertake such study, his work was destined to become an alternative source of light which illumined a secular cosmology to make the most potentially dangerous frontal attack upon traditional religious presuppositions.

CHAPTER VI: DARWIN AND HIS CHILDREN

The Bible -- the commendable film production of Dino de Larentis should be praised for its heroic attempt to present visually a literal six day creationism while at the same time paying due cognizance to generally accepted scientific theory. The characteristic division of the waters is portrayed in the image of volcanic eruption as a concession to the geologist while organic life proceeds out of the primordial sea to placate the marine biologist. However, at the point of man's inclusion into the schema of things, Genesis 1 proved to be a rather inflexible script! Contrary to the predispositions of scientific opinion, man is metamorphasized before the viewers eyes from the dust of the earth --- a unique creature whose inception was wholly singular in quality when compared to the rest of the animate, organic creation.

It was immediately apparent to the writer that even this noble effort by the finest technicians in the cinematic art could be only relatively successful in infusing an archiac cosmology with an element of plausibility --- especially when just such a cosmology is at worst accepted with a "sacrificium intellectus" in the name of religion and at best with a tacit, yet honest, rejection.

Just as there are militant advocates of the plenary

inspiration theory who clutch their morocco bound volumes of inerrant guidance fully prepared to do battle with all those deviating from their opinion, are there much larger numbers of urbane creatures who simply cannot fathom why the churches have become so agitated over such an "insignificant" matter. This latter faction proposed the "simple" substitution of acknowledged biological theory for the cosmologies of Genesis 1 and 2. After all, could not God have been the initiator and director of the evolutionary process, molding his creation in metaphorical "days" constitutive of the geological epochs?

Such a substitution would be fine except for the fact that it gives credulity to neither evolutionary theory nor the Biblical witness¹. Ian Barbour, to whom we alluded at the beginning of our study punctures this conveniently devised equivocal bubble by documenting the far reaching consequences of a strict evolutionism. The inherent importance in change¹ precluded a static world view and went so far as to declare that the notion of "stability" was little more than an illusion produced by man's limited time scale.² Needless to say, Darwin's convincing portrayal

1. Barbour, op.cit., p.86.

2. Ibid., p. 87.

of nature as in a state of flux literally drove the "little old watchmaker" into oblivion. How could something deemed complete be still in a state of flux? Was the creation as it had been traditionally understood simply a germinal creation which still awaited structural fulfillment? "If I am to understand my progression from the ape", one might question, "what proof have I that it was God who provided the necessary impetus for me to forsake bananas as a diet staple in preference for something more sophisticated?". It is more than mildly difficult to conceive of an underlying design when the organism is reacted upon and modified by external forces. Unless one comes armed with an ironclad doctrine of providence and is not adverse to equating human personality with sheer absurdity, he must seriously consider random "chance" as a very real yet virtually elusive factor in his destiny. By a single terminal substitution we might wonder with Pliny the Elder, to whom we have previously referred if we are not, in truth, "so much at the mercy of (chance) that (chance) herself, by whom God is proved uncertain, takes the place of God?"³

Secondly, a strict evolutionism declares an organic interdependence of all components of nature.⁴ Superficially

3. Pliny, op.cit. Natural History II, 22.

4. Barbour, p. 87.

this seems as little more than a truism to which all may ascribe. What could be more innocuous than admitting that man is part of nature even if this should place his metamorphosis from dust on rather tenuous ground? One century ago, as now, men seemed surprisingly willing to make intellectual concessions concerning the constitution of their mortal shell provided their qualitative uniqueness from the beast remained unsullied. This was, in fact, by no means peculiar to the 19th century insofar as Augustinian-Franciscan illumination theories, Ockham's jealousy to protect the sovereignty of God, and Hollaz's inerrant Bible were similar in motivation and purpose. Man's ability to engage in intuitive thought and discursive reasoning was considered his God-endowed qualitative "Magna Charta" of separation from the lower orders of nature. Darwin's coup to this hallowed presupposition was thrust when he declared that this was completely consonant with evolution. For the sake of brevity, we will include the concluding emphases of Darwin (the problem of "evolutionary ethics" and the premise that the cipher "nature" included man and his culture⁵) within the body of our present discussion. Darwin asserted that this uniqueness, traditionally understood to transcend nature, could just as readily be incorporated in

5. Ibid., pp.87-88.

theory of evolution by its presentation as a refinement of a tribalism differing only in degree between man and any other higher animal.⁶

While the notion of flux was indeed pivotal to Darwin's formulation and served as the basis for his theoretical construct, the correspondent notions of organic interdependence, ethical evolutionism, and man and his culture subsumed under, and capable of observation by the "laws" of nature, issued a far more direct challenge to the institutional church. Sufficient light had now been cast into the dark places of a god-autonomous cosmology to make more than mildly respectable. Herbert Spencer appropriated Darwin for his laissez-faire philosophy of private enterprise which he aptly called "Social Darwinism",⁷ the cynical art of Thomas Hardy imbued Darwinism when it masterfully described the Egdon Heath of England's Dorchester district as sullen, unmoved; awaiting only one last crisis --- "the final overthrow";⁸ a seventeen year old boy named Sigmund Freud devoured the new theory and declared it to "hold out hopes of the extraordinary advance in our understanding of the world"⁹ --- who, in his major work into the psychology of religion, Totem and Taboo, could

6. Ibid., pp.91-92.

7. Richard Hofstadter, "Social Darwinism in American Thought" as quoted in Ian G. Barbour, Issues in Science and Religion, op.cit., p. 95.

8. Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native (New York: New American Library, 1959), p.12.

9. Helen Walker Puner, Freud-His Life and Mind (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1947), p. 48.

assert that his own Judaic religious heritage had borne out Darwin's conjecture that originally men lived in hoards,¹⁰ each hoard dominated by a single powerful man.

As more and more of the world's institutional expressions, to use a phrase coined later by the German theologian Bonhoeffer, had sufficiently "come of age" to see that they could still function rather nicely without the cipher "GOD", the church appeared to be doomed to utter impotency. Martin Marty's The New Shape of American Religion chronicles two attempts to counteract such development which were notable for their diametrically opposite methods. The great "fifth awakening" which Dwight L. Moody brought to the English speaking world was for Marty "a new band of fidelity to march out against infidelity" while "awakening" number six led by Billy Sunday is considered as little more than "last gasp old time revivalism adding to (traditional revivalism) this mixture little that was new except noise".¹¹ This raw boned attempt to do battle with the Darwin-spawn forces of infidelity was contrasted with the "Social Gospel" which sought its own peculiar entry on to the evolutionary bandwagon by declaring it was entirely possible to "Christianize" the social order because of God's divine immanence in the structures of society.¹² Man is thus portrayed with

10. Ibid., p. 188.

11. Martin Marty, The New Shape of American Religion (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), p. 9

12. Ibid., pp. 161-162.

an afterglow of Semi-Pelagianism, a colloquial "good guy" capable of transforming his world with what its chief exponent Rauschenbusch called "moral force"¹³ and doing battle with an imperfect society with its competitive customs and bad institutions which are given the vague label¹⁴ "superpersonal forces of evil".

While the revivalist and the social gospeleer held an antipathy to each other comparable to the Hatfields and the MC Coys, they were ironically consigned to the same oblivion by the cannons of the first great war and the headlines of depression once the post-war prosperity balloon had burst. The superfarcial "decision-making" of revivalism withered like the seed cast in shallow soil as the social gospel felt its optimism choked by the thorns it once thought eliminated. Only when the postmortem was pronounced on these two heroic-yet incomplete attempts was theology ready for a comprehensive reconstruction.

13. H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture (New York: Harper and Row, 1951), pp.100-101.

14. Ibid., p. 112.

CHAPTER VII -- THEOLOGY IN RECONSTRUCTION

In histypical terse fashion, Noah Webster defines "reconstruct" (according to the more abstract second meaning) as "to build up, from remaining parts and other evidence, an image of what something was in its original and complete form". The critical question growing out of the strife of World War I and the deprivation of economic depression could be contained in the single word "WHY?" Why was God relegated to a position of utter impotency? Why was "revivalism" little more than religious stimuli for the spinal ganglia and the liberal formulations and the social evangels exposed as being more ethereal than real? A highly probable answer may be that these attempts were analogous to applying a bright new coat of paint to an existing superstructure yielding little more than a shiny anachronism when what was needed was a complete leveling to the solid foundation in order to make reconstruction possible. The brief historical sketch we have undertaken has revealed to us the truth of our analogy. As we attempt to study the "Reconstructionists" (whom we shall limit to Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, Karl Rahner, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, and Paul Tillich) we will pay due cognizance to the broader sentiments they represent as well as their own peculiar contributions. Included within our study will be an analysis of the germinal bases of their articulated systems in the

history of dogma. This will be done to confirm one of the emphases considered at the beginning of our study which envisioned a concurrent development of doctrinal formulae from which even the "Reconstructionists" can trace a linear ancestry.

THE NEW ORTHODOXY

Had the world, who deemed itself sufficiently grown to sever the umbilical cord which bound it to the church, really succeeded in exposing God as a rosy-cheeked antiquarian? Was "Religion" literally fighting for its life in a world who, for all intensive purposes, refused to take it seriously and who looked instead to Darwin for its cosmological theory, the positivism of Comte for a description of its social structures, and to Freud for its insights into human nature? In 1918, a German theologian named Karl Barth answered these questions with a resounding "NEIN". The "death of God" theologians currently in vogue ought well to harken back to Barth who realized that God encounters man on his terms, and that man, in and of himself, does not have the power to effect the converse of this statement. Barth, however, in his reaction against such a conversion, paid his own peculiar price for his reformulation of the faith. Just as Ockham bifurcated man into a religious animal and a political animal in his attempt to protect the sovereignty of God, Barth

crushed the traditional "analogia entis" in favor of an "analogia relations"¹ wholly dependent upon the divine initiative. In a poem entitled "Die Neuen Heiligen", John Updike, having exposed the broad side of his blade to Kierkegaard and Kafka, turned his attention to Barth with the following words:

"Karl Barth, more healthy,
and married, and Swiss,
lived longer, yet took
small comfort from this;
Nein! he cried, rooting
in utter despair
the Credo that Culture²
left up in the air."

