

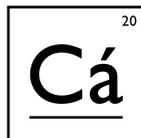
R E C O N S T R U C T I O N a n d R E F O R M A T I O N

by

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P R E F A C E

This provisional publication presents the first half of a series of articles issued by the Christian philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd in the years 1945-1948 in Nieuw Nederland, a Dutch periodical of which the author was editor-in-chief.

Dooyeweerd, born in 1894, was professor of legal and political philosophy at the Free University of Amsterdam from 1926-1965, when he retired. He is one of the founders, with D.H.Th. Vollenhoven, of the Christian philosophical movement known as the Philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea. This philosophy, one of the most significant endeavors in the twentieth century relating the Scriptural sources of the Christian faith to theoretical reflection, is not readily accessible to the student in the English-speaking world at an introductory level.

Dooyeweerd's American lectures of 1958, published in In the Twilight of Western Thought, are too limited in scope to serve as a stepping-stone to his four-volume A New Critique of Theoretical Thought. The republication of the present series of articles, written for a wide audience at a time of intense spiritual debate in Western Europe immediately after the Second World War, will hopefully serve to introduce many to Dooyeweerd's thought. They already serve this purpose in The Netherlands when they were collected by Mr. J.A. Oosterhoff and republished under the title Renewal and Reflection (Vernieuwing en Bezinning, Zutphen: J.B. van den Brink, 1959).

The first part of Renewal and Reflection is presented here. The translator, Mr. John N. Kraay, a Canadian student at the Free University of Amsterdam, has conveniently placed the material under new chapter headings. The subsequent sections of Renewal and Reflection deal with "Reformation and Accommodation" and "Reformation and Humanism". As soon as these sections have been translated the whole will be published in book-form.

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INTRODUCTION

"ANTITHESSES"

On May 12, 1945, the "Dutch Popular Movement" (Nederlandse Volksbeweging) appealed to all citizens by way of a manifesto in which the christian antithesis is firmly rejected as principle of demarcation for post-war political life. (1) The manifesto expressed this conviction:

That the second World War signifies for all nations the close of an era in world-history and the dawn of a new; economically, socially, politically and spiritually the world has changed profoundly and confronts the individual and the community with new demands.

That the people of the Netherlands, to promote their own national community and to maintain a worthy place among the nations, need first of all a spiritual renewal, nourished by the well-springs of Christianity and humanism, which always were our sources of strength.

That fundamental to this striving towards renewal ought to be respect and responsibility for man, who can develop only in service of a strong, just, and inspired community (personalistic socialism).

That every area of human life is bound by absolute norms, such as charity, justice, truth and neighbourly love, which are according to the Gospel rooted in the will of God, but which are also grounded in convictions other than the Christian one --- from which follows unconditional rejection of nation, state, race or class as highest corporate good, unconditional rejection also of any spiritual coercion as means towards the shaping of society.

The Dutch Popular Movement was in particular of the opinion:

That the greatest possible agreement is now necessary among the various religious and political groupings to alleviate the desperate need, to rebuild what was laid waste, to stamp out corruption, to set production in motion again, and especially to base governmental authority on renewed confidence.

That a time of open discussion is urgently called for, so that spiritual renewal will become visible also in the political forum.

The appeal was signed by representatives of the most diverse viewpoints, people whose very names guaranteed the sincerity and the earnestness of their intent.

Undoubtedly the manifesto gave expression to the aspirations (perhaps but vaguely felt) of many who wished to break down the old barriers that kept the country divided --- a desire profoundly stirred by the recent distress of a nation ruled by the enemy --- and now formulated in charged expressiveness. The appeal of the Dutch Popular Movement gave to this longing a specific form. Instead of antithesis, the absolute opposition between the christian and the humanist view of life, a synthesis of them was recommended, in order to draw together in national unity once again the Dutch national strength that had been nourished by both spiritual directions.

And the suggested means to this spiritual renewal of our nation was "personalistic socialism". The old antithesis could be bridged by this principle: that unity and human responsibility can only develop in the service of a solid, just, and inspired community. According to this appeal, christian and humanist alike can find themselves in agreement with this common basis. And the assumption was that neither the christian antithesis nor the old Marxian-socialist dogma of class-struggle could be a fruitful foundation any longer for the solution of the serious post-war problems.

He who, on the basis of the christian antithesis would claim the contrary, will therefore have to prove that the christian religion does indeed draw a permanent dividing-line of essential significance not only for personal faith but for a total view of society. And, specifically, he will have to show what this significance is for the solution of the problems of today.

For those who continue to side with the christian antithesis this demonstration is far from easy. One way out would be to revert the burden of proof to the Dutch Popular Movement, that it be shown that their new principle does indeed form a fruitful foundation for the solution of social problems and is able to cancel out the old contradictions between christendom and humanism. But this would not be a healthy attitude. One cannot hide behind the weak position of one's opponent -- not when soon one must in practice prove the value of one's own principle. What has to be shown now is that since the days of Groen van Prinsterer and Abraham Kuyper this principle has been alive and dynamic. (2)

It must now be shown before adherents and opponents that christians have not simply rested on the authority these leaders had gained among those they inspired. It must be shown now that their spiritual inheritance has been made to pay. If the spirit that moved them is no longer alive among their present followers, then a theoretical reference to the principles they confessed is of no avail. For this leads to a phenomenon well known in history: a spiritless canonization of tradition fearfully guarding against the budding of new shoots on the trunk of the past. The terms, the slogans are still the same, but those who voice them are no longer inspired. The glow of holy enthusiasm no longer radiates from their eyes. The old slogans gain no new recruits because they are no longer real to him who utters them, and he who hears will not fail to notice exactly that.

Surely the christian principle is not the steady, staid possession of a select few who can manipulate it as if it were a collection of magical formulae! On the contrary: it is a spiritual moving force that cannot be halted and those who would encompass it within fixed boundaries of tradition are irrevocably left behind. Those who claim to be led by the christian principle are thereby placed directly before the face of God who knows our hearts and consumes every insincerity by the fire of his anger. Today, the christian principle before all else drives to a deep concern with the spiritual and temporal distress of our nation and of the world which has passed through the fire of God's judgement.

What are we to say? Amidst the ruins of our nation's existence, overlooking the rubble of Western civilization it is hardly fitting to beat the drums. Surely, this is not the time for the antithesis to sound a battle cry. It can only be confessed -- as always if it would be true -- in recognition of the complete solidarity of christian and non-christian in the guilt of man who led the world to the brink of disaster.

The antithesis, we know, cuts right through the christian life itself. Everywhere, in personal life, in the life of the christian family, in christian organizations, even in the christian churches there has been, surely, gratifying evidence of real life, but also alarming symptoms of apostasy, of discord, and of schism. They are the evidences of the turbulent spirit of darkness who, especially here, wages war in the most revolting forms against the spirit of Christ. The antithesis is therefore not a dividing-line between a christian and a non-christian group. It is the unrelenting battle between two spiritual principles that cut right through the nation, through all mankind, and that fail to respect the safe retreat of christian patterns. If it were true that the christian idea of the antithesis be rooted in man, then it would be a satanic invention, a feeding-ground for hypocrisy and pharisaistic pride. But if its action can still be felt as the battle between the spirit of God and the spirit of darkness, then we must humbly thank God every day for the grace of his continued dealings with this world, and we must admit that where this happens christians themselves are not particularly to thank for it.

But how wide is the scope of the antithesis? Is it limited merely to the secret regions of the heart, or does it also draw a visible line in temporal life? Is it limited to the individual or does it also penetrate temporal society, in the sciences, in culture, in politics, in economic life? And if the latter be true, is it then limited to some "specifically christian areas", or is its significance fundamental and universal? In other words, can we admit the claims of the Dutch Popular Movement? Shall we agree that the "christian antithesis" can no longer be a fruitful principle for the solution of social problems? Shall we agree that for political and social life it has had its transitory, historical significance? This is the crucial question.

And it is about this question that a frank discussion with the Dutch Popular Movement must be begun. Having learned from experience, I shall take a road different from the usual one. I hope that the Dutch Popular Movement will follow me on this road, for I believe that it allows for no avenues of escape. More than ever before the nation has a right to clear and explicit answers from those who claim to be able to give spiritual guidance. For this issue is of fundamental importance for its spiritual development tomorrow.

COMMUNICATION

The antithesis was not invented by Groen van Prinsterer or Abraham Kuyper. Those who live the christian religion and understand scripture know that. Still, even among those who confess Christ Jesus as only Saviour of the world, no agreement prevails as to the import of this antithesis for temporal life. And still worse is that in mutual discussion about this fundamentally important problem it appears that no way has yet been found to discover the real form of such disagreement. Consequently, in spite of the good intentions of the participants, the discussion continues to exhibit the character of monologues of the various spokesmen, and real dialogue between people who truly co-operate in service of a communal clarification of principled insight is never achieved.

Truly fruitful communication is not possible until both viewpoints are no longer developed separately, and when both sides try to get at the root of the difference. Only then will one be able to reflect and decide which side he must join.

Of course, an old objection can be raised against this kind of discussion: that is far too difficult for the average reader; it may be a fitting theoretical approach but it does not belong in a popular exposition meant for everyone. All the same, whoever argues this is still the victim of just that fatal misunderstanding that before the war formed one of the greatest obstacles for real contact among the various spiritual currents of our nation.

After all, the first question is: what do we expect from a discussion about the meaning of antithesis? Only this, that two opinions are put forward and that each participant is given the opportunity to advance a number of arguments in favour of his point of view, so that the reader gets the impression that apparently something can be said for either standpoint? It seems to me that in this way little or nothing would be gained. That kind of debate remains superficial. The arguments from both sides only apparently touch each other, because the deeper starting-points that determine the argument remain in the dark. As long as they themselves are not placed in sharp and clear light and confronted with each other, so long real contact is simply out of the question. It is conceivable that those who defend their view in the forum are not even aware of their own deeper point of departure. In other words, the whole discussion never moves toward dialogue, and it would be silly to suppose that listeners are being informed in any kind of fundamental way.

In the second place: it is quite wrong to think that the quest for the deepest source of the differences about the antithesis would be fitting only in a theoretical investigation. The profoundest source of our view on life's questions is not in scientific theory, but in the religious motive of our life. And this is something which concerns every single human being and which certainly cannot be delegated to the theoretical sphere of science.

It is true that some of the reading public prefers not to be busy with the deepest motives of their lives, and that they seek escape rather than confrontation also in "communication". But this can hardly count as criterion to distinguish readers with or without theoretical schooling. It so happens that among theoreticians there is also a category of those who would escape from themselves and would seek "diversion". And my experience tells me that many belong to this class. For many science is a haven in which they think to flee from themselves by diverting their attention to theoretical work which, as they like to think, has no connection with the profoundest root of their lives, and precisely the opposite can be found among those who are not scientifically schooled: they put the shallowness of the educated to shame.

Well then, "spiritual renewal" has become the slogan for the post-war "reconstruction", and we will readily adopt it. But those who wish to take it seriously must not rest content with superficiality, but must look for renewal in depth. And if the post-war "talks" are to contribute to spiritual renewal of our nation, then they will have to penetrate to that depth-dimension of human life where no man can escape any more. Here it will have to come to a "démasqué" of the various views about the significance and scope of the antithesis.

And only then, when no-one has anything to hide from himself and his opponents-in-principle, then the way is opened for a dialogue that is meant to convince and not meant to repel. Those who seriously intend to start out along this road will not quickly shrug off the expositions with the pretext that all this is too "heavy" to digest for the ordinary reader. For if this is the only way that ultimately holds promise for results, then no effort that appears indicated for a real mutual understanding of the various viewpoints may be considered too great. For this road is indeed accessible to every serious traveller and not merely to a chosen company of "intellectuals". It is the way of self-reflection and not the way of abstract theoretical inquiry.

CHAPTER I

W E L L S P R I N G S o f C U L T U R E

Two Kinds of Dialectic

Taken by itself the word "antithesis" means no more than "contrast". It was given a special meaning in philosophy, particularly in the so-called dialectical way of thinking. We will have to consider this a moment in order to cut off a first possible route of escaping the issue, since some still hold that in dialectical thinking no antithesis can be viewed as ultimate or absolute. Hence, precisely philosophy would have to bridge the contract between christianity and humanism. I do not mean to say that this idea is current in the Dutch Popular Movement, but it undoubtedly does claim adherents in certain intellectual circles, especially those oriented to Hegel.

Dialectical thought, which originated already in greek antiquity, does not rest content with simple, logically determined opposites, such as motion and rest. It attempts to reconcile them in a higher unity, which is then supposed to be the synthesis between thesis and antithesis. Thus, for example, the renowned greek thinker Plato found the higher synthesis of motion and rest in the idea of "being", because both can with equal right be said to be. Now, it is certainly true that in concrete, time-bound reality motion and rest continually occur together.

"Antithesis" taken strictly in the theoretical-dialectical sense, is therefore no more than opposing logically that which in reality belongs together. To know what motion is one must distinguish it from the rest, but this logical distinction may never lead to a separation. In this case the antithesis must indeed acknowledge a higher synthesis. Dialectical method then, proceeds on the assumption that the contrasts which are to be resolved in a higher synthesis are of relative, rather than absolute character. Closer reflection will reveal that contrasting concepts are indeed mutually related, so that they are each other's correlates; that is to say: the one cannot exist without the other. Without something that is thought of as being at rest it is impossible to determine motion -- and vice versa. Clearly, this "dialectic" which searches for a higher synthesis through the logical contrasts can be justified as long as indeed only relative contrasts are at issue. It is merely theoretical in character and can, if used correctly, clarify that in temporal life as such nothing is absolute.

However, the case is quite different with the antithesis that has been posited in the world by the christian religion. This antithesis touches the religious root of the whole of temporal life: it concerns the way in which the creature is related to the Creator.

It does not permit of a theoretical synthesis between the christian starting-point and those opposed to it, because it is indeed absolute. If a real synthesis between two antithetically opposed standpoints is to be achieved, a higher starting-point above them is required to embrace them both. But where would one have to look for this higher starting-point with regard to two religious standpoints -- exactly because of their religious nature they rise above mere relativity! Should we look to philosophy? But philosophy as such remains theoretical and is bound to the relative character of all human thinking. Insofar as philosophy itself needs an absolute starting-point it can receive this only from religion, for even theoretical thought can only thus be given sure ground. Even they who think they have found their absolute starting-point in theoretical thought itself have come to this belief through an essentially religious drive, which simply for lack of true self-knowledge remains concealed to them. The absolute has a right to existence in religion only; a truly religious starting-point must claim absoluteness if it is not to annihilate itself. It can never be mere theory, for then it would always remain bound to the relative. Behind all theory it penetrates to be sure, absolute ground of all temporal, and therefore relative, existence. And the antithesis it must be equally absolute.

To get at the true and decisive meaning of this religious antithesis and to penetrate to the real source of the difference of opinion concerning its import it is necessary to take account of the religious groundmotives. They have been the deepest driving forces of the entire cultural and spiritual development of Western civilization. In every religion one can point to such a groundmotive, working in human society as a spiritual force. It is the absolutely central force, because it governs all temporal expressions of life from out of the religious center of life, and directs them toward the true or supposed origin of existence. It determines in the profoundest sense one's whole life-and-world view; it places its indelible stamp on the culture, the science, the social structure of a given period -- at least insofar as one can actually point to a leading cultural power direction. If that is no longer the case a real crisis in the cultural foundations arises, and this is always accompanied by spiritual uprootedness.

The religious groundmotives of a culture can never be gotten at by way of the conceptions and personal beliefs of an individual. It really is a community-motive that governs individuals even when they are not conscious of it or when they do not give account of it. But make no mistake; it is no possible object for scientific analysis and explanation (in social psychology, say). That kind of approach can never penetrate to the root of communal life but only to its temporal ramifications; not to the religious center of life, but only to its distinct temporal expressions in feeling, thought, art, morality, justice and faith. And science itself is controlled by a religious motive in its starting-point; it can therefore never be neutral with respect to that motive. In the religious groundmotive a spirit is directly operative: the spirit either of God or of an idol -- depending upon in whose service man has placed himself and in whom he participates in that relation. It is a spirit that establishes the community, and that is not controlled by man but rather governs him. For precisely religion reveals to us our profound dependence on a high Power in which we look for the certain ground and origin of our existence and whom we can never confront as rulers, but only as servants. The religious groundmotives receive their central influence upon the historical development of mankind by means of cultural powers that successively manage to gain leadership in the historical process.

The most important spiritual powers that have governed our western culture through the centuries are the spirit of ancient civilization (Greece and Rome); christendom, and modern humanism. Once they successively made their entrance in history they each continued in mutual tension with the others. This tension cannot be resolved in a kind of "balance of powers". As we already noted, if cultural development is to be unwavering in its direction a leading power is required.

In classical greek civilization this was the polis, the greek city-state as exponent of the new culture-religion of the Olympian gods. In classical roman times it was the res-publica, the roman commonwealth, and later the emperors as bearers of the religious imperium-idea. In the Byzantine period this remains in force, except that the idea of the sacrum imperium (the holy empire) is externally accommodated to christianity. The process from persecution to accommodation of christianity signified a crisis in the foundations for the whole of ancient culture. The tradition of the "holy Roman Empire" is continued in the christian rule of Charlemagne and his successors. The germanic peoples accepted the inheritance of ancient civilization and adopted the christian religion.

During the Middle Ages the Roman Catholic Church is able to assume leadership. A unified culture is established in which all spheres of life are placed under ecclesiastical dominion. In the fifteenth century the next great crisis is occasioned by the rise of the modern Renaissance movement. Its advent had been prepared by the spiritual decay of the late Middle Ages, when the church's hold on the whole of life had begun to weaken. During the Renaissance period the ancient cultural factor, the content of its groundmotive basically altered by the rising humanism, begins to tear itself loose from the leadership of the church. At the same time the great movement of the Reformation challenges the ecclesiastical power of Roman Catholicism from a principally different standpoint. In the countries that remained largely faithful the church, Roman Catholicism regroups its forces in the Counter-reformation. It creates room for the absorption of Renaissance culture, just as it had previously been able to accommodate ancient civilization. In protestant countries cultural leadership temporarily devolves to the Reformation.

Gradually, however, a new direction in the development of Western civilization becomes apparent: both Roman Catholicism and Reformation as factors of cultural leadership are driven back by modern humanism. Originally humanism had aligned itself partly on the side of the Reformation, partly on the side of Roman Catholicism. But in the Enlightenment it breaks away completely from any ecclesiastical faith. It reveals its true colours and becomes the guiding cultural power in the Occident. Not that Roman Catholicism and Reformation are thereby eliminated as cultural factors in historical development. As such they continue to operate, partly in antithesis to the new world-and-life view what had transformed christianity into a rational personal faith, partly also in many respects in an attempt at synthesis with the new humanistic ideas that were then shaping history. But they can no longer as before place their stamp on Western civilization: with respect to the power-struggle for the spirit of culture they are pushed into the defensive for nearly three centuries. For the time being the leadership is with humanism.

Since the latter decades of the nineteenth century, meanwhile, we witness a general process of decline manifesting itself in the world-and-life view of humanism. And out of this decline are born the very anti-humanistic cultural forces (Marxism, Darwinism, Nietzsche's doctrine of the Uebersch) that in turn push humanism into the defensive. This heralds a tremendous period of transition in world-history, a battle for spiritual leadership of our Western culture is being waged, and the outcome is still undecided. The first world war greatly accelerates the process of inner decay in humanism. Bolshevism, Fascism and National-Socialism arise. These last two place over against humanistic "ideology" their religious "myths of the twentieth century". In the second world war the reactionary and intensely anti-christian power of Fascist and Nazi is broken -- at least politically. But the spiritual crisis that had set in long before the last great war has not been overcome. The "new age" still exhibits the features of spiritual confusion everywhere. A definite direction that cultural development will follow in the near future cannot yet be pointed to.

In this seemingly chaotic time of transition the older, spiritually consolidated cultural powers of the west: Roman Catholicism and Reformation, begin to join the great spiritual fray, this time with modern weapons. And the aim is not merely to defend the christian foundations of modern civilization, but to reclaim leadership for a future which in its nearest perspectives is still unknown and bleak.

Western political and social structures, the sciences, the arts, etc. in their development show their historical dependence on the leading cultural powers which, by reason of their historical power, impose their most fundamental religious groundmotives on all normative public expressions of society. Four such religious groundmotives largely control this development. Three of them are characterized by an inner duality that breaks them down in discord. They forever drive one's world-and-life view to polar contrasts that cannot be resolved in a true synthesis (I call these contrasts "polar" because these groundmotives do indeed exhibit two "poles" with opposing spiritual "charges"). Within themselves they carry the seed of religious dialectic. What is meant by "religious dialectic"? Earlier we noted that a sharp distinction must be made between the theoretical and religious antithesis. The first, I argued, is always relative. It has to do with the relative contrasts that in reality exist in a higher unity and justly resist any theoretical thought that would absolutize such contrasts. Indeed, the proposition that motion and rest exclude each other absolutely has no tenable sense, for we can ascertain that motion and rest are merely two different aspects or modes of expression of one and the same temporal reality -- aspects which do not exclude but rather presuppose each other. There must therefore be a third something which unites them, even if purely logically they are mutually exclusive. Accordingly, theoretical dialectic must try to overcome the merely logical contrast to arrive at a higher synthesis. Whether or not it will achieve this synthesis correctly will depend on its starting-point. And we know that the starting-point of theoretical thought is itself governed by religious groundmotives. At any rate, theoretical dialectic is admittedly justified when it looks beyond relative contrasts for higher unity.

But the cardinal difference between the religious antithesis and the merely theoretical was exactly this: that the religious antithesis is necessarily absolute, because no higher standpoint than that of religion is possible.

The attempt to bridge such an absolute antithesis after the method of theoretical dialectic must therefore rest on a mis-conception in principle.

The true religious antithesis is posited by Divine Revelation. The key to the understanding of the Bible is its religious groundmotive, which can be summarized in the triad: creation, fall, and redemption through Jesus Christ in communion with the Holy Spirit. The religious groundmotive of Holy Scripture is first of all the impelling power of the Word by means of the Holy Spirit who transforms the religious root of our lives and from there penetrates all temporal expressions of life. Only the Spirit of God can disclose the radical meaning of revelation which in unmeasurable depth reveals to us both the true God and ourselves. The Word of God teaches us when it redemptively works in us. And wherever it functions redemptively, there it irresistibly affects a radical turn-about in the root of our apostate existence.

It is not theory, not even theology, that uncovers for us in its true meaning the religious groundmotive of Scripture. As soon as theology presses that claim it becomes a satanic power, opposing the work of God and rendering the religious groundmotive of the Divine self-revelation powerless by making it theory (ver-theoretisieren). Theology as a science is itself totally dependent on the religious groundmotive that drives it. As soon as it withdraws theorizing from the driving power of revelation, it falls inescapably into the clutches of another religious groundmotive which is then an idolatrous one.

The Word of God is from the beginning in absolute antithesis to every form of idolatry. The essence of an idolatrous spirit is that it draws the heart of a man away from the true God, and replaced Him with a creature. Every absolutization of the relative means deification of the creature, considering self-sufficient that which is insufficient. Insofar as such absolutization asserts itself in science, it never finds its source there, but it is a religious dynamic which drives theoretical thought into an idolatrous direction. Scientific thinking is always determined by a groundmotive. When therefore the religious groundmotive fixes upon a deified something in creation and thereby absolutizes the relative, this absolutization calls forth its correlates with intrinsic necessity. That is to say, it calls forth its related contrasts in reality, which assert themselves over against the former with equal claims of supposed finality, for the one relative as such is necessarily related to the other. And so veritable polarity arises -- a tension between two extremes -- within the religious groundmotive. It actually breaks apart and the opposed (partial) motives, each positing absoluteness, cancel each other out, but at the same time they reciprocally determine each other's religious meaning because of their necessary mutual relatedness. Now, the groundmotive is religious and cannot be content with mere correlate relativity; consequently, without ceasing it drives thinking and the practice of life from pole to pole. Thus it entangles theory and life-practice in a religious dialectic that is utterly incomprehensible when measured with the yardsticks of theoretical dialectic. Religious dialectic -- for lack of a basis for real religious synthesis -- will seek refuge in attributing religious priority to one of the antithetical principles within the groundmotive. Concomitantly, the opposite principle will usually be debased and depreciated. The ambiguity, the brokenness in a religious groundmotive does not allow for reconciliation in a truly higher unity because that is precisely excluded by the groundmotive itself. In the end one must choose.

Let none try, therefore, to correct this religious dialectic by way of theoretical dialectic, the method attempted by the Hegelian school. This is an utterly uncritical way of thinking dialectically, because at the root of this overestimation of theoretical dialectic lurks a religious dialectic that remains hidden to the thinker himself. For it may be that the two motives in a dialectic groundmotive are in truth no more than correlates in temporal reality; nevertheless, the religious dynamic of the idolatrous spirit has absolutized them. And this religious force can never be controlled or corrected by mere theoretical insight.

A genuinely religious dialectic also arises when the attempt is made to combine the groundmotive of Divine revelation with an idolatrous groundmotive and thus to arrive at a religious synthesis between christianity and greek antiquity or between christianity and humanism. In such cases the dialectical tension between the antithetical motives will characteristically be different from the tension within the actual idolatrous groundmotive. For now the true cause of tension is in the attempt to bridge the absolute antithesis between christian and idolatrous groundmotive by way of mutual adaptation -- whereby both have to tone down their pure, original meaning. But the antithesis remains in force and continually drives the motives apart. They are synthesized in appearance only.

Generally speaking, the antithesis posited by the christian religion will on this view continue to be recognized to some degree. Certainly in the "areas" of faith and religion. And for the rest of temporal life a distinction is generally made between specifically christian issues where the christian faith is directly involved, and so-called "neutral" issues, where the christian faith is not directly involved. Also, in such a partial christian groundmotive the synthesis-in-appearance may be so arranged that the adapted non-christian motive is almost completely controlled by the specifically christian one. In this case the universal significance of the antithesis can indeed be recognized also for the issues of temporal life. But it will nevertheless not be understood as it would if the scriptural groundmotive had penetrated completely. This will in fact prove to be the case in Roman Catholicism, which from the outset aimed at assimilation of the greek motive (and later also the modern humanistic one) to the groundmotive of the christian religion. This can also happen in reformation-bred life and thought, whenever one continues to cling to the groundmotive of Roman Catholicism.

The central issue around which all else revolves is the pseudo-synthesis which, time and time again, through the functioning of religious dialectic, threatens to fall apart into absolute separation and opposition between a christian and non-christian "area of life". We shall have to subject these attempted syntheses to a thorough investigation; for here, and here only, lies the real source of difference among christians as to the scope of the christian religious antithesis.

I spoke of four religious groundmotives which have controlled the development of Western culture. We must now focus on each in succession, for it ^{is} not possible to get at the core of the issue of antithesis today unless we have seen which religious forces have been operative in our culture and how they have in fact been the central determinants in the treatment of practical problems.

Once again I must warn against a possible misunderstanding, as if we are about to engage in a learned academic discourse. That is not the intention. It so happens that what is at stake in the issue of the antithesis is the relation of religion and temporal life, and this is not pure-theoretical matter that can be left to theoreticians. It is a problem that concerns everyone because it touches the deepest level of our existence as human beings. And whoever refers it to theory merely succeeds in showing that he shirks his personal responsibility, that he seeks to escape from himself by hiding behind the broad back of an impersonal science -- which precisely in these central issues of life can give no answer other than religiously prejudiced ones!

The antithesis is to be "discussed". Well then, let it be a serious discussion. That is impossible as long as there is no penetration to the deepest drives that determine the various relevant points of view. It is impossible as long as anything that seems foreign and strange in the religious motivation of our fellow-men is immediately brushed aside as "not to the point" or perhaps as being of only "theoretical interest". We must keep in touch with each other in the dialogue on antithesis, and if perchance there are those who are not even aware of the deepest motive of their stance we must help them hunt it out. We in turn must be willing to learn from our opponents-in-principle: we are responsible for ourselves and for them.

If now we are about to trace the religious groundmotives of Western culture we must constantly remember that these motives concern us personally. We are all children of this culture of ours into which we were born and bred, and which has moulded us. It is true that by and large modern man has not reckoned with them and their true origin. It is true that also among Christians this has up to now been insufficiently the case. But it is equally true that just in this lack of critical reflection upon the religious foundations of the cultural development lies the deepest cause of mutual estrangement of the various spiritual currents that confront each other in this cultural bedding. Hence it is that we must search out the religious well-springs of these currents.

Which then have been the religious groundmotives in the development of Western civilization? Essentially the following:

1. The "form-matter" motive of Greek antiquity in alliance with the Roman imperium-idea.
2. The scriptural groundmotive of the Christian religion: creation, fall, and redemption through Jesus Christ in communion with the Holy Spirit.
3. The groundmotive of "nature-grace", introduced by Roman Catholicism, which seeks to combine the two mentioned above.

4. The modern humanistic groundmotive of "nature-freedom", in which the attempt is made to synthesize all three previous ones in religious orientation toward the "value" of human personality.

It is absolutely necessary to consider the greek groundmotive first since it has continued to operate in both Roman Catholicism and humanism, even if in a modified sense.

MATTER and FORM

Although the famous Greek, Aristotle, was the first to fix the name "form-matter", that to which the term refers did in fact religiously control greek thought and civilization from the very beginning of the greek city-states. It originated in an unreconciled conflict in greek religious consciousness between the groundmotive of the ancient nature-religions on the one hand, and the more recent culture-religions (the Olympian gods) on the other.

These nature-religions, with their primeval greek core but also containing much that was pre-greek and even foreign, differed greatly in local ritual and specific concepts of faith. A clear reconstruction of all these early forms is mostly guesswork for lack of data. But from the beginnings of so-called "historical times" (the ages from which actual written records have been handed down to us) the influence of that communal groundmotive is evident in the deification of the formless stream of life that ever cyclically returns to itself. The idea was that the individual forms of plant, beast and man always emerge out of the stream of life, mature, perish, and rise again. All that has individual form is thus doomed to disappear so that the cyclical life-stream can continue without ceasing. Also the worship of tribe and ancestors is completely interwoven with this religious conception. Closely related to this belief in the stream of life is the way time is seen: it is cyclical, not linear as it is in Newton's modern natural scientific conception.

In this life-stream mysterious forces were held to be operative which did not run their course in a traceable, rational order, but rather in accordance with anangke (blind, incalculable fate). Everything that has a life of its own is subjected to it. Hence the divine was not pictured as a concrete form or personality. The material names used to indicate the nature-gods are just as undefined as the shapeless divinities themselves. The nature-gods remain flowing and invisible. There was no single concept of the divine, but instead an uncounted multiple of divine powers, bound up with a great variety of natural phenomena that embodied the flexible and variable deities. This applied to the "lesser" gods, the so-called "demons" (shapeless psychical powers), the "heroes", who were worshipped in connection with the deification of life in tribe and family, etc., but it applied with equal force to the "great" gods such as Gaia or Ge (mother earth), Uranos (god of the skies), Demeter (goddess of grain and growth) and Dionysos (the wine-god).

It is understandable that in this situation the coming-into-being of relatively durable, individual forms was felt as an "injustice" which, according to the mysterious saying of the Ionic philosopher of nature, Anaximander (6th cent. B.C.) "will find retribution in the course of time".

One could, with a genuinely Greek variant on Demphistophelers' saying in Goethe's Faust, express this thought as follows:

Denn alles, was in Form besteht,
Ist wert, dasz es zum Grunde geht.

On the other hand it is clear also that in this nature-religion faith in the continuity of the divine stream of life provided some comfort regarding the inevitable destruction of all definite, visibly shaped and formed individual life. This life-religion is bound to "mother earth" out of which the stream of life begins its cycle.

The newer culture-religion which is embodied in the official religion of the greek city-state and which at the same time proclaimed mount Olympus as a first national religious center, was a religion of form, of measure, and of harmony. Eventually it would find its highest greek expression in the Delphian god Apollo, conceived as giver of law. Apollo, god of light, lord of the arts, is indeed the greek culture-god par excellence. The Olympian gods leave "mother earth" with her cycle of life behind. They become the immortal, radiant gods of form -- invisible and personal, idealized cultural forces. Mount Olympus is their home. Essentially, "culture" is indeed the free forming of matter.

This new religion, which received its most splendid embodiment in the heroic poetry of Homer, tried to assimilate the older religion of nature to its own groundmotive of form, measure and harmony. It was especially concerned to curb the wild, impassioned worship of Dionysos, god of wine, with the normative form-principle of Apollo-worship. In the city of Delphi culture and nature, Apollo and Dionysos become brothers. Dionysos loses his unmeasured boundlessness and is cast for the more serious part of "keeper of souls".

Ancient greek "seers" and poet-theologians early in the period of transition (Hesiod and Homer) sought to convince the people that the Olympians had themselves evolved out of the formless gods of nature. Hesiod's teaching concerning the geneology of the gods, which influenced subsequent greek philosophical thought profoundly, gave the groundmotive of the older nature-religions a general, abstract formulation: the basic principle of all that comes into being is chaos or formless void. The inner connection of the culture religion and the older nature religions is most evident in the peculiar part played by the Moiras. Ex origine, the Moiras is none other than the old Ananke of the nature-religions: inexorable fate revealing itself in the cycle of life. But in some ways it has been brought into line with the form-motive of the culture-religion. "Moiras" is related to "meros", a word that means "part" or "share". Among the Olympian Gods Moiras becomes that fate which gives each of the three most important gods a realm to rule: the heavens to Zeus, the sea to Poseidon, and the underworld to Hades (Pluto). Already this implies something of design instead of blind fate. The Moiras became a principle of order which however does not originate with the Olympian gods but which goes back to an older impersonal and formless divine power, even though sometimes Homer designates Zeus as the dispenser of fate. But exactly when the Moiras appears as the fate of earth for mortals it reveals its original dark and sinister self. Even Zeus, lord of Olympus, father of gods and men, is powerless before the Moiras of death. Incalculable and blind, but nevertheless irresistible is the fate that holds death for all individual forms of life.

At this point the culture-religion reveals its indissoluble dialectical coherence with the religion of nature: in the theme of the Moirai they unify. Without the background of the nature-religions the religion of culture remains inexplicable. In its very groundmotive the latter calls forth its counterpart as with intrinsic compulsion. And "Moirai" remains the expression of the irreconcilable conflict between them. In the religious consciousness of the Greeks it remains the unsolved puzzle that stands in the center of attention both in the tragedies and in the philosophies. And it continues to be the threatening antipode of the greek cultural and political ideal.