Updike's dry humor paints far better than the author's slightly overbearing verbiage the dilemma in which Barth found himself. In a somewhat less polemical tone, Barth goes so far as to say that "man can know by his own power according to the measure of his natural powers, his understanding, his feeling, will be at most something like a supreme being, an absolute nature, the idea of an utterly free power, of a being towering over everything".³ Yet this,

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1. Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics III/2 (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1936), p. 325.
 2. John Updike, Telephone Poles and Other Poems (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p.69.
 3. Karl Barth, Dogmatics in Outline (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), p. 23.

by no means, represents a concession to an "analogia entis" or its attendant arguments of God's existence, being clearly perceptible through his external effects. He denies any such attempt with the strict qualification that "this absolute and supreme being, the ultimate and most profound, this 'thing in itself', has nothing to do with God. It is part of the intuitions and marginal possibilities of man's thinking, man's contrivance. Man is able to think this being; but he has not thereby thought God. God is thought and known when in his freedom God makes Himself apprehensible".⁴ Barth continues "knowledge of God takes place where there is an actual experience that God speaks".⁵ The pivotal question at this point may well be "what means does God choose to speak?" According to Barth, it is impossible to glean a perceptible knowledge of God from nature by his repudiation of the "analogia entis". Once again, he concludes that "knowledge of God is a knowledge completely effected and determined from the side of its object, from the side of God" although it is presumed to be "a relative knowledge, a knowledge imprisoned within the limits of the creaturely".⁶

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., p. 24.

Shifting his emphasis from God to man, Barth rejects the historicity of the early chapters of Genesis and regards them instead as "saga" bearing little relation to a proper understanding of man.⁷ He finds his clue to this problem by asserting it to be "a simple deduction of anthropology from Christology" although there can be no question of a direct equation of human nature as we know it in ourselves with the human nature of Jesus⁸. Barth here in no way attempts to provide us with an insight into the pristine nature of Adam before the "FALL" as he desires to show the prototypical character of Christ as it exemplifies what God intended human nature to be. For Barth, "Jesus is man as God willed and created him"⁹. "The truth of Jesus Christ is not one truth among others; it is the truth, the universal truth that creates all truth as surely as it is the truth of God, the prima veritas which is also the ultima veritas".¹⁰

America's indigenous contribution to the "Neo-Orthodox" movement rests in the figure of Reinhold Niebuhr, currently Professor Emeritus of Christian Ethics at New

7. Ibid., pp.50-52.

8. Church Dogmatics III/2, p. 47.

9. Ibid., p. 50.

10. Dogmatics in Outline, p. 26.

York's Union Theological Seminary. Niebuhr's approach differs from Barth's insofar as, in his major work, The Nature and Destiny of Man, he begins with man as the given. He deals with what he calls the "paradoxes of human self-knowledge" which point to two facts. The first, which Niebuhr deems most obvious is that "man is a child of nature, subject to its vicissitudes, compelled by its necessities, driven by its impulses, and confined within the brevity of the years which nature permits its varied organic form, allowing them some, but not too much latitude. The other less obvious fact", according to Niebuhr, "is that man is a spirit who stands outside of nature, life, himself, his reason, and the world".¹¹ Where Barth relegates self transcendence, for all intensive purposes, to the fact that God breaks in and provides content for man's finitude, making man little more than a receptor of divine action, Niebuhr exhibits a far greater sensitivity to the peculiarly human agency within the transcendent process. He further makes his unique contribution to a reconstructed theology by his dismissal (as Barth) of the Genesis 3 narrative as "historical - literalistic illusion"¹² in preference for a definition of evil and sin which embodies the ironic character of man's self-transcendence within the bases of his finitude. Yet, Niebuhr is particularly careful to avoid making

11. Reinhold Niebuhr, op.cit., p. 3.

12. Ibid., p. 150.

finitude the concomitant and result of sin. He declares sin and evil to be "a consequence of his inevitable though not necessary unwillingness to acknowledge his dependence (on God), and to accept his finiteness, and to admit to his insecurity, an unwillingness which involves him in the vicious circle of accentuating the insecurity from which he seeks escape".¹³

Barth and Niebuhr evidence remarkable similarities yet display interesting contrasting emphases which we can trace back to the roots of doctrinal development. When Barth propounded the "Credo that Culture left up in the air", his motives were wholly in the name of faith. Just as Ockham's nominalism sought to protect the sovereignty of a god who was being transformed by some into a sterile logical premise, Barth uttered a resounding "Nein" to the notion of an emasculated God drawn along in the tide of social progress. Yet, as Ockham's logic paid the price of severing a once unified man into a homo fides and a homo politicus, Barth unwittingly gave further credence to a God-autonomous world by declaring "God" and "faith" to be a superadded inclusion from above. Thus man is driven to his knees by nothing save God's verbal address which is, thereby, the only thing capable of making man transcend his creatureliness. The cosmology of Genesis is clearly placed in a minor key in Barth's system as humanity sees its impotency when confronted by the figure of Christ.