We have seen how the new culture-religion of Olympus and the poetic teachings regarding the origin of the gods intended to reconcile the mutually antithetical motives of the older religions of nature and the newer religion of culture. These attempts were doomed to failure for at least the following three reasons, of which the first is decisive.

1. The newer culture-religion neglected the profoundest questions: life and death. The Olympian gods protect man only as long as he is healthy and vigorously alive. But as soon as dark Ananke or Moirai, before whom even great Zeus is important, has willed the fate of some mortal's death, the gods retreat.
2. The Olympian religion, exactly as Homeric myth of culture, came into conflict with the moral standards of the Greeks. Even though greek morality was sanctioned and protected by the gods, the Olympians themselves in Homer lived "beyond good and evil". They fornicate and thieve; Homer glorifies cheating as long as it is expressive of the grand manner of the gods.
3. This whole splendid array of gods was too far removed from ordinary folk. The Homeric world of the gods as agents of historical shaping only fitted greek civilization in the times of its feudal lords and nobles. The relation between Zeus and the others is perfectly analogous to that of a lord and his powerful vassals. Hence this divine world lost all contact with the cross-section of the people as soon as feudalsim had run its course. Thereafter it could only find some support in the power-formation of the greek polis as bearer of culture.

The critical years of transition from Lycenean feudalsim up to the Persian wars, in which the greek city-states withstood the test brilliantly, also mark a religious crisis. Nilsson, the well-known scholar of greek religion, characterizes this crisis as a conflict between exstatic (mythical) and legalistic movements. The first can be recognized as a revival or repristination of the old suppressed religions, while the second takes its stance in the Olympian religion of culture and finds its typical representative in Hesiod, the philosopher-poet.

These reasons render intelligible the fact that in private life the Greeks continued to observe the ancient rites of nature, although they worshipped the Olympians as the official gods of the state. It is also clear why the deeper religious longings of the people came especially to be oriented to the mystery-worship in which the questions of life and death were central.

In the sixth century B.C. the culture-religion, in the form that Homer had given to it, is already undermined. In intellectual circles the criticism becomes ever more outspoken and "sophism", the greek "enlightenment" of the fifth century B.C. had a relatively open season, even if the reaction in the form of trials of "atheists" inevitably complete the picture. But unabated remained the dialectic religious groundmotive; born out of the meeting of old nature-religious and olympian religion of culture, it lived on and was able, when myths demoted to tales, to don the garments of creeds fit to serve the "religious needs of the times among thinking men". The old conflict continued to characterize this religious groundmotive; the principle of the eternal flux of all individual forms in the cyclical stream of life according to the decree of blind fate over against the transcendent principle of rational and immortal form not ruled by the stream of becoming.

It found pointed expression among the Orphics whose religious re-creation-movement, in legend founded by the poet and singer Orpheus, gained great influence in greek philosophy. Orphic religion, following the old religions of the flux of life, worshipped Dionysos. No longer the untamed god of wine however, but a reborn Dionysos who, after the Titans devoured him, reappears in personal form and takes his place as twin brother to Apollo, god of Olympian light. Orphic religion maintains a sharp distinction between the darkness of earthly life that moves in the cycles of birth, death, and rising again, and the supra-cosmic life in the starry heavens. The inner discord of the greek groundmotive is expressed clearly in its anthropology. Man has an "immortal soul" originating from the heavens of light beyond the world. But the soul fell. And on dark earth it was "encarcerated" or "entombed" in a material body, and thus became subjected to the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth in ever different bodies. Not until the contamination of matter has been cleansed can the soul cease its migrations from body to body (including animal bodies) and return to its true home: the divine, imperishable globe of starry light.

I am a child of earth and of the starry heaven
But heaven is my home.

Mention of an imperishable light-form (globe) in the heavens points to combination of the so-called uranic nature-religion, in which the sky with its lightgiving bodies was worshipped, with the culture-motive. The older nature-religions did not know of an immortal form. Even the sun rises from the earth and returns to earth's bosom when it sets. Whereas the Olympian religion attributes to the gods immortality in trans-earthly light-figures, the Orphic movement projects this immortality upon the rational soul-substances which make their home in the starry sky. This abode is accorded imperishable form, while earthly bodies are totally subjected to the cyclus of ever-flowing life.

Clearly, this entire conception of "soul" and "body" is completely determined by the religious contrast between form and matter. The matter-motive, as formless principle of coming-to-be and passing-away, gives greek thought and the entire greek culture a peculiar hint of mystery which, in this sense, is foreign to modern thinking. In fact it is oriented to the aspect of movement in temporal reality, here related to life and death. The culture-motive (actually an orientation to the cultural aspect of temporal reality and here embodied by the immortal Olympian forms) constantly directs thought to an extra-sensory, imperishable form-of-being that transcends the cyclical stream of life. This form of being cannot be grasped as a mere concept but the non-sensory, light-giving form must be contemplated.

(this too, is a typically greek feature which in its original significance is quite foreign to us). Just as the Olympian gods were held to possess an imperishable light "gestalt" that could not be sensorily perceived, so also could the Greek only think of "immortal being" in terms of a radiant, though invisible, form. Unbreakably cohering with this religious groundmotive is the greek idea of "Theoria" (philosophic theory). Essential to this "theoria" is always contemplation directed to an invisible and imperishable form of being in which the divine was thought to be found. From the outset greek philosophical thought presents itself as the way to true knowledge of god, while belief is depreciated to doxa or uncertain opinion bound to sensory perception.

In greek thought form and matter are inseparably connected to each other within the religious groundmotive in this sense also, that they presuppose each other and mutually determine their religious meaning. And in their dialectical tension they determine the greek conception of the nature (physis) of things. Sometimes it is the animated flow of life, sometimes the invisible form, but more often a pseud-combination. This dialectical groundmotive drives greek thinking to real polarities pushed to their extremes, and forces it to diverge into seemingly radically opposed movements, that nevertheless reveal their deeper solidarity in the groundmotive itself. The greek community of thought and culture is rooted in this motive. That is also why greek philosophy, which has so profoundly influenced Roman Catholic scholasticism, cannot be understood when this groundmotive is left out of consideration. And the same holds for greek art, political life, community, morality, etc. The connection between the greek religious groundmotive and their idea of the state may serve as illustration.

In the classical age of greek civilization the state is limited to the small area of the city-state (polis). It was the embodiment of the culture-religion and hence at the same time the greek cultural ideal. For the Greek only the free citizen of the polis is truly man. For, according to this view, the polis gave form to human existence, which outside this forming influence remains caught in the boundless savagery of the matter-principle. All non-Greeks were "barbaroi", barbarians. They are not fully human, since they lack greek cultural forming. The ideas of natural equality of all men of "cosmopolitanism" (world citizenship) are launched later in greek philosophy, by the Cynics and the Stoics — ideas whose origin was not greek and they hardly influenced the greek idea of the state. In essence they were hostile to it. The radical wing of the Sophists, guided by the greek matter-motive, had even declared war on the polis. And even more radically foreign to the greek is the christian confession of the religious root-community of man which transcends all boundaries of race and nation.

The greek ideal of democracy which emerged victorious in Ionian culture, therefore, is quite different from the modern humanistic one. It was limited to a small number of "free citizens" while across the fence were a crowd of slaves and city-dwellers without rights. "Freedom" consisted in total involvement in the affairs of state. Labour and industry were despised and left to the crowd. "Equality" meant only this, that financial security was no prerequisite for citizenship. Soon every aristocracy, whether of means or of brains, was suspect, and liable to all sorts of annoying regulations. The idea of sphere-sovereignty was utterly foreign to the greek mind. Sphere-sovereignty is rooted in the christian view that no single societal sphere can embrace man's whole life, and that therefore each of these spheres has a God-given task and competence, limited by its own intrinsic nature, and to be recognized in the relations of these spheres mutually.

But the greek idea of the state is basically totalitarian. In accordance with its religious groundmotive it demands the total life of the whole man. Or rather: man becomes truly man only when he is an active, free citizen. All of life must be made to serve this citizenship for it alone grants the divine and rational "cultural form" to the being of man. Connected with this is the fact that the greek state as realized in the "democratic" polis is not founded on the principle that the competence of the state is inhearently limited (that is, by the nature of the state-institute) and that man also has inalienable rights over against the body politic. The Greek had but formal guarantees against despotism.

ROMAN IMPERIUM

When Alexander the Great, the royal pupil of Aristotle, formed his Macedonian world-empire, greek culture became a world-culture, and the torch was no longer carried by the city-state. An Imperium, a world empire, had come to be which stretched from Greece to India. Simultaneously, eastern religious motives mingled with the greek. And to render the Greco-Macedonian world dominion legitimate, to give it divine sanction, Alexander made use of the Asiatic belief in the divine ancestry of monarchs. He allowed his person to be worshipped as "heros" or "demi-god" and before long as god. From east to west, from Greece to India, Alexander-worship was added alongside indigenous cults. In 324 B.C. Athens decided to incorporate Alexander among the city-deities as Dionysos. This became the basis for the religious imperium-idea which was to become the moving force of Roman world-dominion, and would continue, christianized, after Rome's decline in the Germanic-Roman idea of sacrum imperium, the "holy Roman empire".

It was indeed possible to combine this religious imperium idea with the ground-motive of greek culture, and it was not by chance that in Athens Alexander was worshipped as Dionysos. We noted that in the Dionysos-cult the matter-motive of the older nature-religions was expressed, i.e. the religious motive of the formless stream of life moving in the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. It is even likely that this cult was imported from Asia. The fatalistic conception of the cycle, of life which inevitably meted out death to everything that exists in individual form was eminently suited to deification of the monarch as lord over life and death. Was not the same mysterious power revealed in him as in Dionysos who was the daimon, the dynamic soul of the ever-flowing life stream? The imperium of which the ruler was the deified bearer was therefore surrounded with a kind of magical halo. It was useless to resist this imperium, just as useless as fighting the inexorable fate of death. And so the religious imperium-idea was a well-established commonplace in Hellenistic culture when after his death Alexander's world-empire broke up into several large realms which eventually yielded to Roman might.

The Romans had already made closer acquaintance with greek culture when they were capturing southern Italy. The Greeks had established colonies here so that this part of the Italian peninsula was called "Magna Graecia". And after they occupied Greece itself the Romans adapted their own religion to the greek culture-religion. Thus the religious groundmotive of greek culture claimed its hold upon them too.

"Authority" was the motive that deeply penetrated the roman world of thought. The roman religion of life, veneration of communal life in tribe and clan, they had in common with the older greek nature-religions. Hence the religious imperium idea of the conquerors found a congenial milieu indeed.

But this idea of the imperium did not become embodied in the person of a ruler until the ancient republican form of government was replaced by the emperor (Augustus). At first the deification of this office was associated with the common roman practice of ancestor-worship. Emperor Tiberius, successor to Augustus, still resisted veneration of a living emperor and only allowed worship of his predecessor. But after him the infamous Caligula dropped this limitation and the ruler is worshipped as god already during his lifetime.

In the religious consciousness of the Romans the deification of the imperium is the counterpart and antipode of the typically juridical character of their ancestor-worship. Roman worship was sober and to the point. It has a stern juridical bent. For them the gods of the state had their own sphere of competence, next to the old gods of home and hearth who represented the coherence of family life throughout the generations. The claims of both spheres regarding sacrifices and worship were closely defined and balanced.

In the old popular law (ius civile) of roman tribalism the religious motive of authority and law was all-pervasive. It rested on a strict juridical delimitation of the spheres of competence, each of which was religiously inviolate and sacred. The authority of the patrician family (gens) was the sphere of religious communal life of the family in which the ancestors were rendered divine honour. The head of the gens was at the same time its leader-priest. All this was carefully distinguished from the sphere of competence of the roman tribe (the civitas) where the public tribal gods maintained their inviolable religious sway. When in the course of time the roman state as Res Publica begins to emerge out of the still primitive and undifferentiated social structure, the power of the great patrician gentes is broken and they divide into narrower spheres of authority: the roman familiae or domestic communities.

Such a familia is not like our modern family. It is undifferentiated, i.e. it reveals traits of many different societal spheres which in a more highly developed culture diverge into well-defined communities, such as family, state, church, etc. One could picture this undifferentiatedness as the lack of specialization in lower animals such as worms. There too no specific organs for the various functions are developed. Just as the old gens and clan had been undifferentiated, so also the familia. Each familia was a family-community, but equally an economic unit, a miniature state, and a community of belief. Above all it was the embodiment of the religious authority of the household gods who represented the communion of the living and the dead members of the familia. Head of the familia was usually the oldest male member, the pater familias, who wielded the power of life and death over all -- over his wife, the children, the slaves, and over the so-called "clients". He was also leader as priest.

The sphere of the pater's authority was juridically distinct from the power of the state. It was religiously ultimate and absolute, with the state powerless to interfere. Its territorial basis was that plot of Italian soil on which the familia was situate, just as the sphere of authority of the older gens had been territorially based on gens-owned lands. To this piece of land, which had, under solemn invocation of the god Terminus, ceremoniously been marked off with boundary-stones, accrued for the pater familias the right of absolute ownership, excluding all others from possession or use.

One should, of course, not err into thinking that this absolute ownership was anything like our modern civil right to ownership, which is strictly a right to property and does not include any authority over persons. But the right of absolute ownership held by the roman pater familias was rooted in the familia's religious sphere of authority, and hence meant first of all for those who belonged to the ancestral lands an authority that decreed over their life and death. Hence also its absolute and exclusivistic nature. The aspect of property-right was but a facet of this right to ownership and a consequence of the religious power of the household-chief. Similarly, he had power to sell children and slaves that resided under his jurisdiction.

Legal authority and property right then, are indissolubly bound together in this still undifferentiated form of ownership. Roman popular law (ius civile) can never be understood apart from the religious groundmotive of roman culture.

That motive also permeated the contractual laws of roman society. The household-heads were mutual equals; the one had no jurisdiction over the other. But if one were indebted to another and did not discharge his debt immediately, then a so-called obligatio was established. Its meaning originally was that the debtor was brought within the religious jurisdiction of the creditor. A prescribed legal formula was pronounced upon such occasions. Payment (solutio) would release him from this sphere of power that held him captive as with a magic bond (vinculum). If he failed to pay his whole person fell to the creditor.

Roman popular law, like the old-germanic and other primitive popular law, was exclusive. It made one's entire legal status dependent upon membership in the roman populus. Banishment from the community resulted in total loss of legal rights. The foreigner too was without rights and could only procure juridical protection by placing himself under the patronage of a roman pater familias, who took him into the familia as "client".

When Rome became an empire, a mere universal law was needed that could be applicable to personal interrelations of citizens as well as of foreigners. This ius gentium is what we today would call the civil law of the Romans. It was no longer bound to the religious sphere of authority of the undifferentiated gens or familia. It raised every free person, regardless of birth or nationality, to the status of legal subject, entitled to the possession of rights and liable for certain obligations. It created for that person a sphere of personal freedom and self-determination that offered a beneficial counterbalance over against the jurisdiction of the community (both state and familia). It was a product of the process of differentiation in ancient societal life. The roman state as res publica, as an institution which, though founded on the power of the sword, had as its goal the public good, acknowledged over against itself a lawful sphere of freedom for the individual whereby he could pursue his own interests as he saw fit. Public law, as internal sphere of authority of the roman state began to reveal a real distinction between itself and civil personal law. Already the old ius civile had distinguished between public and personal law, but here the authorities could not really be intrinsically different as long as the roman community was still undifferentiated. Both were rooted in a religious sphere of authority which, according to its absolute character, included the entire temporal life of its subordinates. Both had sway over life and death.

The difference depended strictly on the difference in bearer. If it was the roman community, it lay within the sphere of public law; if it was the pater familias it was within the sphere of personal law. Thus, in this undifferentiated state of communal life, there was no room for constitutional law nor for a differentiated civil personal law. All law was one, namely, a law of citizens. Differences were due to difference as to who wielded the authority.

The development of a broad civil law as common to all free people presented the roman legislators with a fundamentally religious problem. This ius gentium was not based on the religious sphere of authority of the old gens, nor of the familia, nor yet on the roman community. Where then could its basic principles be found? Here greek philosophy offered aid with its doctrine of natural law (ius naturale), i.e. a law not residing in man but in nature itself.

Stoic philosophy (in which one can point to Semitic influences) had introduced the idea of a natural freedom and equality of all men into greek thought. It had broken with the provincialism of the polis. The founders of stoic philosophy lived in the period that greek culture had become a world-wide culture under the Macedonian imperium. Not the religious idea of the imperium determined their thinking about natural law however, but rather the old idea of a so-called Golden Age, without slavery and war, without distinction between Greek and Barbarian, and which mankind had lost through its own guilt. The stoic idea of an absolute natural law corresponded with this golden era of pre-history: all men are free, and equal before the law.

The roman jurists now based the ius gentium on this ius naturale. With that, they had indeed made an important discovery; they discovered enduring principles that according to its very nature lie at the basis of civil law; civil freedom and equality of the individual as such. The nature of civil law is not that of common law and cannot be made the same without distorting its essence. It is, as is commonly said in modern times, founded on the rights of man. The roman ius gentium, which legitimized slavery, only partially actualized these principles, but the doctrine of the ius naturale continued to breathe the life of pure civil juridical principles into the consciousness of roman jurists.

This roman law was adopted by most of the germanic countries at the close of the Middle Ages as a supplement to indigenous law. And so it became a lasting influence on the development of Western law. The fact that National-Socialism resisted this influence of roman law and in its myth of "Blut und Boden" preached the return to a view of german popular social law, only proves its reactionary character. It failed to see the authentic meaning of civil law as counterforce before the overpowering pressure of the community on the personal freedom of the individual. But the process of undermining civil law was started long before National Socialism arose and the process is still with us.

The Roman ius gentium was indeed a gift of God's common grace to Western culture. The roman jurists had developed it with a true mastery of form and great sensitivity to practical needs. Many profound principles of law so familiar to us from modern civil law could here come to expression. Nevertheless, the religious groundmotive of Greece-Roman culture continued to threaten this blessed fruit of God's common grace. Roman civil law remained in the clutches of the religious motive of authority which had governed roman law-development from the outset.

The development of ius gentium was totally bound up with roman world-dominion. It placed man as it were as an individual unit with his private sphere of freedom squarely over against the all-powerful roman state-mechanism which was to promote the "common good" of the roman Imperium. The christian idea of sphere-sovereignty of the differentiated spheres of life was as foreign to the Romans as it had been to the Greeks. How then could the individual maintain his private freedom in the face of the roman Leviathan? Must not that freedom necessarily fall victim to the absolute authority of the imperium? This was certainly not the case when Rome flourished. In those days one finds a sharp demarkation between the sphere of competence of state and of individual freedom. Essentially, however, this was but due to the fact that the old undifferentiated familia could still maintain itself. and in that familia-structure was given the ancient division between the absolute and impenetrable religious competence of the household-chief and that of the roman state. Under the protection of the familia also the freedom of trade and industry remained in force in the roman empire. The shops and plantations that wealthy Romans exploited with great numbers of slaves in and beyond Italy belonged to his familia and thus fell outside state-interference. This mechanical delimitation of private and public jurisdiction could, of course, lead to a capitalistic exploitation of labour.

But in the days of the Byzantine emperors (beginning in the third century A.D.) the Graeco-Rastern idea of the sacrum imperium gains ground and this spelled the end of the civil freedom of the individual. The Greeks did not know of the roman familia and the idea of marking off its religious jurisdiction from that of the state was foreign to them. In this period the only stronghold of the roman idea of freedom is razed and an unbridled state-absolutism arises against which not even the ius gentium could offer any resistance. Trade and industry are forced into the strait-jacket of the roman civitas. Everybody becomes a civil servant. A strictly hierarchical "guided economy" ensues. After emperor Constantine the Great accepts the christian faith this state-absolutism even subjects the christian church to itself (state-church). The divine ruler of the world-empire now calls himself, in christian syle, "Ceasar by the grace of God", but he claims absolute authority on earth, even over christian doctrine.

CREATION, FALL, and REDEMPTION

The second groundmotive that is formative in the development of western culture is that of creation, fall, and redemption through Jesus Christ, in the communion of the Holy Spirit. The christian religion in its pure Scriptural meaning introduces it as new religious community-motive. Already in its revelation of the creation it is in radical antithesis over against the religious groundmotive of greek and graeco-roman antiquity. The creation-motive reveals itself as truly divine Word-revelation through its integrality (it embraces all things created) and radicality (it penetrates to the radix, the root of created reality). As Creator, God reveals himself as the absolute and complete (integral) Origin of all things. There is no equally original power next to him like the Greek Ananke or Moira that opposed the Olympian gods. Accordingly, creation in no way gives expression to two opposed Ur-principles.

Greek philosophy, influenced by its motive of form and matter, had come to the conclusion that there could be no such thing as creation. Nothing comes from nothing. Some greek thinkers (especially Plato) had indeed held that the world of becoming must be the product of the form-giving activity of a divine rational spirit. But under the suggestion of the cultural religious groundmotive this could only be conceived after the image of human cultural achievement. The divine mind to which the world owes its being is, according to Plato, the Demi-urges, the great architect and artist who requires matter for his controlled form-giving. This material was thought of -- as in the greek matter-motive -- as utterly formless and chaotic. It does not owe its origin to the divine reason, for the Demi-urges is but a god of form or culture. He does not create: he gives only divine form to matter. "Matter" retains its autochthonous power, the Anangke, or blind fate, hostile to the divine formative activity. According to Plato in his famous dialogue the Timaeus, which deals with the origin of the world, the divine Dios can only "persuade" the Anangke and so bridle it. We meet the same idea in the great greek tragedian Aeschylus' Oresteia, in which Orestes, who killed his mother because she murdered his father, is persecuted by Anangke on account of matricide. For Plato's great pupil Aristotle too, the divine nous (mind) is pure form while the Anangke that permeates matter is the peculiar cause of everything anomalous and monstrous in the world. The earlier "philosophers of nature" had given the primacy to the matter-motive. But both in Plato and in Aristotle the religious primacy is given to the form-principle. For them "matter" is no longer divine. Still, the god of rational form is not the originator of matter. He is not the integral, sole cause of the cosmos. This is what makes their idea of God apo-state (fallen-away). The greek idea of god is the product of absolutizing the relative, deification of a created aspect, now of the cultural aspect, then of the aspect of movement. And thus it stands absolutely antithetical to the revelation of God in the Bible, squarely against God the Creator of heaven and earth. No synthesis between the creation-motive of the christian religion and the form-matter motive of greek religion is possible.

Of one piece with God's self-revelation as Creator of all things is the revelation of who man is in his deepest relation to his creator. In the revelation that man was created in the image of God, God revealed man to himself in the religious root-unity of his creaturely existence in which the whole meaning of the temporal world is integrally bound up and concentrated. Jehovah God, the integral Origin of all things is, in accordance with his creational order creaturely mirrored in the heart or soul or spirit of man. This is the religious center and the spiritual root of the whole of man's temporal existence in all its aspects. Just as God is the absolute Origin of all creation so also was all creation focussed upon the Origin in the soul of man before the fall. All of human life in all its temporal aspects and relations without exception ought to be directed towards that absolute Origin in that religious center, and ought to surrender totally to the service of love to God and neighbour. As the apostle Paul has said: "Whether you eat or whether you drink, do it to the honour of God."

While the heart or the soul is the religious center of the entire individual temporal existence of man, scripture simultaneously teaches us that each man is created in religious community with mankind. In Adam all mankind was included in its relation to God. In Adam also all of mankind fell. This religious community is spiritual. That is to say, it is governed and maintained by a religious spirit that works in it as central dunamis (moving force).

According to the plan of creation, this was to have been the Holy Spirit of God himself which would have brought man into communion with God. In this religious root-community of creation not only the temporal being of man, but that of the whole world was concentrated to the service of God. For God had created man to be lord of creation; the resources God had placed there were to be disclosed in the service of love toward God and neighbour. That's why in Adam's fall the whole temporal world fell with him. Because of man the earth was cursed. Instead of the Spirit of God the spirit of apostasy began to govern the community of man and so the whole of temporal reality. Neither the anorganic elements, nor the kingdoms of plants and animals have a spiritual or religious root of their own. Their temporal existence is only completed in and through man. Just try to conceive of their existence apart from man! One would have to think away all their logical, their cultural, economic, aesthetic and other properties that relate them to man--down to (for anorganic elements and for plants) their capability of being seen! For objective visibleness can only exist in relation to possible visual perception which these creatures do not themselves possess. Modern materialists, overestimating the mathematical, natural-scientific mode of thinking, have in all seriousness thought to grasp the essence of nature apart from man completely. Nature, they thought was nothing more than the collection of static particles of matter utterly determined by mechanistic laws of motion. But they failed to remember that the mathematical formulae in which they thought to have grasped the essence of nature, themselves presuppose human language and human thought. They forgot that every concept of natural phenomena is a human affair which has to do with human thinking. Nothing at all is left of "nature" apart from man, for whoever thinks to grasp it begins with an abstraction of the extremest sort. And this abstraction (lifting out) of given reality is itself a logical-theoretical achievement and presupposes thinking. On the Scholastic-Christian standpoint too, influenced by Greek thought, it has been held that the anorganic, the plants, and the animals should be granted a being of its own apart from man. This in terms of so-called material substances or self-subsistents whose existence depends on God alone. But this cannot be maintained in view of God's revelation concerning creation either. Objective visibleness, logical characteristics, the beauty or ugliness and other properties subject to human valuation are in the order of creation necessarily related to human sensory perception, human conceptualization, human standards of beauty, etc. And all these are created. They cannot, therefore, be predicated of God the Creator. Man was indeed the last to be created, but at the same time God had related everything temporal to man. So that it all came to full reality in man. So this scriptural creation-motive turns one's view of temporal reality around. It cuts off at the root every view of reality which grows on the trunk of some idolatrous dualistic groundmotive. Jehovah God is integrally Origin of all that is created. Integral, after the image of God, is the being of man, concentrated in his heart, or soul or spirit. This existential centrum is the religious root-unity of all of man's functions in temporal reality, none excepted. And every other creature is also integrally created into the whole of temporal reality, so that his being is not closed off within a few aspects as abstracted by the natural sciences (number, space, and motion), but embraces all of reality in all its aspects, though in relatedness to man. That's why the whole of the temporal world (and not just some abstracted parts) has its root-unity in the religious community of mankind. That's why in man the whole of temporal reality could fall away from God.

In the years just prior to World War II the question as to how we are to conceive in the light of the Word of God the human soul and its relation to the body was hotly debated. This argument can be understood only from the point of view of a complete antithesis between the scriptural groundmotive of the christian religion and the religious groundmotive of greek thought.

Perhaps some have impatiently wondered why I made so much of the ancient groundmotive of the Greeks. But if it be true that our modern Western culture can only be approached with the understanding that it came forth out of the conflicts and tensions of four religious groundmotives, then it is simply impossible to inform the reader meaningfully concerning the sense of the antithesis for today if it is not made clear that today cannot be understood apart from yesterday. And if even in the most fundamental doctrines of the christian religion such as creation, fall, and redemption, the influence of the religious groundmotive of ancient Greece still causes strife and separation among christians today, then it is inescapable to spend time with this groundmotive. I want to let the reader himself get to the bottom of the problem of antithesis. And that in such a way that he gradually begins to see that the christian religion itself fights a battle of life and death against all sorts of religious groundmotives which in every principal issue of our times try to take hold of the soul of modern man. A bitter battle is waged, both against those who consciously reject this groundmotive and against those who time after time would rob it of its intrinsic strength by "accommodating" it to non-scriptural groundmotives. A battle between the Spirit of the christian religion and the spirit of idolatry. But a battle, also, that cuts right through the ranks of the christians and through the soul of the believer.

THE SOUL AS ROOT

What is the soul? Is this a question that only psychology (psyche=soul) can answer? If so, how is it that the christian church has considered it necessary to make pronouncements concerning the relation of "soul" and "body" in its confessions? Is it perhaps like this: the church confesses only to the imperishability of the human soul, its not being subject to temporal bodily mortality, and to the resurrection of the body in the Last Judgment, while the question as to what the "soul" actually is, is referred to philosophical psychology? But this would place the christian church in a strangely contradictory position. What if "psychology" would come to the conclusion that no such soul as distinct from the body exists? Or what if psychology does indeed give an elaborate theory concerning the "essence of the soul", but utterly oriented to the groundmotive of greek philosophy or to the modern humanistic world-and-life view? Would not the christian church be building on sand if it honoured such philosophical constructions of the soul with the predicates "immortal" and "imperishable"? And yet scholastic theology has from the beginning tried to push the church into this intrinsically contradictory position and has managed to gain entrance for the greek conception of the soul in the Roman Catholic confessions.

But the radical antithesis between the groundmotive of Holy Writ and that of greek "psychology" will not be bridged. No conception of body and soul in human nature that is determined by the greek form-matter motive can stand in the face of the Word-revelation concerning creation, fall, and redemption. The question as to what in truth we are to understand by "soul" or "spirit" or "heart" is no theoretical question but a religious one.

Because the question asks where human existence finds its religious root-unity. As long as we focus our attention on our temporal existence we discover nothing but a bewildering variety of aspects and functions: number, space and motion, organic functions of life and functions of emotional feeling, logical functions of thought and functions in historical development, social and lingual functions, economic, aesthetic, juridical, moral functions, and functions of faith. But where does man find the deeper unity of his existence? As long as he continues to study the temporal diversity of his functions that correspond to the different aspects of reality that are investigated by the special sciences, so long he never arrives at self-knowledge, but his gaze will continue to lose itself in dispersion. True self-knowledge is not gained except by way of religious concentration, when we converge our entire existence upon the true basic relation to God, the absolute and only Origin and Creator of all. But since the fall man can no longer attain this true self-knowledge. According to scripture this self-knowledge is completely dependent on the true knowledge of God which man lost when idolatrous ground-motives took possession of his heart. Man is created in God's image: the soul is the religious focus of human existence in which all temporal, diverging rays are concentrated before the light whence they come is broken up by the prism of time. Augustine has said that in a certain sense the soul is identical with our religious relationship to God. Man is created in the image of God: when he lost the true knowledge of God he also lost true knowledge of himself.

An apostate groundmotive drives a man to see himself in the image of his idol. That's why greek "psychology" has never been able to conceive the religious root-unity of man, and has never penetrated to what is truly called "soul", that is, the religious center of human existence. As long as in greek thought the matter-motive dominated, the "soul" was merely seen as formless and impersonal life-principle caught up in the stream of life and unaware of "individual immortality". In other words: death is the end of man as individual being. His individual life-force is necessarily destroyed so that the great cycle of life may go on. Under influence of "orphic" thought the soul is seen as a rational, invisible form^{sub}-stance of super-cosmic, "heavenly" origin and existing quite apart from the material body. But this "rational soul" (in Scholasticism: anima rationalis) itself was nothing but a theoretical abstraction from the temporal existence of man. It embraced but a part, a subtracted complex of the various functions: the function of feeling, the function of logical thought and judgment, and the function of faith. And this was conceived as man's invisible individual form which just like the Olympian gods of culture possessed immortality, while the material body was totally subject to the cycle of life, death, and becoming again. The "rational soul" was supposedly characterized by the theoretical-logical function of thought. In the development of this philosophical conception of the rational soul one finds many differences among Plato and Aristotle and each changes his view throughout phases of his life. I won't trace all that, but one thing must be mentioned: their conception of the rational soul is inseparably related to their idea of the divine. Both Plato and Aristotle considered the truly divine to reside only in theoretical thought-activity directed to the imperishable and invisible world of forms and being. According to Aristotle god is absolute theoretical thought which is pure form and which finds its absolute counterpart in the matter-principle of eternal formless motion or becoming.

If the theoretical activity of thought is the divine and immortal in man, then it must be capable of existence apart from the perishable body. The latter is actually the antipode of theoretical thought. For this reason, in greek thought the "rational soul" can never be the religious root-unity of temporal human existence. The ambiguity within the religious groundmotive which time after time caused the form-principle to be placed in absolute opposition to the matter-principle did not allow for a recognition of the root-unity of human nature. Just as for Plato and Aristotle god cannot be creator in the sense of absolute and sole Origin of all that exists, so also the human soul in this view cannot be the absolute root-unity of man's temporal expressions in life. In their greek conception the soul's theoretical activity of thought always stands over against everything that is subjected to the matter-principle of eternal becoming. Greek thought never arrived at the truth, first revealed in scripture, that human thinking too, springs forth from a deeper central unity of the whole of human life which, since religious, determines and transcends also the theoretical thought-function.

Scripture says: "Out of the heart are the issues of life". "Biblical psychology" may not denature this to a mere expression of Jewish wisdom that can be understood simply as a typical instance of Jewish language usage. Whoever reads scripture thus fails to recognize that it is God's revelation whose groundmotive can only be heard through the operation of the Spirit of God. A pregnant meaning of what the soul, or the spirit or heart of man really is can never be understood apart from the divine groundmotive of creation, fall, and redemption. He who takes his stance in this integral and radical groundmotive of scripture must come to the conclusion that there is an absolute, unbridgeable antithesis between the greek conceptions of the relation of soul and body and the scriptural one of the christian religion. The former are determined by the apostate groundmotive of form and matter; the latter by the scriptural motive of creation, fall, and redemption through Jesus Christ. The former, at least as long as it consistently follows the greek groundmotive in its ambiguous directions, leads to a so-called dichotomy or dualism in the temporal existence of man: a "perishable, material body" and an "immortal rational soul". The christian motive reveals that the soul or spirit of man is the utterly central root-unity of the heart of his entire being because man is created in the image of God; his fall was the apostasy of the spiritual root of his existence, and in that heart or focus his being is redirected toward God through the redemptive work of Christ. In this central spiritual unity man is not subject to temporal bodily death. But here too an absolute antithesis obtains between this scriptural revelation concerning the imperishability of the soul and the greek-orphic belief in immortality that permeated scholastic theology by way of Plato and Aristotle. Nowhere does scripture teach that man can save a "divine part" of his temporal being from the grave. It does not at all teach us that an "invisible" substantial form with an abstract complex of functions of feeling and thinking can survive bodily death. The soul or spirit of man that temporal or bodily death cannot touch is not an abstraction out of temporal existence but the full, spiritually religious root-unity of man, man himself in his personality which transcends temporal life.