13. Ibid., p. 150.

Niebuhr, by contrast, places self transcendence within the capability of man. Man is not simply addressed by the transcendent "other" but contains within him the unique potential to transcend himself. While finitude is part of the givenness of the creaturely world for Barth, it is at the inexorable root of anxiety for Niebuhr. Man's aim exceeds the boundaries of his physical identity and his ambition stumbles over the barrier of his biological non-existence. Where Barth displays a spiritual affinity to Ockham, Niebuhr reflects a proximity to Augustine who declared that memory was a legitimate function of self transcendence and that human life pointed beyond itself.¹⁴ Though Barth was clearly an eloquent reaction to a saccharine, out-dated liberalism by putting forth the transcendence of a God who was rapidly being immanentized, his "wholly other" God could simply be deemed an item of indifference to those who desired to remain oblivious to the audible word. Niebuhr, however, provided more fertile food for thought insofar as he infused an Augustinian hunger for God with new meaning and urgency.

FERMENT IN ROMAN CATHOLICISM

In the encyclical "Lamentabili Sane", St. Pius X roundly condemned what he numbered as the sixth error of

14. Ibid., pp.152-156.

the so-called "Modernists". This heinous error declared that "since the deposit of Faith contains only revealed truths, the church has no right to pass judgment on the assertions of the human sciences".¹⁵ The sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth "errors" rendered anathema by Pius X also asserted that "scientific progress demands that the concepts of Christian doctrine concerning God, creation, revelation, the Person of the Incarnate Word, and Redemption be adjusted" and that "modern Catholicism can be reconciled with true science only if it is transformed into a non-dogmatic Christianity; that is to say, into a broad and liberal Protestantism".¹⁶ The magisterium of the Catholic Church, in its characteristic encyclopedic manner, managed to draw the loose strings of dispute (affecting both Catholicism and Protestantism) together into a relatively concise statement of the problem confronting the institutional churches. Does the Church deal only with "revealed truths" in a Barthian sense? Has the church a prophetic role to fulfill when accosted by the (sometimes) equally dogmatic pronouncements of modern science? Is "scientific progress" a creature of such overwhelming magnitude that the concepts of traditional Christianity must not only undergo a process of re-articulation but one of "readjustment"

15. Anne Freemantle, ed., The Papal Encyclicals in their Historical Content (New York: New American Library, 1956), pp.202-203.

16. Ibid., p.207.

as well? Finally, must we accommodate ourselves in order to be reconciled with a "true" science?

Naturally, the errors condemned by St. Pius represent the mentality of another age --- an age which saw as inviolable the logical application of microcosmic causal relationships to the infinitely more complex macrocosm. This was an era similar to the one which produced "the little old watch-maker" --- an era in which the creature attempted to make provision for the creator within the creation lest he (according to the creature) pale away and die. During the period, science was deemed as "true" because of its "verifiability" while religion was consigned to the more ethereal study of physic phenomena.

Pius XII, in his "humani generis", gave spiritual counsel to a world which no longer held such a cavalier assurance in the "truth" of science yet who had to make an effective response to such concomitants as "immanentism" "pragmatism", dialectical materialism (which, in its more fully developed, post-Marxian expression, was a curious nuptial of Hegel and Darwin) and "existentialism" --- the new rival " for supremacy in what Pius XII calls "the philosophy of error". All contain the same error because as they, according to the Pope, "leave the unchanging essences of things out of sight, and concentrate all their attention on particular existences".¹⁷ Yet, despite this, Pius could still assert in the same encyclical that

17. Ibid., p.284.

"the Teaching of the Church leaves the doctrine of Evolution an open question, as long as it confines its speculations to the development, from other living matter already in existence, of the human body".¹⁸ Rapid qualification is given to this seeming antithesis to Pius X with the reminder¹⁹ "that souls are immediately created by God" which bears more than just a polite resemblance to our earlier assertion that man is extraordinarily ready to examine his mortal coil while showing extreme reticence to conjecture concerning his power source.