In the religious groundmotive of the christian religion fall and redemption through Christ Jesus are unbreakably connected with the revelation of creation. In apostate groundmotives sin in its radical scriptural sense plays no part. It cannot occur there because it can only be understood in true self-knowledge as fruit of the Word-revelation.

Greek religious consciousness at best knows of a battle between the principles of form and matter in man. This is supposed to be the conflict between the uncontrollable sensual desires arising out of the life-stream that courses through the blood, and "reason" which ought to bridle the desires. For, in this view "reason" is the formative principle of human nature, the principle of harmony and measure. The sensual desires are formless, in constant flux; they are beyond every measure and limit. The matter-principle, the principle of the ever-flowing earthy stream of life becomes the autonomous principle of evil. The Orphics considered the material body to be a prison or grace for the "rational soul". He who capitulates to his sensual desires and drives, and rejects the lodestar of "reason" stands convicted morally. But on the other hand Ananke, blind fate, is at work in these boundless drives, and reason is often powerless before it. That's why the state must force the average citizen to moral living.

Modern humanism knows in man only the battle between sensual "nature" (controlled by the natural-scientific law of cause and effect) and rational freedom of the human personality in the face of its sensual inclinations. Man's duty is to act worthily as autonomous free personality and it is reprehensible if he shows his weakness for sensual "nature". But humanism indicates no way toward release.

Both contrasts, "matter" and "form" in greek ethics as well as "nature" and "freedom" in humanistic ethics, do not take place in the religious root but in temporal branches of human life; but they are religiously absolutized. Consciousness of guilt, therefore, remains merely dialectical (moving to and fro between the opposing poles of the groundmotive). It is born of the devaluation of part of man's being over against another (deified) part that in reality never actually functions without the former.

We shall see that in Roman Catholic doctrine the radically scriptural meaning of the fall is circumvented by the idea that sin did not despoil the natural life of man, but only caused the supertemporal gift of grace to be lost, with the admission that "nature" is weakened and wounded by original sin. The dualism between "nature" and "grace" in the Roman Catholic groundmotive stands in the way of understanding the real meaning of sin, even if Roman Catholic doctrine far surpasses the greek and humanistic idea of guilt.

But in its revelation of the fall into sin the Word of God gets at the radix, the root, the religious center of human nature. The fall is apostasy from God in the heart, the soul, i.e. the religious center or root of man. This was spiritual death: being fallen away from the Fountain of life. The fall was radical and therefore swept the whole temporal world in its wake because its religious root-unity is man. Every denial of this radical sense of the fall even when it maintains the term "radical" as the great humanistic thinker Kant did who spoke of the "Radikal-Böse" in man, stands in direct opposition to the scriptural groundmotive. It knows neither man nor God nor the depth of sin.

The revelation of the fall does not, however, imply recognition of an autonomous original principle opposed to the Creator. Sin only exists in a false relation to God and is therefore never independent of the Creator. If there were no God there would be no sin either. The possibility of sin is, as the apostle Paul profoundly expressed it, created by the law.

and so it is. Without the law which commands the good there could be no evil. But the same law is the possibility for the creature to exist. Without the law man would sink into nothingness because it determines his humanity. Since sin has no existence of its own before God the Creator it is not able to bring an ultimate duality into creation either. There is no two-fold origin. Satan himself is a creature who in his created freedom voluntarily fell away from God.

The divine Word by which, according to John, all things were created has become man in Christ Jesus. It entered root and temporal branchings, heart and life, soul and body of human nature and for that reason its redeeming work was radical: the rebirth of man and in him of the whole created temporal world which finds in man its center. In his creative Word by which all things were created and that as Redeemer became flesh, God also upholds his fallen world by "common grace", that is, the grace shown to the whole community of man, whether they be regenerate or apostate. Redeemed man too shares the sinfulness of his nature with fallen humanity. "Common grace" curbs the effects of sin and staves off the demonization of fallen man, so that everywhere it is still possible to see traces of the light of God's power, goodness, truth, righteousness and beauty, even in cultures directed towards idols. I already pointed to the meaning of the civil law of the Romans as fruit of this common grace, for example.

In his common grace God first of all maintains his creational ordinances and therefore also human nature. These are the same for christians and non-christians. God's common grace is evident in that even the most anti-godly ruler time after time must bow and capitulate under these decrees if he is to see enduring results in his labours. But wherever the diversity of temporal ordinances is not grasped and obeyed in their religious root (the religious love-commandment of the service of God and neighbour) such capitulation, such de facto subjection remains incidental, partial. That's why apostate culture always reveals disharmony arising out of idolatrous absolutization of certain aspects of God's creation at the cost of others that are, however, just as essential.

God's common grace reveals itself not only in maintenance of his creational decrees, but also in the individual gifts and talents given by him to specific people. Great statesmen, thinkers, artists, technicians, etc. can be of relative blessing in temporal life, even though the direction of their lives is ruled by the spirit of apostasy. In this too, one sees how blessing and curse, light and darkness are mixed.

But common grace cannot possibly weaken or destroy the antithesis between the groundmotive of the christian religion and the apostate ones. Rather, it can only be understood on the basis of the antithesis. Common grace marks its beginning in the promise, made in paradise, that God would put enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, out of which Christ would be born. Its religious root is Christ Jesus who is King of common grace, and apart from whom God will not look upon his fallen creation in grace at all. In reformational-christian circles there may no longer be any argument about that. As soon as one tries to conceive of common grace apart from Christ, for instance by attributing it exclusively to God as Creator, then one drives a wedge in the christian groundmotive between creation and redemption.** Its radical and integral character disappears.

** The result is an intrinsic dualism.

Then one forgets that common grace is shown to mankind -- and in man to the whole temporal world -- as to an as yet undivided totality, because humanity is redeemed and reborn in Christ, and because those who are in Christ still share in fallen human nature until the completion of the times. Christ's kingship over the entire terrain affected by common grace is integral, complete, in his battle against the kingdom of darkness. For that very reason the antithesis embraces in common grace the whole of temporal life. That God lets the sun rise over the just and the unjust, that he grants gifts and talents to the believing and the incredulous alike -- all that is no grace for the apostate in particular, but for humanity in Christ. It is a gratia communis, a common grace rooted in the Redeemer of the world.

The rule of common grace will not cease until the Final Judgment at the close of history, when the reborn creation will be freed from its share in the sinful root of human nature and when that re-creation will shine with the highest perfection through nothing but the communion of the Holy Spirit. Even in Satan and in the wicked, God's righteousness will be shown as confirmation of the absolute sovereignty of the Creator.

God's revelation of his common grace shown toward his fallen creation as a still undivided totality guards truly scriptural christianity against a sectarian pride that wants to flee the world and simply rejects everything which in our Western culture came into being apart from immediate religion (buiten de onmiddelijke religie gegroeid). In every cultural phase, no matter how much its development was directed by idolatrous spiritual powers, there are still glimmerings in varying degree of the original glory of God's creation. One cannot deny this except in plain ingratitude. It is the will of God that we were born into this culture, just as Christ appeared in the midst of a Jewish culture in which Graeco-Roman influences were already evident in all sides. But, as we said earlier, this can never mean that therefore the radical antithesis between the Christian and the apostate groundmotives would lose its force in the "area of common grace". The way in which scriptural christianity can and must be enriched by the fruits of classical and humanistic culture can be no other than a radically critical way. The groundmotive as such of an apostate culture may never be assimilated by the christian in his thought and life. Never may he strive for synthesis, to bridge the gap, between that sort of groundmotive and the christian religion. And it may never be denied that from out of this religious root the antithesis cuts right through the issues of temporal life.

CHAPTER TWO

STRUCTURAL PLURALITY

The scriptural groundmotive of the christian religion: creation, fall, and redemption through Christ Jesus, operates through the Spirit of God as a driving force in the religious root of temporal life. Of necessity, as soon as one is totally dominated by it, it effectuates a radical turn-about in one's stance and so in one's whole view of temporal life. This can only be denied by those who fail to do justice to the integrality and radicality of this groundmotive. It can be denied only by those who tone down the absolute antithesis between this groundmotive and those of apostate religions in a fruitless effort to bridge them. He who by the grace of God has come to true knowledge of Him and true knowledge of himself inevitably experiences spiritual liberation from the yoke of sin including its burden upon his view of reality -- even while he knows that sin will not cease in his life. But he knows that created reality nowhere offers foundation or foothold, no solid ground for his existence. He perceives how temporal reality as a whole in the many-faceted variety of its aspects and structures is concentrated in the religious root-community of the human spirit. He sees how this temporal reality restlessly searches in the human heart for its divine Origin and how it cannot find rest until it rests in God.

SPHERE SOVEREIGNTY

In temporal order created reality displays a great variety of aspects or modes of being in which its spiritual (religious) root-unity breaks up in a wealth of colours, like light when it passes through a prism refracts into the rainbow-hues. These are the aspects of number, space, motion, organic life, emotional feeling, logical distinguishing, historical cultural development, symbolic meaning, social forms, economic value, aesthetic harmony, justice, moral valuation, and pistical (pistis = faith) certainty.¹ These aspects are basically the fields of investigation for the various modern special sciences: mathematics, natural science (physics and chemistry), biology (science of organic life), psychology, logic, history, linguistics, science of social forms and conventions, economy, aesthetics, jurisprudence, ethics or moral science, and theory concerning divine revelation in Christian and non-christian faith. Each of these special sciences considers reality in but one of these aspects.

Now, imagine science without the light of the true knowledge of God and self, about to investigate these distinct aspects of reality. It is then in a situation analogous to that of him who sees the colours of the rainbow but knows nothing of the light out of which these colours refract. The colours seem to run into each other, without strict demarcation. Would that man, if one were to ask him where these different hues come from, not be inclined to consider one of the colours the origin of the others? Would he be able to discover correctly the mutual relations and coherence among them? And if not, how then will he know each colour as to its peculiar intrinsic nature? If he is not colour-blind he will indeed distinguish, but he will likely begin with the colour that strikes him most and consider the others to be but shades of the absolutized one.

No different is the position of him who thinks he can find his basis, his starting-point for a view of temporal reality in science. Time after time such a one will be inclined to present as integral reality some aspect of it -- organic life, or feeling, or historical cultural development -- and he will reduce all the others to various manifestations of the overestimated one. Think for instance of Goethe's Faust, where Faust says: "Gefühl ist alles". Or modern "materialism", in which all of temporal reality is reduced to particles of matter in motion. Think of the modern naturalistic philosophy of life (Lebensphilosophie) which sees everything one-sidedly in the light of organic life-development.

Actually, it is not science as such which drives a man to absolutizations: it is the idolatrous religious groundmotive that has taken hold of his thinking. Science can only let us get to know reality in theoretical distinction of its many aspects. It teaches us nothing concerning the deeper unity or concerning the origin of them. Religion alone causes us to seek after this unity and origin, since it drives us to focus everything relative toward the absolute ground and origin of all things, because religion calls men to knowledge of God and self. Once an apostate groundmotive takes hold of us it compels our thinking to absolutization of the relative, to deification of that which is creaturely. In this way false religious prejudices darken our conception of the structure of reality. He who absolutizes created reality according to one of its aspects can no longer comprehend any one of them in its ^{own} inner character. He has a false view of reality. This does not exclude the possibility that he may discover various important moments of truth. But these moments of truth he integrates in a false totality-view of reality. And precisely then they become the most dangerous and most poisonous weapons of the spirit of the lie.

Dominant today is an idolatrous view of reality that absolutizes the historical aspect of creation. It calls itself dynamic, that is to say, it conceives of all reality as in motion, developing historically. Its polemic is against the static view that ascribes to fixed truths. Since in this conception everything is considered in the one-sided light of historical becoming and development everything is held to be purely historical. This "historicism" knows of no eternal values. Everything is caught up in the stream of historical development. The christian truths of faith are, from this viewpoint, just as relative and of passing value as are the ideals of the French Revolution.

There are many moments of truth in this "historistic" view. Everything temporal does indeed have an historical aspect. There is historical development even in the word-revelation of God, just as there is in human scientific endeavour, in society, in art, and in "ideals". Still, the historical remains but one aspect of total reality as given to us in time. It is but one aspect among many others which cannot be reduced to it. And it does not reach to the root-unity and the absolute origin of reality. In the overestimation of this historical aspect the moments of truth become the most dangerous weapons of the spirit of deception. Just like the tempting words of the serpent to Eve in paradise: you will be like God knowing good and evil, historicism contains half-truths.

When the scriptural groundmotive of the christian religion begins to rule us our view of reality is also liberated from the false prejudices that idolatrous groundmotives had foisted on us. The motive of creation continually drives our thought to view comprehensively the inner nature, mutual relations, and coherence of all the aspects of God-created reality.

Once one becomes conscious of this motive he begins to see the richness of God's creation in the great pluriformity and colourfulness of its temporal aspects. And, since by way of God's revelation we know of the True Origin and the true religious root-unity of them all, we will no longer attempt to absolutize one and to reduce the others to it, but we will recognize the true intrinsic nature and peculiar law of each. For God created everything after its kind.

In their mutual relations the various aspects of reality cannot be reduced to each other. They each possess a sovereign sphere with regard to the others. Abraham Kuyper called this their "sphere-sovereignty".

The creation-motive of the christian religion is in implacable conflict with the apostate tendency of the human heart to erase boundaries, eradicate and level the peculiar natures that God has laid in each of the many aspects of reality. The principle of sphere-sovereignty is therefore of powerful universal significance for the whole of one's view concerning the relation of temporal life to the christian religion. It cannot be at home with a conception of a dichotomy of mutually contrasted and opposed areas of temporal reality, such as "matter" and "mind" in Orphic-Greek thought. For, such a dualistic view is always the result of a dualistic ground-motive that knows neither the true religious root-unity, nor the true absolute Origin of temporal reality.

Sphere-sovereignty is a creational principle that cannot be conceived apart from the scriptural groundmotive of the christian religion. It not only tells us of the mutual irreducibility, but also of the indissoluble inner coherence and unbreakable correlation of all the aspects of reality in the order of time. Our logical thinking is enclosed in the logical aspect of temporal reality. And while this aspect is indeed irreducible to any of the others, sovereign in its own sphere and subject to its own sphere of divine decrees (the laws for logical thought) -- it can reveal all this only in unbreakable coherence with all the other aspects of reality. As soon as one attempts to conceive of the logical function as absolute, that is, as independent of and apart from our function of feeling, our organic life-function, the historical cultural function etc., it dissolves into nothingness. It does not exist all by itself. It can reveal its proper nature only in inseparable coherence with every function we possess in other aspect of reality. We can therefore, admit quite simply that we can think logically only as long as we have a perishable body that functions physicochemically and that has organic life-processes. Our hope of immortality is not rooted in our logical thinking, but in Christ Jesus. By the light of the Word of God we know that the whole of our temporal life in all its aspects has a spiritual, religious root-unity that will not decay with our temporal existence: an imperishable soul which transcends our bodily life.

The principle of sphere-sovereignty has even more concrete meaning for our view of reality. The scriptural groundmotive, as we saw earlier, radically transforms one's entire view of temporal reality as soon as it really begins to penetrate into one's life. Then it causes one to know again the true structure of reality.

Two kinds of structure there are within time. First, there is structure according to the various aspects of modes of being (enumerated on p.). One is familiar with all these aspects in one's experience in daily life, but they are experienced only by way of the individual totalities of concrete things, events, acts, societal relationships, etc.

In the ordinary experience of daily life attention is directed to the latter and does not get to explicate the aspects displayed by concrete things, events, etc. as such, apart from things that function in them. That happens in the theoretical attitude of thinking. One can determine this for himself when he recalls how as a child he learned to count: by moving the beads of the abacus. The numerical relationships were learned by means of the beads. This calls for a theoretical abstraction foreign to ordinary experience of reality. The numerical aspect with its numerical relations and their laws now become problematic for logical conceptualization. At first this raises difficulties: one has to learn to spread out reality as it were in one's thinking, in order to focus on the numerical aspect alone. This theoretical analysis (reading out) of reality means, of course, that one has to subtract something from the full reality that is given. The logical function of one's thinking, with whose aid one forms concepts, comes to stand over against the aspect of number which, since it is non-logical in nature, offers resistance to the attempt to conceptualize it.

In everyday experience, on the other hand, reality does not confront us in its abstracted aspects, but concretely in the structure of individual totalities such as things, events, acts, societal relationships (family, state, church, school, etc.). This is the second structure, the concrete structure of reality as it reveals itself in time and in which it presents itself to the experience of daily life. But this second structure is inseparably related to the first. So much so that if one views the latter wrongly, it is also impossible to gain correct (theoretical) insight into the former.

Now, if one would understand in its full scope the significance of the creational principle of sphere-sovereignty for human society, then one must first be clear on its meaning for the intrinsic natures and the mutual coherence and relation of the aspects of reality, including the aspects of societal life. Earlier we have seen that in the religious root these various aspects of reality are one (the analogy of the prism). In their peculiar distinctiveness they nevertheless proved to be interwoven and to cohere in the order of time in which they are enclosed, so that none of them can exist except together with all the others. This universal coherence also expresses itself in the structure of each of the aspects themselves.

Take for example the feeling-aspect of reality. Its core, its nucleus, is irreducible to any of the others. Nevertheless, one discovers in his psychical life the expression of an intrinsic coherence with all the other aspects manifest in reality. Feeling has a life of its own: psychical life. This is possible only on the basis of organic life, but psychical life is not organic life, although it is inseparably connected with it. In its "life-moment" then, the psychical aspect is intrinsically interwoven with the organic aspect of reality. Feeling further has an emotional moment in which psychical life coheres with the physico-chemical process of bodily motion. Emotion is nothing but movement of feeling. It cannot be reduced to the mere motion of so-called particles of matter in the body. Still, without the latter it cannot occur. Thus there is an intrinsic coherence between the feeling aspect and the aspect of motion. Psychical life is connected to the spatial aspect in the moment of the feeling of spaciousness, which corresponds to the sensory space of awareness in which one notes the colours, the sounds, the hardness or softness of things and their other sensorily perceivable properties.

This is quite different from mathematical space. The aspect of feeling also manifests an inherent plurality of emotional impressions -- here the coherence with the numerical aspect comes to expression. Human psychical life is not even limited to the coherence with the aspects that precede feeling: it unfolds itself in logical feeling, historical cultural feeling, lingual feeling, feeling for social convention, economic feeling of value, aesthetic feeling, ethical feeling and the feeling of pistical certainty. In other words, in the structure of the psychical aspect the coherence with all the others is reflected.

This universal scope of psychical life is unlimited. In its own sphere it is the integral (complete) expression of God's creational work. Its religious root-unity lies, together with all the other aspects of one's temporal being, in the religious focus of existence; in the heart or soul or spirit -- where God is inescapable. And so, out of the religious creation-motive of Holy Writ one discovers in each of the aspects of God's work of creation the expression of creation's integral and radical nature. The sphere-sovereignty of the aspects, which guarantees their irreducibility and distinct laws, thus finds its correlary in sphere-universality, by way of which they express in their own structure the universal coherence of all the aspects.

Precisely this sphere-universality provides occasion for absolutization of some aspect of God's immeasurably rich creation as soon as an idolatrous groundmotive takes hold of a life-and-world view. When, for example, one sees that in psychical life all the other aspects are as it were reflected, and, misguided by some apostate groundmotive, one is in search of a certain ground for life in feeling -- what then will prevent him from proclaiming feeling as origin of number, space, motion, logical thinking, historical development etc.? Why not ultimately even identify faith with the feeling of trust and certainty? It could be that the reader's own life of faith has been undermined and impoverished by such false mysticism! In Goethe's Faust the simple Gretchen inquires of Dr. Faustus whether or not he believes in God; he, the thinker in Satan's power, replies by pointing to the feeling of happiness that flows through us when we contemplate heaven and earth, and in the experience of love in courtship. And then he says:

"Erfol davon dein Herz, so gross es ist,
Und wenn du ganz in dem Gefühle selig bist,
Nenn es dann wie du willst,
Nenn's Glück! Herz! Liebe! Gott!
Ich habe keinen Namen
Dafür! Gefühl ist alles,
Name ist Schall und Rauch
Umneblend Himmelsglut!"

Besides idolatry of the psychical stands idolatry of every one of the other aspects of reality. Vitalism, which deifies the eternally flowing stream of life, is no less idolatrously directed than the religion of feeling. Modern historicism, which sets its heart on never-ending cultural development, is no less idolatrous than modern materialism which declares the aspect of motion as investigated by the natural sciences to be the alpha and omega of reality.

Do we now begin to see how the religious groundmotive of our life governs and determines the whole of our view of reality?

Is it not obvious that there is an irreconcilable antithesis at work between the groundmotive of the christian religion and that of the service of an idol? Can we, in the light of all this, still maintain that the christian religion is meaningful merely for our life of faith but not for our view of reality? No! Here we cannot escape from ourselves. The christian religion will not be bartered with! It is no treasure that we can lock away among relics cuddled in an inner chamber. It is as a leaven that permeates the whole of our life and thought -- or else it can have no more meaning for us than any theory. Theory fails to touch us inwardly.

But what does this religious groundmotive have to do with the concrete needs of political life and social action? This question is crucial, especially for those who saw the annihilation of christian parties and organizations during the war. After all: our christian confessions provide no answers to the concrete political problems and social questions of the present time, do they. True! The church confessions do not. Its ecclesiastical character does not allow for that. But the groundmotive of the christian religion will, provided it does indeed work in our lives, radically convert our view of the intrinsic nature of the state in its relation to the other societal spheres. Through it we will discover the true principles for political life and for societal life as a whole. And thus the antithesis with the principles for politics and society of apostate orientation must come to expression.

Sphere-sovereignty as principle of the creation-order here reveals its meaning in a second way: this time as it applies to the structure of societal forms such as family, state, church, school, economic enterprise, etc. Our view of the inner nature and mutual relations and coherence of these societal spheres is, as in the case of the aspects of reality, governed by our religious stance. The groundmotive of the christian religion penetrates to the root-unity of the societal spheres, all of whom are distinct in the temporal order. It causes us to see the intrinsic nature proper to them, their mutual relations, and their coherence in the true light. What is, in the light of the scriptural motive, this true unity-in-râdix? It is the religious root-community of humanity, which in Adam fell but in Christ is restored to communion with God. With this revelation of the true root-community of man on which all temporal societal relationships are founded, the christian religion stands in absolute antithesis to every view of society that would absolutize and deify some temporal societal form.

We saw that on account of their apostate groundmotive the Greeks came to declare the state to be the totalitarian community which, by way of its cultural "paideia" (nurture) makes a man truly humane and which therefore demands the whole of that man's life in every one of its spheres. It was the religious motive of form and matter that completely ruled this view. Accordingly, human nature is on the one hand, on account of the matter-principle of the eternal flux of the stream of life, constantly threatened by his sensual desires and drives. On the other hand this nature receives form (measure, control, harmony) through the formative activity of the polis. For the city-state was the bearer of the greek culture-religion which deified the distinct cultural powers such as science, art, commerce, etc. in the brilliant circle of the Olympian gods. Among the Romans we saw that originally they had placed two societal spheres in opposition to each other; the familia and the Roman state. Each represented an absolute sphere of authority. But during the times of the emperors the familia collapses and an unbridled state-absolutism ensues which monopolized every sphere of life, including the christian church.

In our times too, we have witnessed bodily the demonic tyranny of a totalitarian regime. The Dutch, historically born and bred in a modern constitutional state which surrounded the rights of man and citizen with scores of guarantees (undoubtedly inspired by both christian and humanistic influence), experienced the burden of totalitarian rule as intolerable tyranny. What was the mightiest principal pillar supporting the resistance? It was this very same creational principle of sphere-sovereignty, rooted in the scriptural groundmotive of the christian religion. For neither humanism in its liberal and modern-socialistic offshoots, nor communistic Marxism could get at the religious root of the totalitarian state-absolutism. Only when eyes are open to the religious root-unity of man can our view be disclosed to the essential nature, to the real mutual relatedness and to the inherent coherence of the various societal spheres.

What is the significance of sphere-sovereignty in regard to temporal human society? To each of the spheres it guarantees its own intrinsic nature and law-of-life, and with that it also guarantees an original sphere of authority and competence not derived from the authority of any other sphere, but directly related to the sovereign authority of God. Since Dr. Kuyper, this term "souvereiniteit in eigen kring" has become common property in the Netherlands. Few, however, understood how profoundly the groundmotive of the christian religion here shed its light on Kuyper's teaching concerning human societal life. And the less it was realized that this fundamental principle is rooted directly in the scriptural groundmotive of the christian religion, the more it dissolved into a mere political slogan that could mean anything. Especially the increasingly historicistic way of thinking, which absolutized the historical aspect of reality, robbed the principle of its religious root. But if one takes sphere-sovereignty as no more than an historical given, somehow grown on Dutch soil as expression of the nation's love of freedom, then one almost automatically detaches it from the constant intrinsic nature of the societal spheres. It is then easy to update it according to "present historical needs" and identify it with the modern slogan of "functional decentralisation". By this is meant that all other life-spheres are to be incorporated in the state as relatively independent parts that retain a certain amount of autonomy. The task of the state would thus be decentralized, by the creation of "new organs" next to municipalities, provinces, etc. These new organs would be vested with governmental public jurisdiction supervised by the government. In this way the central bodies of legislation and administration could be relieved of a sizeable part of their task, and this striving could indeed enlist men of various convictions. "Sphere-sovereignty" would take on a different meaning in every new historical-political situation. How is it that this principle could be misunderstood so sadly? This we will take up next.

STAHL, GROEN, and KUYPER

To find an answer we must remember that the "anti-revolutionary" political philosophy, particularly in its view of history, is influenced by the so-called "Historical School" in Germany. Although the founders of this school were devout Lutherans, their view of reality was totally ruled by the "historicism" that gained ground in humanism after the French Revolution. By "historicism" I mean, as explained above, the philosophical conception that resolves the whole of reality in its historical aspect and therefore absolutizes this aspect.

Everything is seen as a product of historical cultural development which cannot be brought to a halt and is therefore subject to continuous change. Unlike the rationalistic thinkers of the French Revolution they no longer sought to construct the right societal order out of abstract rational principles apart from historical development and the individual peculiarities of national character. Rather, the fundamental thesis of the new "historical way of thinking" is that the entire political and social order is intrinsically a phenomenon of historical development, originating in a nation's individual character, the "national spirit". This "national spirit" itself was held to be the historical germ of the entire culture, including the language, the national social conventions, its art, and the national economic and juridical order.

Earlier humanistic theory had always (after the example of the mathematical and natural sciences) looked for universally valid laws that control reality. Out of the "rational nature of man" it constructed an "eternal order of natural law" which was supposed to hold for all peoples in all times and places, totally independent of historical development. It had no eye for the individual peculiarities of peoples and nations. Everything individual was but an instance, an exemplar, of the universal rule and could be reduced to this universal order. This was the rationalistic trait of humanistic thought. After the liquidation of the French Revolution, humanism, by reason of the polarity of its religious groundmotive, overbalances to the other extreme. The rationalistic view of reality, oriented to mathematics and the modern natural sciences, turns into an irrationalistic humanism, which depreciates all universally valid law or order for reality and which raises individual potential to law. This irrationalism is no longer inspired by the "exact" mathematical and natural sciences, but is oriented to the science of history and to art as manifestation of "genius" and incomparable individuality. The climate here is that of "Romanticism" which for a time dominated Western culture during the so-called Restauration after Napoleon's fall. And this Romanticism is the wellspring of the "Weltbild" of the Historical School.

When this school attempts to understand the whole of culture, language, art, jurisprudence, the economic and social order, in terms of the historical development of an individual "national spirit", it elevates this individual national character to origin of these orders and it denies that in truth the individual **creature** always remains subject to, under, law. If the individual potential of a man or nation itself is the only law for his development and action then this individual potential can no longer be evaluated in terms of a universally valid law. Then the nation (in this case, the German nation) acts rightly and legitimately if only it follows its historical fate or goal that is given in its individual potential. This view of reality is historicistic in the sense explained above. On principle the validity of general laws is rejected. But as "Ersatz" (substitute) for this it tries to effect a compromise with the Christian belief in "Divine providence" which it introduces as a "hidden" law of history. And where the christian mask is laid aside there is no longer talk of "providence" but of the "Schicksal", the historical fate of a nation. God's providence and guidance rules the history of a nation. But from this point of view one can say with equal ease that in the "national character" a "Schicksal" is operative which is to be accepted as a king of norm for its development.

Discerning readers will have noted already how in this view of history we come very close to the spiritual atmosphere of National Socialism with its oft-reiterated appeal to "Providence" and to the "Schicksal des deutschen Volkes". We will do well to keep this connection with the views of the "Historical School" in minds later I will show that Nazi-ism must primarily be considered as a rotten fruit of the historicism propagated by this school.

The Historical School strongly emphasized the bond between past and present. It was held that culture, language, art, the order of law, economics and society originally develop unconsciously out of the national character, without any formative influence of the will. Tradition works as an unconscious power. If it is the operation of God's providential guidance in history, or, expressed less christianly: the unseen work of nature's Schicksal. The founder of anti-revolutionary political philosophy in Germany, Friedrich Julius Stahl (who profoundly influenced Groen van Prinsterer in his second period, i.e. after 1850) tried to incorporate this romantic view of history into the scripturally christian one. He failed to see that the historical idea of reality recommended by the Historical School was completely dominated by a humanistic religious groundmotive. Everything that is the historical development of a nation has come into being "outside of human effort" by the silent workings of tradition is, says Stahl, revelation of God's guidance in history and must be accepted by us as norm, as directive for further development. Nevertheless, Stahl certainly did see the dangers of such a view of divine providence as directive for human action. That's why he looked for a higher and truly "universally valid" norm for action that could at the same time serve as touchstone for the historical development of a nation. This highest norm he thought to find in the revealed "moral law": the Ten Commandments. His conclusion then, is as follows: One ought to accept as norm for action the tradition of national historical development in the sense of God's guidance in history, insofar as it does not conflict with an expressly revealed commandment of God. Hence Stahl calls the norm of historical development a "secondary norm" in which one can always appeal to the primary norm which has been revealed in the law of the Ten Commandments. And so this irrationalistic view of history was taken up into antirevolutionary political thought except for this one reservation. Groen van Prinsterer, following Stahl, did the same. For that reason² he called the antirevolutionary movement the "Christian-historical" movement.

In the Historical School there was a so-called germanistic wing, specialized in investigation of the juridical history of the germanic countries. Before roman law was taken over in these countries to supplement indigenous law, society and its legal order was still largely undifferentiated. Still unknown were the idea of the state as res publica, an institution for the sake of the general good, and the idea of civil law according to which man as such, independent of his membership in specific communities, is recognized as legal person. These ideas were unknown on the European continent as a whole until the advent of roman law, and they were by no means entirely implemented before the French Revolution.

In the Middle Ages there were undifferentiated communal spheres everywhere. They carried out simultaneously all those tasks for which on a more highly developed cultural level separate, differentiated communities are found. In the country, for instance, the manor was an undifferentiated community. In the towns the guilds with their ecclesiastical, economic, and often political structure, and frequently based on a so-called fraternity was another. Such undifferentiated spheres of authority were autonomous. They were competent within their own sphere to govern without interference from a higher authority.

The idea of the state, of the res publica, was absent. And along with the lack of an idea of the state the idea of civil right of ownership with its foundational principles of freedom and equality before the law was lacking also. On the eve of the French Revolution, in Germany as well as in France much of this "ancien regime" still stood, even if the historical line of development quite clearly pointed in the direction of a process of differentiation that could but end in a clear distinction between public and civil law. Now, the germanistic wing of the Historical School wished to continue this line of development and hence to accept the fruit of the French Revolution, i.e. recognition of the idea of the state. But at the same time it sought to historically harmonize this modern idea of the state with the old idea of the autonomy of the life-spheres. This harmonization could only be effected in such a way that this autonomy would be limited by the requirements of the common good. The autonomous spheres of life, therefore, really had to be incorporated into the new state: they had to be accommodated to the requirements of the body politic.

The german antirevolutionary writer Stahl considered such a recognition of the autonomy of the societal spheres as a vital requirement of a truly christian-historical political philosophy. Similarly, in the Netherlands Groen van Prinsterer eagerly recommended an idea of the state along historical-national lines, which was supposed to fit in with the Dutch national character in its historical development. For the mutual relation of church and state Groen was the first to use the term "sphere-sovereignty", but he did not yet see this as a creational principle of universal scope. For the societal corporations he requested only autonomy, as Stahl had done. Trade and industry are for him but organic members of national life, just as the municipalities and provinces. For him, their autonomy within the state was a merely historical principle by God's guidance rooted in the Dutch national character. Stahl and Groen did see very clearly the essential difference between the state on the one hand and church and family on the other. Driven by the scriptural groundmotive of the christian religion both held that the state is incompetent to interfere in the inner life of these spheres. But the compromise with the Melbild of the Historical School prevented them from applying this scriptural motive consistently in their political thought.

It was Kuyper who really grasped sphere-sovereignty as a creational principle. With that it was fundamentally disengaged from the historicist outlook upon human society. But in his initial formulation of this idea there are still traces of a confusion of sphere-sovereignty with mere autonomy founded in Dutch history. When he lists the various "sovereign" spheres he mentions next to family, school, science, art, economic enterprise, etc. also the municipalities and provinces. But these are not sovereign but indeed autonomous parts of the state and the boundaries of their autonomy are indeed in principle dependent upon the requirements of the whole, the needs of the common good.

What was the result in the practice of political life? It turned out to be impossible to offer a principled criterion for the limits of this "autonomy". Increasingly, that which originally could be left to the autonomous discretion of municipalities and provinces in time had to be regulated by centralized legislation. But since this autonomy had been styled "sovereign in its own sphere", Kuyper's followers found themselves in a predicament. The more or so since Dutch antirevolutionary political philosophy had never severed its links with the Historical School and therefore had remained more or less infected with the virus of "historicism".