The pivotal question, as Pius XII sees it, which involves one's theological presuppositions, is whether there was a singular, unique creation of a man Adam. The denial of this event, called polygenism, would by necessity have to posit²⁰ an earthly race of men not literally descended from Adam, who, if we take Catholic doctrine to its logical conclusion, could conceivably not be afflicted with the linear and genetic transmission of man's predisposition to sin. A theologian of no less a reputation than Karl Rahner devotes 68 pages of his dogmatic corpus to what the writer feels to be a "half-hearted" justification for a singular Adam concluding with an extensive four point argument as "a metaphysical proof of monogenism" developing from the principal assertion that

18. Ibid., p.287.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

man as man represents a divine institution and not a
"terrestrial cause".²¹

Although Rahner (who may be colloquially considered a "mainline" theologian despite his affinity for Martin Heidegger) genuflected politely to the wisdom of "Humani generis" in his affirmation of monogenism, his chapter on "The Dignity and Freedom of Man" reflects quite a different mentality.¹ Here Rahner effects a fusion of a "neo-orthodox" vocabulary with traditional Catholic theological emphases. He begins his development at a point which would offend neither the Thomist nor the Barthian by saying that the content of Revelation is superior to rational metaphysical knowledge.²² What man "essentially" knows of God, himself and the world, he receives by revelation which renders him capable of employing a "transcendental method" very similar in expression to Thomas' "conversio ad phantasmagoria"²³ as he perceives the given world. Man's essential dignity rests in the fact that within "spatio-temporal history" he experiences an openness to the love of Christ. This dignity cannot be non-existent in some individual because of its character as divine gift though God may choose to have it "exist as something denied, as foundation for damnation and judgment".²⁴ Here one may raise an interesting question

21. Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations-Vol. I (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961), p. 292.

22. Theological Investigations-Vol. II, p. 236.

23. Ibid., pp.236-237.

24. Ibid., p. 238, p. 240.

(in light of the polygenism-monogenism controversy) insofar as since this dignity is a donum of God, why need this preclude polygenism? Especially when one admits the semi-Pelagian flavor of Catholic theology, why may it not be within the realm of possibility to see Adam as "mankind" as well as single man-making him a symbol of perennial condition as well as (and hopefully in lieu of) an original misdeed?

Rahner counters this question, at least in part by declaring man's dignity is threatened by external events which (symptomatic of the 20th century) tend to depersonalize him and obscure his identity and well as his own rebellion against his ontological nature. Rahner is here quick to observe that the former is always the result of the latter²⁵ --- and not the converse as the liberal 19th Century Europeans and the American social-gospeleers believed. With the classical doctrine of original sin acting as the only barrier which (in the writer's estimation) prohibits him from admitting a wholly "realized" notion of man viewing the Adamic sin sui generis in each human personality, Rahner articulates several concluding statements concerning the nature of Man. The first statement, which causes one outside the Catholic Church to be just a bit mystified, is that man carries within himself the potential to realize his essential dignity "without any supernatural help of grace and external revelation

25. Ibid., p. 242.

of God".²⁶ However, because of the "long temporal duration" given man to realize this dignity, he needs the help of God's grace.²⁷ These phrases are rife with contradiction and seem only to nourish the stereotypes Protestants harbor concerning Roman Catholics. The second of these concluding statements is decidedly more fruitful in that it declares that man's dignity is dependent upon the fact that he is "end-directed"²⁸ --- or, in other words, not only musing about his beginnings (monogenists take note!) but casting his eyes ahead to see where he is moving -- or being led.

A second Catholic theologian, emphatically not on the "mainline" yet exerting just as profound an influence as Karl Rahner, is Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. While one clearly feels Rahner's theological exhaustiveness may rival that of St. Thomas in certain respects, one may wonder if Teilhard is a scientist with religious sensibilities or a Religious whose faith has led him to a geologist's pick. As a Jesuit-paleontologist, Teilhard's thoughts and motives represent a curious compound, as this term may indicate, of religion and science. Rahner and Teilhard exhibit an affinity since both are scholastics bound within the vows of the same Order and both exhibit an understanding of man on the basis of his "end-direction". However, it would not be

26. Ibid., p. 243.

27. Ibid., p. 244.

28. Ibid., p. 2 45.

unfair to either man if we were to say that this is the point at which any affinity is terminated. Rahner expends nearly 70 carefully written pages to justify the singular creation of Adam while Teilhard, in his two major works, The Divine Milieu and The Phenomenon of Man does not even mention Adam once.

Man, for Teilhard, is bound up within a linear-chronological process in which he, along with the rest of creation, is caught up in a process of "involution" in which he becomes more intensively aware of the end to which he and the world are being directed. He is "experiencing a coalescence or gravitation of these divergences and convergences back to a central axis of meaning" --- a phenomenon which Teilhard describes finally as "PLANETISATION" --- eloquently yet vaguely envisioned as "the expected plenitude of the earth".²⁹

When pressured by the secular scientist of the Julian Huxley ilk to provide sufficient cause to postulate an "Alpha-Omega God" when "planetisation" can, at least in theory, just as easily issue forth from a god-autonomous, thoroughly optimistic (in the sense acceptable to the logical positivist), socio-biological, humanistic determinism, Teilhard alludes to three basic beliefs to which he is committed. The first, a belief in "progress" which he

29. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, The Phenomenon of Man (New York: Harper and Row, 1959), p. 212.

admits is undemonstrable to science (if understood as purposeful direction) yet to which he clings as a faithful hope of "an inevitable perfection" inherent within the created, evolving world.³⁰ The second belief, put rather simply, is the inference of an Architect by an observation of the house, and the further inference of a master plan on the basis of the initial premise. "Hence", in Teilhard's words, "belief in unity".³¹ And, as the second belief postulates Alpha-Omega by his efforts (in the noble tradition of the School of St. Victor), the final belief put up for display by Teilhard attempts to find rationale for God qua person by asserting a supreme center or point of cohesion -- "the special binder or cement which will associate our lives together --- hence, belief in a supremely attractive centre which has personality".³²

The theological expression "Grace", all but wholly absent from The Phenomenon of Man, curiously permeates The Divine Milieu, yet does so in the disconsolate images of a divine ocean sweeping the individual along in the tide.³³ If one were disposed to use figures from the game of chess,

30. Ibid., p. 284.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid., pp.284-285.

33. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, The Divine Milieu (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), pp.126-128.

he would develop the uneasy feeling that man is simply the pawn whose life and identity may well be sacrificed (in curious contrast to Rahner's emphasis on human dignity) in order to conclude the cosmological drama and pronounce the verdict of "checkmate". One need only imagine the difficulty the explication of this position caused Teilhard, who publicly and privately was forced to reconcile this with a magisterium anything but tolerant to a notion of an evolving humanity as the work of his fellow Jesuit Rahner has borne witness.

In summary, one can witness a genuine ferment within Roman Catholicism, especially in the characters of Rahner and Teilhard, even though the former was bound by his church to justify a literal "Adam" and the latter was forced to resort to sophomoric proofs to vindicate the necessity of a God in an otherwise tightly knit scientific system. The peculiar values of their attempts lay in the greater en rapport created with their "separated brothers" through the effort of Rahner and with those holding comprehensive, scientific world view through that of Teilhard --- thereby giving greater credence and urgency to the re-articulation of a proper natural theology.

TOWARD A PROTESTANT NATURAL THEOLOGY

It is significant that as we draw our treatment of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin to a close we begin an investigation of Paul Tillich, for never have two individuals lamented

the divorce of the religious dimension from the more mundane, concrete, practical side of life. Both shared with equal intensity a belief that the natural, perceptible, tangible world bore witness to God's activity and championed the re-inclusion of the category of the "natural" into the discipline of theology. However, one must observe with equal care the methodologies each employed to heal the breach the preceding century had effected between science and religion.

Both men were front-line witnesses to the "war to end all wars" (Teilhard as a stretcher-bearer and Tillich as a military chaplain), and, though both emerged profoundly moved and changed by the conflict, an immediate divergence became apparent. Tillich returned to Germany to become a leader in an activist movement as Teilhard joined a scientific expedition to China seeking to find humanity's missing link. Nowhere does the basic deliniation between the cultural activist and the dispassionate scientist become more evident than when both view the content of the world around in the context of its "givenness", when both conjecture concerning the purpose and end to which the world is seemingly moving, and when both try to fathom within this the nature and destiny of man.

True to his scientific presuppositions, Teilhard, as we have seen, viewed the content of the world around him as a physically and chronologically conditioned conglomerate capable of verification. Even his elaborate concept

of progression from the biological to the noetic operated under the structures of an ironclad space-time determinism in which the preceding sphere of activity pales and is ultimately lost in the sphere which supercedes it. Tillich, however, in his analysis of what we, for convenience, have classified as the "given" evidences a markedly different outlook. He abandons any thought of a concept of "levels" (which is a reaction not so much to Teilhard's empirical terminology as it is to an outworn, pre-Darwinian 17th century Protestant Orthodoxy) when he speaks of man within the limits and bases of the created order, preferring to use instead in place of "level" the designations "dimensions" and "realm" (which he defines consecutively as "encounter with reality in which the unity of life is seen above its conflicts" and "a section of life in which a particular dimension is predominant"³⁴). The reason Tillich puts forth for this semantic substitution is that "dimension" and "realm" are "social"³⁵ --- and, if the writer of the paper may presume to understand what Tillich is saying, --- the "givenness" of life is meant to be experienced and lived and not merely measured. It is within this area that Tillich makes his greatest contribution. Though broadly classed as a "Neo-Orthodox" theologian which may stem from his repudiation of a literal interpretation of Genesis 3, his existen-

34. Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology - Vol. III (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp.15-16.

35. Ibid.

tialism is the device he employs to arrive at a more relevant understanding of nature, man, and the grace of God.