Had Kuyper perhaps erred in principle when he founded "sphere-sovereignty" on creation? Was it perhaps the case that what he had claimed to be an immutable principle was in fact no more than an historically alterable and variable given in the Dutch national character? Influenced by considerations of this sort many anti-revolutionaries, especially among the more educated began to evince an attitude of "caution", advocating to be a little more hesitant to honour certain slogans with the predicate "principle". It was considered safest if "eternal principles" were limited to the directives which are "explicitly revealed" in Holy Writ. And, well, in the Bible there are no direct texts about "sphere-sovereignty". In this way the infection with the historicist view of reality could surreptitiously penetrate the ranks of the antirevolutionaries.

But the foundation laid by Kuyper was too firm. The principle of sphere-sovereignty in its true scriptural sense could not be completely wiped out of the religious consciousness of those who lived by the Word of God. Still, "purification" and further elaboration were necessary. And the important moments of truth in the teachings of the Historical School would have to be freed from the framework of the historicist Weltbild if they were to become part of a truly scriptural view of history. It was high time for this. The "new age" knows no mercy for internally undermined principles. And the explication and implementation of the creational principle of sphere-sovereignty has never been as urgently needed as it is today in our spiritually uprooted nation.

SPHERE SOVEREIGNTY IS A CREATIONAL PRINCIPLE: TWO OBJECTIONS

Kuyper's great achievement was that he based the principle of sphere-sovereignty in creation. But above we saw that the way in which he sought to apply this principle to society the influence of the Historical School is evident. Since he, in his general list of the life-spheres placed municipality and province alongside family, school, science, art, economic enterprise, and even the church as temporal institute, the confusion of principle between a mere historically founded autonomy of parts of the body politic and true sphere-sovereignty was virtually inevitable. Especially today, when the issue of (political and societal) reconstruction demands immediate, principled solutions, it is of supreme importance to escape this confusion. For, we have seen the "historicist" view of reality holds sway over spirits everywhere. Those who still hold to constant principles rooted in the creation-order are summarily dismissed in the profusion of current pamphlet-literature (which, by the way, is always a dangerous feeding-ground for journalistic superficiality): they are rigid builders of fossilized systems; they have not understood the spirit of our "dynamic times"! But if ever, this is true today:

Was man den Geist der Zeiten nennt,
Das ist der Herren eigener Geist
In dem die Zeiten sich bespiegeln.

Against "historicism" that feeds on the absolutization of the historical aspect of reality there is only one principled antidote: exposure of its hidden religious groundmotive which lurks behind an apparently neutral mask of deepened theoretical insight. All false fronts of groundmotives that are in truth apostate become transparent under the searching light of divine Truth which is the groundmotive of the Word-revelation discovers man to himself in relation to his Creator.

Autonomy of parts of a whole, and sphere-sovereignty of societal relationships that according to their intrinsic nature are radically distinct, are two quite different things in principle. The first is, in a differentiated society, dependent upon the requirements of the whole of which the autonomous community is a part. The second remains rooted in the constant inhaerant character of the life-sphere itself. A differentiated sphere such as the family, the school, an economic enterprise, science and art, can according to their nature never be part of the state.

A little earlier I referred to the undifferentiated situation of society during the Middle Ages. Some remnants of that undifferentiated situation maintained themselves right up until the French Revolution. In such an undifferentiated condition sphere-sovereignty cannot yet express itself in society. For, since guilds and towns and manors still unite traits of the most divergent societal structures within themselves it is impossible to distinguish them according to the criterion of "intrinsic nature". Precisely for that reason their autonomy could only be limited according to a formal criterion which says nothing as to the essential nature of their competence. This criterion can then be formulated as follows: that those matters belonged to the autonomy, and only those concerning which the community concerned could decide without interference from a higher authority. So the basis for this autonomy could not be the intrinsic nature of such a community either, for these communities had no differentiated nature of their own. They rested entirely on ancient custom, on privilege granted by a lord, etc. The real idea of the state, i.e. the idea that governmental jurisdiction is no private property but a public office which can only be exercised in service of the common good -- that idea was still lacking. That's why "autonomy" under the ancien regime prior to the French Revolution was not delimited by the requirements of the common civic good, but was strictly formally limited by custom and privilege. When a powerful lord would try to subject this autonomy to the ** common good the autonomous representatives would invariably appeal to those special rights and privileges.

But when the idea of the state was actually implemented by the French Revolution the undifferentiated life-spheres had to be annihilated. Modern municipalities and provinces are therefore not comparable to the old boroughs, towns, estates and manors. They have really become parts of the modern state and display the differentiated, intrinsic nature of parts of the body politic. For just that reason there can be no talk of sphere-sovereignty when it comes to the relation of the state and its parts, nor can one speak of autonomy in the sense of the ancien regime. Municipal and provincial autonomy are in principle dependent on the demands of the common good of the state as a whole. Thorbecke³ and some of his followers have indeed held that the municipal, provincial and national economy formed three independent spheres which could be mutually delimited according to their nature. But nature proved stronger than the doctrine. It turned out to be simply impossible to offer an intrinsic criterion for the mutual delimitation of these three "spheres". For indeed, to what extent the common good of the body politic can allow an autonomous sphere of self-government to municipalities, provinces and other real parts of it does in fact depend entirely on the historical development and its coherence with juridical life. Sphere-sovereignty, on the other hand, is rooted in creation, not in history,

** demands of the

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This does not in anyway imply that the whole question of municipal and provincial autonomy can be removed from the list of principally political problems. A truly christian-historic political philosophy in which the christian religion also governs our historical reflection, does indeed demand that in the building of the body politic that national character in its historical development is seriously taken into consideration. Not because this "national spirit", taken individually and by itself, could be a norm for political thinking. But rather insofar as historical development is subject to the norm of differentiation, that is to say, a norm that demands that undifferentiated societal forms break open, unfold; and because the process of differentiation carries with it historical individualization which must continue, also nationally. What does this mean?

We will have to go into this a little further, for it is here that the scriptural view of history is immediately at stake while it has been increasingly overrun by the historicist view. Historicism is, it cannot be said often enough, born out of the absolutization of the historical aspect of reality as it is in particular investigated by the (special) science of history. But the integral (complete) and radical (penetrating to the root of created reality) character of the scriptural motive of creation causes us to see this aspect too in its irreducible proper nature and in its indissoluble coherence with all the other aspects of reality. In its core it's irreducible to the others, but at the same time it displays, in its inner structure, a complete expression of the universal coherence with all of them. It's the work of God's creation -- which is integral, complete. Earlier I demonstrated this state of affairs in the case of the psychical aspect and called it the sphere-universality of each aspect as correlary of sphere-sovereignty. To perceive God's ordinances for historical development it is necessary to search them out in the historical aspect in its unbreakable coherence with the structures of the others, as they are grounded in the creation-order. The scriptural ground-motive of creation, fall, and redemption through Jesus Christ must be the only point of departure and the only religious dynamis of that search if it is not to go astray.

Some may well object as follows: is such an intricate investigation really necessary to gain insight into the ordinances of God for historical development? Is it not true that God has revealed his whole law in the Ten Commandments? Is that not enough for a simple christian? I answer with a counter-question: is it not true that God has placed all spheres of temporal life under his law and decrees? The laws that govern numerical and spatial relationships, the laws for physical and chemical phenomena, those for organic life and the norms for Beauty -- would not all of these alike be grounded in God's creation-order? Can we find explicit scriptural texts for all these? If not, shall we not admit that God has given man the task to discover them? And if that is so, can we then hold that it makes no difference whether we start from the groundmotive of the Word of God or whether we allow ourselves to be guided by unscriptural groundmotives? Those who think they can derive truly scriptural principles for political thought strictly from direct scriptural (proof) texts surely have a very mistaken notion of scripture. They see but the letter, and forget that the Word of God is spirit and power, and must penetrate the whole of our attitude of life and thought. God's revelation puts men to work. It claims the whole of our being; it wants to conceive new life in us where before death and spiritual complacency held sway. Some lazy folk would have the ripe fruits of God's revelation simply fall into their laps. But Jesus Christ tells us that we ourselves must bear fruit, wherever the seed of the Word of God has fallen in good soil.

Well then, today christians are placed before a question of principle: what historical measuring stick do we possess by which we can distinguish in our times a reactionary direction from a truly progressive one? We cannot derive this criterion from the Ten Commandments, for that law is not meant to save us an investigation of creational ordinances. To answer the acute question of the new age, i.e. what goes in the direction of real progress and what must be rejected as reactionary, one needs insight into the specific ordinances that God has put to, established for historical development. There is no easy road to such insight! It requires search. And our searching is only kept from straying if and when the cration-motive of the Word of God claims us integrally.

There is another objection to consider: the Barthian one. I confidently speak of creation ordinances, as if the fall had never happened. But do we know of the original ordinances of creation? Has sin not changed them, such that they are now ordinances for sinful life? My reply is as follows:

The groundmotive of the divine Word-revelation is an indivisible unity. Creation, fall, and redemption cannot be separated. But this is in effect what a Barthian does, when he does indeed confess that God has created all things, but refuses to let this creation-motive completely permeate his thinking. But has God revealed himself as the Creator in order that we now brush this revelation aside? I dare say that he who does this fails to understand the depth of the fall and the scope of redemption also. Relegating creation to the background is not scriptural. Just read the psalms in which the devout poet rejoices in the ordinances that God has decreed for his creation, or read the book of Job, where God himself speaks of the riches and depth of the laws which he has established for his creatures. Or read the gospels, where Christ appeals to the creational ordinances for marriage, over against those who would trap him. And, finally, read Romans 1:19 and 20, where the creational ordinances are explicitly mentioned as part of general revelation to the human race. Whoever holds that the original creational ordinances are unknowable for fallen man, because they are supposedly completely changed by sin, at bottom does injustice to the true significance of God's common grace which maintains these ordinances. Not the creational decrees were changed by sin, but the direction of the human heart in that it has turned away from his Creator.

Undoubtedly, this radical fall further comes to expression in the way in which man discloses the powers that God has laid in creation. It penetrates into natural phenomena that man can no longer control. It comes to expression in theoretical thought led by an idolatrous groundmotive. It expresses itself in the subjective way in which man gives form to the principles which God established in his creation as norms for human action. The fall has made necessary special institutions such as the state and the Church in its institutionalized form. But even these specific institutions of general and special grace are based upon the ordinances that God decreed in his creation-order. Neither the structures of the various aspects of reality, nor the structures that determine the nature of concrete creatures, nor the divine principles as norms for human action have been altered by the fall. To deny this leads to the unscriptural conclusion that the fall is as broad as creation, that is, that it has destroyed the nature of creation.

But this would mean that sin now plays an autonomous role over against God, the Creator of all. He who maintains this, at bottom robs God of his sovereignty and grants Satan a power equal to that of the Origin of all things.

Therefore, this second objection may not keep us from the search for the divine decrees for historical development as they are revealed in the light of the motive of creation.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICISM, HISTORY AND NORMS

THE HISTORICAL ASPECT

Historicism is the fatal illness of our "dynamic" times. It absorbs the whole of reality into its historical aspect. There is no cure for this decadent view of reality as long as the scriptural creation-motive does not regain integral claim to our attitude of life and thought. Historicism would rob us of our belief in abiding standards; it even stalks our faith in the eternal truth of the Word of God. For historicism everything is relative, everything is historically determined—including belief in lasting values.

Bid it halt before the gates of your life of faith, if you wish. But the demon of historicism will not be shut out so easily. He has bribed your watchmen without your knowledge. And suddenly he stands in the inner chamber and has you in his power. Would you claim that the Holy Scriptures disclose eternal Truth? But don't you see, o dogmatist, that the Bible which you accept as God's revelation has itself completely gone through the process of historical development? Is it not true that the road from Old to New Testament is the great highway of history? If the Old Testament is revelation of God, have you not seen that this revelation apparently developed in the New Testament? or would you still live by the book of Joshua for the divine rule of life for the christian of today? Can you still sing the Jewish psalms of revenge without experiencing a clash with your modern christian consciousness? Do you really mean to say that the content of your modern christian faith is identical to that of the Bible-believing devout of the Middle Ages? If so, solid historical research will soon end your dream. Even your use of archaic terms cannot prevent a new meaning from creeping up on them. The meaning of words changes along with historical development and no power on earth can call a halt to it. Talk of political principles? Appeal to "sphere-sovereignty"? But you live in "dynamic" times where everything is in motion. Stable principles are nothing. You live in days which have definitively conquered the dogmatic prejudice concerning the existence of abiding standards that are supposedly not subject to historical development. Place yourself, therefore, midstream in the movement of history if you would be at home in these times; be open for the spirit of your time if you would be listened to. And above all, be progressive, for the future belongs to those.

These are the sly ways by which historicism gains entry into the heart of modern man. Some theologians could only grant its claims across the board insofar as temporal reality was concerned, but for the christian truths of faith they still claimed eternal value. A capital error! Historicism, if its view of temporal reality is accepted, does not stop short before one's faith. Why not? Because the life of faith itself belongs to that very temporal reality. And especially because historicism itself is driven by a religious groundmotive that takes its stance in radical opposition to the groundmotive of the christian religion.

Earlier we saw how historicism initially managed to infiltrate even the view of history in antirevolutionary political thinking. And it is no overstatement to say that the whole of modern thought concerning human society is permeated with the

dangerous spirit of historicism. It is therefore extremely important to consider this: that even if one would limit it to a view of temporal reality, it can only take root when the creation-motive of divine revelation has lost its hold upon one's Weltbild. Education or the lack of it are irrelevant here! Historicism is more than a philosophical theory; it is a "spiritual evil in the air", which does not only demand our thinking, but the whole of our practice of life.

The first dangerous aberration to which abandonment of the creation-motive led was the following: the historical aspect of reality, in terms of which the science of history investigates facts and events, was identified with concrete history (Geschiedenis) in the concrete sense of What has occurred. (1) "It is written" and "it has come to pass" were the two key-witnesses to which Groen van Prinsterer appealed against the idolatrous philosophy of the French Revolution. But this "it has happened" may not be identified with the historical aspect in terms of which facts and events are scientifically investigated. I can scarcely warn often enough against this fundamental error which leads directly into the clutches of historicism. This mistake is being made continually, also by truly believing thinkers. And this first concession to historicism has filtered down out of theory into the practical life-view of common folk.

Concrete events such as wars, famines, revolts, new political forms, important discoveries and inventions etc., all belong to concrete reality which in principle functions in all aspects without exception. The same holds for things in our everyday experience, and for the various spheres of society such as family, school, church, etc. If now the historical aspect of reality is identified with that which has occurred it is forgotten that concrete history displays a great many other aspects which as such are not historical in character. Then the fullness of reality is identified with one of its aspects (the one abstracted by the science of history). One becomes historicist and abandons the christian motive of creation. It can convincingly be shown that this is so.

Ask a man what he understands by (concrete) history. His prompt answer will be: whatever happened in the past. This answer is correct. In the ordinary experience of daily life one does not direct his attention to abstract aspects of reality which, as was shown above, are as such distinguished in the theoretical attitude of thought. Here attention is fixed on reality in its second, concrete structure: the structures of things, events, etc. Just try to delimit the field of investigation for the science of history in terms of the criterion "that which has happened". Its utter impossibility will soon dawn upon us. Take, for example, the following event: yesterday you smoked a cigar. Today, that undoubtedly belongs to the past. But does that make it an historical event, fit to be laid down in the annals of history? Of course not. And yet, closer reflection will cause us to admit that this event does in fact have its historical aspect. In the Middle Ages people did not smoke. The introduction and popularization of tobacco in our Western culture undoubtedly was an event of historical significance. Your own activity of smoking took place in an historical cultural milieu or context, which is hard to conceive without the presence of this means of pleasure. Compared to the use of such means during the Middle Ages this event undoubtedly displays an historical aspect, but it is not typically characterized by its historical aspect. Other events are so characterized, for instance the capitulation of Japan and Germany in the last world war, or the

French Revolution -- events that themselves acted formatively in concrete world-history. surely this is also implicitly known in ordinary (non-theoretical) experience. No one will speak of a typically historical event in the case of the smoking of a cigar. One will not call a natural event such as the falling rocks or an inundation an historical event as such. Such occurrences can become historically significant in connection with their effects in human culture.

It is imperative then, not to identify the historical aspect of reality with concrete events that function in that aspect but which equally display all the other aspects with which God has endowed reality in his creation-order. The historical aspect is to be distinguished from the others, such as organic life, emotional feeling, logical distinction, etc., not by that which occurs in it, but by the how, the way in which it occurs. For the historian, therefore, the crucial thing is to grasp the core of the historical mode of concrete events. He needs a criterion to distinguish the historical aspect of reality from the other aspects. Historicism lacks such a criterion, since in its view the historical aspect and the fullness of reality are one and the same.

The current criteria are completely useless. If it is said, for instance, that the science of history is the science of becoming or development, then it is forgotten that there is also talk of becoming and development in the natural sciences. If then there is both organic life-development and historical development, the cardinal question is what the specifically historical character of a process of development might be. One thing is sure: the organic development from seed to full-grown plant, or from embryo to mature animal is not the kind of development with which the science of history is concerned.