Tillich is thankfully lacking of any such vulnerability which so painfully characterized Teilhard. In a fashion reminiscent of Kant, he declares "time" to be a superimposition of the mind upon the encountered reality in an attempt to codify the latter and thereby render it more meaningful.³⁶ When man ceases to recognize "time" as a creature of his cognition and view the attendant notions of "time" and "space" as barriers across which he cannot venture, he falls prey to the deviations running the gambit from a flight into "mysticism" (which, if we are allowed a certain latitude, may include a verbally inerrant Bible as well as a rigid hyper-Barthianism capable of calling Genesis "saga" yet bifurcating as successfully as Ockham's razor to a perverted nationalism (taking us the expanse between Spencer's "Social Darwinism" to a "National Socialism" to a dialectical "Communism").³⁷ As one delves further into his analysis, he begins to realize the buttress Tillich is creating against the arguments which seemed so potentially destructive to Teilhard. "Religion" clearly is something which Tillich does not reserve to the final scene (as a misreading of The Phenomenon of Man may indicate)

36. Theology of Culture, op.cit., p.30.

37. Ibid., p. 34.

but is, as he declares in Theology of Culture, "the dimension of depth" in the totality of man's existence. "Religion", according to Tillich, "is at home everywhere in the depth of all the functions of man's spiritual life" and that which "opens up the depth of man's spiritual life which is usually covered by the dust of our daily life and the noise of our secular work."³⁸

Tillich's unique contribution to the effective reconstruction of theology lay in the liberation of it from the linear-chronological, deterministic bondage under which it chaffed in the previous century. In his chapter "The Eternal Now" from the book with the same title, Tillich draws the various notions of time, space, and the function and nature of religion into a concise unity. He reaffirms what may be considered the modality of time and declares the futility of imagining eternal life as a "time after time" because "eternity (is) above time".³⁹ We, according to Tillich, "have our past because we remember it in the present" and "have our future because we anticipate it in the present" only thereby to discover "the riddle of the present is the deepest of all the riddles of Time".⁴⁰

38. Ibid., p. 9.

39. Paul Tillich, The Eternal Now (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1963), pp.122-132.

40. Ibid.

He concludes by saying "each of the modes of time has its peculiar mystery, each of them carries its peculiar anxiety --- there is only one answer to these questions ---⁴¹ the eternal. God gives us rest in his eternal Presence".

It is within this mentality that Tillich expands the notion of the "end" of the world by stating that the word "end" has inherent within it the notion of "aim" as well as "finish".⁴² The eschaton for him is envisioned not merely in terms of "spatio-temporal" conclusion but as a "qualitative-valuating" event as well.⁴³ While the popular piety endorses a "supranaturalistic" realm of heaven (to which the Earthen brand of modern theology pays more than token respect) effecting a severance between God and his creation, Tillich presents a "paradoxical understanding of the relation of the temporal to the eternal".⁴⁴ Thus Tillich does not occupy himself with a painful analysis of man qua creature or even qua spirit --- not only because such undertakings fail to do justice to the "dimensions" and "realms" of the created world but fail to appreciate and respect man's self transcendence as well. Tillich sees all of life subsistent within the "now" of the Divine. Man's end consists

41. Ibid.

42. Systematic Theology- Vol. III, p. 394.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., p. 397.

(as Karl Rahner declares) in the realization and appropriation of his essence. This, for Tillich, constitutes the moment of existential decision (the nunc existientiale) for man.⁴⁵ Appropriation brings attendant with it (reinterpreted concepts of) justification and forgiveness. Within his "eschatological pan-en-theism", Tillich postulates an ultimate fulfillment of allthings in the dimension of the Divine.⁴⁶ One wonders if due cognizance is paid to the notions of "sin" and the "demonic" --- yet one can easily see how Tillich affords to the jittery resident of the concluding half of the 20th century a much more workable and livable schema of existence who, unlike Teilhard, whom we have previously considered, is more interested in how comfortable he can make his pullman seat than in how quickly the train is moving.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

At times our study must have appeared as a potpourri of disjunctive topics bearing little relation to each other. However, it did attempt to document what it ~~deems~~ to be the incontestable fact that theological expression has always been, and will always be in flux. It contended further to prove, at least by historic documentation, that the concerns driving man to "theologize" in a particular fashion are in fact perennial while the peculiar historical circumstance

45. Ibid., p. 420.

46. Ibid., pp.420-421.

is in reality acting as the variable to draw forth a "new" apology. This observation rested further on one of the original assumptions that within such development, no single theology receives universal acceptance but is rather in a position of predominance while the alternatives to it still exist with their own loyal adherents concurrent to it. Finally, we have attempted to remain loyal to our concept of "metaphysical determinism" as being descriptive of man's identity in the world and before God.

As we endeavor to draw these diverse emphases into a cohesive unity it would be fitting to do so in acknowledgment to the insights of Etienne Gilson. We spoke earlier of the verbal devices Gilson employed to make the investigation of theological development more comprehensible. He spoke of the "Tertullian family" who was characterized by the "absolute opposition between religious faith in the word of God and the use of natural reason in matters pertaining to Revelation";⁴⁷ the "Augustinian family" who declared "that the safest way to reach truth is not the one that starts from reason and then goes on from rational certitude to faith, but, on the contrary, the way whose starting point is faith and then goes on from Revelation to reason";⁴⁸ and finally, the "Thomistic family" in which "all members....grant that there is a true Revelation; the

47. Gilson, op.cit.., pp.10-11.

48. Ibid., pp.16-17.

Christian Revelation. They grant it, but they do not
take it for granted".⁴⁹

When we examine the implications of the distinguishing characteristics of Gilson's three families, we would be in difficult straits to seek out a theologian or religious philosopher who cannot be subsumed under one of the three. The Tertullian family tree grew from its namesake who received philosophy as folly to a William of Ockham who saw God's sovereignty tarnished by idle speculation to a Karl Barth who drove an incisive "nein" between credo and culture. The conjunction of "metaphysical" and "determinism" would be a logical and, above all, an ontological impossibility because of the very fact that man (according to this mentality) labors under a creaturely determinism and is liberated from this only through a supranatural (as contrasted to supernatural) metaphysical intervention. The Tertullian family will never be at a loss for second cousins in each generation because each age harbors those who see religion as a pristine superadditum to a grimy world. Should the "Tertullian" attempt to engage in dialogue with one who does not share his "supranaturalism" and who may, in fact, posit the reality of only that which he can see, taste, smell, or touch (whether through his own six senses or by the use of advanced equipment) --- these two individuals may have

49. Ibid., p. 81.

little in common as far as meaningful intercourse is concerned. It is not without purpose that John Updike's acidic humor has called our modern "Tertullian" Karl Barth to task because the latter did nothing to fill the chasm between "reason" and "faith" and, in fact, only made it wider and more difficult to traverse.

The "Augustinian family" contains a cluster of luminaries which include Thomas (Whose existence as a separate family progenitor will be justified later), Luther and Calvin. Even though the middle figure, in his sweeter moments, could characterize reason as "Frau Hulda the Whore", he, as the other two figures, was willing to see the legitimate place of man's rational faculties provided it is not cavalierly assumed to be an inductive device to fathom the mystery of God. To the "Augustinian" (we use the term here in the sense of Gilson's analogy), God is not simply the logical first cause to a lengthy sequence of events, but the transcendent cause and ground of all that is. Paul Tillich, of the personalities we have considered, perhaps is the most eloquent present day "Augustinianism" in his development of an "eschatological pan-en-theism"⁵⁰ in which man is not forced in

50. Systematic Theology - Vol. III, op.cit.,
pp.420-421.

desperation to utter "all matter is illusion" (as Mary Baker Eddy's avant garde misreading of Bishop Berkeley declares) but to see both inorganic and organic matter, including man, as infused by and determined by God.

However, the "Augustinian" is prey to the same risk as the "Tertullian" insofar as the other party with whom he wishes to engage in dialogue may choose to turn a deaf ear to the preamble of faith which the former declares provides meaningful content for the reason. The precise point of demarcation between these first two families which clothes the "Augustinian" position with greater respectability in the dialogical context is the fact that it does not despair of creation but rather affirms it as a meaningful vehicle of God's activity. The stumbling block (the premise that "God is") still remains within the realm of faith (as God himself may purposely desire) and does nothing to resolve the tension with which the Kerygma has always been imbued.

The Thomistic Family" (which the writer accepts in order to maintain Gilson's analogy --- yet harbors certain reservations concerning its legitimacy apart from the "Augustinian" approach) affords the greatest opportunity for dialogue with a world unwilling to wholly accept the previous two approaches. There one admits reason's identity as both preamble of --- and to faith as he acknowledges that the "whatness" of God is per-

ceivable from His effects in nature. While this inductive approach is more palatable to the person who cannot in good conscience make a presupposition of faith, it runs the decided risk of immanentizing God to the extent that he grows and ^{is} refined along with his creation instead of being ^{the} transcendentally perfect one who ⁵¹ gives the creation meaning and depth. L

The Assault of Darwinism upon the dogma of the church rendered a positive service by exposing the weaknesses in all three of Gilson's family constructs; it showed in a new and more forceful way that an ad hoc "Tertullian" type of God can easily be dismissed without doing violence to a god-autonomous world view; it presented the "Augustinian" with the possibility that a capacity for self-transcendence could be the greatest irony man is destined to suffer as well as a path which leads him to seek out and find rest in God; it evidenced to the "Thomist" how induction based on causal inferences breaks down in a given world whose present status could be just as easily the result of random chance as well as the activity of the hand of God. The tension which Darwin eloquently re-expressed has, even to this present

51. Ibid.

day not been adequately resolved. What has resulted, however, is a much more virile and workable concept of the nature of man --- be he simply biological organism with the ironic power to transcend his organic shell --- or the vicegerant of creation capable of walking in meaningful communication with his transcendent God, who, by grace, has revealed himself through perceptible means. We have simply stated the condition --- the reply must come from the theologian who must simultaneously justify his existence while he speaks the message God has given him to proclaim.

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