What then is the nucleus of the historical aspect of reality? Whoever understands it aright is no longer victimized by historicism. But it will not be rightly understood unless the creation-motive of revelation intrinsically governs our view of reality. Only then has historicism lost its hold. The nucleus of the historical aspect, that which guarantees its proper nature and irreducibility, is the cultural. Cultural activity always consists of giving form to materials in free control over the material, formgiving according to a free design. Thus cultural formative activity is different in principle from the way lasting forms arise in nature. The marvellous crystal-forms, the form of the honey-comb, the spider's web etc. are no cultural forms because they did not come to be by way of a free design and free control of a material, but originated through natural instinctual process according to fixed, unchangeable schemes and laws. That the cultural mode of formative activity is grounded in God's creation-order is shown in the story of creation itself. God gave man immediately the great cultural mandate: subdue the earth and have dominion over it. But this cultural command is posited as one among other creation ordinances. It only touches the historical aspect of the creation, which becomes subjected to cultural development.

The cultural is the mode in which reality reveals itself in its historical aspect. Usually the term "culture" refers to everything that owes its existence to human formgiving in distinction from anything that develops in "nature". Often it is forgotten that the cultural is no more than an aspect of concrete things, events, etc., and that for instance a so-called cultural object such as a chair also functions

in all the other aspects of reality, who are not historical in essence.

This cultural as nuclear moment of the historical aspect was deified in the greek culture-religion and as form-motive it stood in religious antithesis to the matter-motive of the eternal flux of the stream of life. Still, one does not find in this greek form-motive the typically relativistic and dynamic moments that confront us in modern historicism. This can only be because in the greek form-motive the cultural (the core-moment of the historical aspect) was completely detached from the moment of development whereby the historical is inseparably interwoven with the organic aspect.

For, in the religious groundmotive of greek antiquity the culture-religion is absolutely antithetical to the old life-religion. This religious antithesis indeed demands that all ties be severed between the cultural form-motive and the motive of the old life-religions. That is why the religious form-motive of greek thought led to belief in an eternal immutable world of forms, which is completely elevated above the earthly stream of becoming (development of life). And in the religion of the Olympian gods this belief took on a Gestalt that appealed to the imagination of the people: the Olympian gods are invisible, immortal, brilliant form-gods, personifications of the various cultural powers, and far above the fate of mortals.

Modern historicism, on the other hand, is dominated by the religious groundmotive of humanism (nature and freedom -- more about this groundmotive later). It sees "culture" precisely in its never-ending historical development and denies all constant structures which make that development possible, since these structures are rooted in the abiding creation-order of God. In the first place it denies the constant structure of the historical aspect itself, in which the divine decrees for historical development are enclosed. For that reason it has no reliable standard by which to distinguish reactionary and truly progressive tendencies in historical development; consequently it is without principles in the face of the problems of the "new age". All the slogans with which it has done battle against National Socialism and Fascism were, on account of its historicist, relativistic view of life, already robbed of their reliable value. And this holds with equal force for "democracy", "the rights of man", for "law and order" and "freedom".

But we must at the same time observe that also antirevolutionary thought showed a weak spot precisely in its reflection on history. To be sure, to counter consequent historicism it had a powerful weapon in its scripturally-christian basis: It is written! But, as we saw before, in its view of history it had allied with humanistic historicism. And it was inevitable that precisely in the present phase of world history this would avenge itself. For the historicist spirit of the new age can only be effectively done battle with if it be withstood in the arena of historical development itself. And that will require the complete spiritual armour of the christian religion.

This is not meant to imply that I would belittle the great achievement of Stahl and Groen -- nor would I wish to give that impression. My critique is meant constructively and is offered in a spirit of deep gratitude for the labours of these christian leaders and thinkers. But their work can be continued in their own spirit only if the scriptural groundmotive of the Reformation remains operative in it.

If there be weaknesses in their spiritual legacy they will have to be cut away resolutely. Before all else today's need is a deeper scriptural insight into the relation between the creation-principle of sphere-sovereignty on the one hand, and historical development on the other; a deeper insight also in the ordinances that God has caused to obtain for that development.

CULTURAL POWER

We discovered the nucleus or core of the historical aspect of reality to be the cultural. The cultural mode of an activity appeared to consist in control over a material by formgiving according to a free design. This free control applies both to persons and things. But the first is primary. It reveals itself in historical formation of power. Without personal power no discovery or invention by which we gain factual control over "nature" can be truly historically formative. The great Italian artist of the early Renaissance, Leonardo da Vinci, was also a great scientist. It is said that he already knew how to construct an airplane. but this invention went with him into the grave. It remained his private property. Only if the great Italian could have won men for his invention it could effectively have given form in world-history. For that, historical power formation, historical influence would have been required -- which Leonardo did indeed have as artist, but not as inventor.

What is the nature of this personal power which is the equipment of a genuine moulder of history?

Many a distorted notion is rampant here, not the least among christians. Many place power on one line with brute force. Today there are christians who, misled by this identification, really consider it un-christian to strive for the consolidation of power by organizations intended to infuse christian principles into society. For them power may play no part among christians. Especially among Barthians -- I am thinking of Emil Brunner's book Das Gebot und die Ordnungen (The Divine Imperative, 1937) -- the state is viewed as a half-demonic being precisely on account of its power-organization. Of love and justice the christian may speak with unburdened conscience, but as soon as power comes into his purview he has probably lent his ear to the devil.

Such opinions only indicate that the creation-motive of the christian religion has retreated from these christians' Weltbild. Hence they can no longer understand the fall and the redemption in Jesus Christ in the fullness of their scriptural significance either. The un-scriptural sense of their view comes readily to the fore if it is recalled that God revealed himself as Creator in the original fullness of power: God is the all-powerful one. At creation he charges man with the cultural mandate: subdue the earth and have dominion over it. Throughout history God reveals himself as the Almighty. Through the fall the position of power to which God had called men in the development of culture came to be directed towards apostasy. But Christ Jesus, the Redeemer, reveals himself again as possessor of power in the full sense of the word: "all exousia (power or authority) has been given to me in heaven and on earth", says the risen Lord. And he charges his apostles to spread the power of the Gospel among all nations. No doubt this spiritual power of the Gospel is quite different from the sword-power of the government. And both are essentially different from the power of science, or of art, or of capital, or the social power of the labour union or an organization of employers. But regardless of the concrete structure in which the historical formation of power reveals itself, as such it is never brute force. It is always rooted in creation and as

such there is nothing demonic about it. Jesus Christ explicitly calls himself the ruler of the kings of the earth. He claims for his service even the swor-power of governments, because to him is given all authority or power in heaven and on earth.

Only sin can place power in the service of the demonic. But this holds for every good gift of God: for life, for feeling, thinking, justice, beauty, etc. Power--insofar as it has been entrusted to the creature man--is always cultural. It implies an historical calling, the task to form-giving, for which the bearer of power is responsible and of which he will have to give account. Power as such may never be used for personal advantage and interests, as if it were a private possession. It is the great driving force in cultural development, and the all-important question is: in what direction is it being applied?

The formation and exercise of power are not (as has often been held) subject to natural laws. They are essentially subject to norms, to rules of what ought to be. And these norms are intrinsically historical, for God has indeed placed historical development under norms to which nations and rulers are subject. It is not true that the individual national character itself is the norm for its cultural development, as the Historical School taught. This irrationalistic view of history I emphatically reject (see above, p.). The scriptural creation-motive forces us, as soon as it takes hold of us, to admit that in every sphere of life the law of God is sovereign over the creature that is subject to it. But these ordinances, placed by God over the process of historical development, can be transgressed by nations and rulers. In this they reveal that they are norms. Man cannot disobey a natural law such as gravity.

Actually, everyone accepts that truly historical norms do in fact obtain, the moment one talks of the opposition historical/unhistorical and calls unhistorical action "reactionary". For, when a certain political trend is called "reactionary" an historical value-judgment is being made which presupposes the application of a norm for historical development.

An example of reactionary policy in the Netherlands was the attempt of king William I in 1814 to restore, at least partially, the noble privileges and the old class-system (which had intrinsically outlived itself). The nobility-rights, which turned public authority into private property, were the fossils of the undifferentiated situation of society during the Middle Ages. The same can be said about the old classes. Neither of them could be made to fit with the modern idea of the state with its clear demarkation of civil and private law as concretized by the French Revolution. The so-called contra-revolutionary movement of the Restauration did not merely intend to do battle with the principles of the French Revolution; rather, it sought to do away with everything associated with it, including the modern idea of the state. It tried to turn back the political clock to the situation of the ancien regime with its feudal relationships. The anti-revolutionary party has from the beginning opposed these "contra-revolutionary" trends since it recognized here a reactionary, unhistorical movement; that is to say, the contra-revolutionaries were in conflict with the norm for historical development.

But how do we in fact know that God has really placed historical development under norms, and not under so-called natural laws such as hold for electrical and chemical phenomena and for the organic development of life? We know this from the place God in his Creation-order assigned to the historical aspect. A contrast such as we found between historical and unhistorical or reactionary action goes back to the opposition we first found in the logical aspect of reality, i.e. between that which is in agreement with the norm and that which conflicts with it. If one contradicts himself in a logical argument we say: you argue illogically. The duo logical/illogical presupposes that our thought-function is subject to logical norms that can be transgressed. Among the various aspects of reality logical distinguishing is the first where such a contrast between that which ought and that which ought not to be is met with. And in all the aspects that follow upon the logical the ordinances or laws which God has established for them in his creation-order are norms. Norms are standards for evaluation. As such they can only be employed by creatures capable of rational distinction, endowed with a logical thought-function.

It has been thought that such norms already apply to the organic aspect. After all, we call the organism healthy or unhealthy, depending on whether or not it functions in accordance with the "norm" that apparently holds for health. But this is a misunderstanding. A norm proper only exists for creatures that are responsible for their behaviour, and to whom we can ascribe behaviour that conflicts with the norm. And this is possible only on the basis of the "faculty" of logical judgment. Surely, no one would think to hold a sick plant or animal responsible for the abnormal functioning of their organism. No one will ascribe the illness to them as something for which they can be blamed. But we do so when someone argues illogically. And we also do it when we blame some political movement for its reactionary attitude towards historical development. Or when we say of someone that he behaves anti-socially, or that he expresses himself ungrammatically, or that he runs his business uneconomically, or that he has written poor poetry, or that he acts unjustly or immorally, or when we accuse some one of unbelief.

Norms have only been given in the creation-order as principles of human behaviour. From the historical aspect on these principles require further form-giving by competent human agencies. This process of form-giving must always befit the niveau of national historical development. For, in the process of form-giving all later aspects of human life are interwoven with the historical cultural aspect. Form-giving always refers back to the cultural giving of form in the historical development. Accordingly, the principles of decency, courtesy, gallantry, etc. require that they be given form in social intercourse. Lingual principles require form-giving in the forms of language, principles of economic value in the economic forms, principles of harmony in the forms of style, legal principles require juridical forms, such as laws, statutes, regulations, etc. Because of this inseparable coherence of all the later aspects with the historical it appears (if the creation-motive no longer governs one's thinking) as if social intercourse, language, economics, art, justice, morality and faith are really historical phenomena. Their origin seems historical. But the creation-motive of the Word of God, which continually reminds us that God created all things according to their nature, keeps us from this historicist error, and sharpens our ability to distinguish with regard to the aspects of reality. And so, for example, it is impossible that justice as

it has been given form by man could as such be historical in its nature. As we have seen, historical form-giving requires power for those who are called to give form to cultural principles. But the formation of positive law, such as is done by legislators, requires legal power or juridical competence. Juridical power cannot be reduced to power in the historical sense. The moment this is done, justice and power are identified and this comes down to a negation of justice.

The fact that National-Socialism consistently taught that a nation proves its right to existence through an historical power-struggle was a typical outcome of historicism. "Might is right" was the political slogan of the totalitarian states. This doctrine is the more dangerous because it contains a moment of truth. It is indeed true, as we will see later, that in world-history a world-judgment takes place over the nations -- though never in this sense that right dissolves into might. To be sure, in the figure of legal power the juridical aspect of reality coheres inseparably with the historical. Without power in the historical sense no juridical power can exist. Nevertheless, in their nature they remain two different things.

All historical form-giving then, requires power. And it never takes place without a struggle. The progressive will of the moulder of history meets with the power of tradition which as power of conservation opposes every attempt to break with the past. In tradition a cultural communal possession is embodied which has been acquired in the succession of the generations. In large measure it determines us as members of a cultural sphere without us being aware of it: from our childhood we were nurtured by it; we accept it as a matter of course; and we seldom take stock of its intrinsic worth. Tradition is immeasurably richer than that which an individual has made his own. He who dares to do battle with it is never merely confronted with some conservation-prone souls, but with a communal power which binds past to present and stretches across generations. The conserving power of tradition is almost invariably underestimated by the innovator, for he sees but the surface of the present where tradition seems only a retarding force. But tradition has depth-dimensions that gradually reveal themselves to careful historical research. And only then it dawns on the investigator how great the power that confronts the shaper of history really is. Indeed, it is childish to complain about "tradition" as if it were a difficult old woman who simply swears by what is and utterly fails to appreciate anything new that comes to press its claims. Without tradition culture would not exist. no historical development would even be possible. Imagine that every generation anew would erase the past. Imagine that, in all seriousness it would try to start afresh. Nothing, nothing at all would come of it. The world would be a desert, a chaos.

Without tradition no cultural development is possible. The power of tradition is grounded in the creation-order since the cultural mandate itself is part and parcel of the creational ordinances. But true historical development equally demands that a culture not vegetate upon the past, but be disclosed.

Besides tradition, progress, next to the power of conservation the power of renewal or progression demands its rightful place in history. And in the power-struggle which ensues between them the progressive will must bow under the norm of historical continuity. The revolutionary spirit of reconstruction that would clear

the decks ought to accommodate itself to the vital forms of tradition -- insofar as these themselves conform to the norm for historical development. Very definitely this is no "law of nature" which would work itself out in history apart from human reasoning. In every revolution, for instance, we see that false principles lead to an attempt to a complete turn-about of the existing order. The French Revolution began with the year 1. But under pressure of tradition it soon had to tread more softly. Still, if in such situations the power of tradition were completely overcome, the revolutionary striving for renewal could indeed lead to annihilation of culture. What man cannot do is overturn the creation-order: it has bound real historical development to abiding norms. The creature cannot create in the true sense of the word. Hence he cannot create a real culture if the past is totally swept aside.

It is a phenomenon typical of the historicist spirit of the times that the antithesis as old demarcation-line for political grouping is thought to be replaceable by the distinction between the conserving and progressive direction. It is symptomatic by reason of the fact that this distinction originates in the historical aspect of reality. Only when the historical aspect is absolutized does it make sense to hold that the division among political principles and goals can be made on the basis of this historical criterion. It will become clear, however, that even from the historical point of view this criterion is insufficient to determine the principle direction of political trends.

Investigating the structure of the historical aspect we uncovered the normative principle of historical continuity. The Historical School too, had come upon this principle but gave it an irrationalistic twist, which in fact led to bowing to the "fait accompli" and which raised the individual national character as "national fate" to the rank of law. Appeal to "God's guidance" in history could only provide a mask for this unscriptural conception, which is in conflict with the motive of creation. We saw that the norm of historical continuity does not arise out of the national character, but that nations and rulers are subject to it. In the national spirit and its tradition good and evil may be mixed -- which is sufficient reason why they cannot function as norm. But, if this is so, is the norm of continuity then an adequate standard by which to judge the pressing question as to what can be viewed as progress, and what as reaction in historical development? Evidently not. Not everything that announces itself as progressive is by that token true cultural progress. It may well turn out to be fundamentally reactionary. National Socialism undoubtedly claimed the honour of being an extremely progressive movement. Was it justified? Let none answer too hastily, for I fear that many would be embarrassed if they were asked for the criterion for their historical value-judgment. Precisely the historicist lacks such a criterion. What is gained if on this basis one claims that National Socialism trampled the "rights of man" and the "foundations of democracy" underfoot? If everything is in historical flux and principled stability is a conquered figment of the imagination--why then prefer an ideology of human rights to the vital ideals of the strong race and its bond to germanic soil? Is the modern conviction concerning the "rights of man" still the same since the days of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution? Are the modern views of democracy still the same as those of Rousseau? If not, then whence the modern historian's right to call his innerly undermined ideology progressive and the living ideals of National Socialism bleak reaction?

Indeed, the quest for norms for historical development will have to continue. The norm of continuity requires closer specification. And only out of the groundmotive of the Word of God can we hope to accomplish it.

DIFFERENTIATION

Historical forming turned out to occur in and through a battle between the conserving and the progressive cultural powers. The first is the guardian of tradition that binds present to past. In the power-struggle the progressive will of the former of history ought to be accommodated to the vital elements in tradition. Tradition as such is no norm, no standard by which can be determined what one's attitude should be toward a power that claims to be "progressive". It can contain good and bad, and thus is itself subject to the historical norm. Even the criterion that the progressive direction ought to begin from "vital" elements in tradition is not yet sufficient.

In speaking of "vital" cultural elements in tradition, we refer historical development to its inseparable coherence with organic life-development. I have repeatedly mentioned that the historical aspect of reality cannot exist without this bond with the organic. God's creation-order has placed all aspects of reality in unbreakable coherence with each other, so that none of them can be left out, or else the others would lose their meaning and the condition for their being. This is but a consequence of the integral character of God's creational work which in each of its aspects maintains its bond with the others. And only in this inseparable coherence is it possible for each of the aspects to reveal their irreducible peculiar nature.

In the historical aspect of the coherence with the organic is maintained by cultural life which ought to follow its own development. Cultural life can as such not be reduced to organic life, though it cannot exist without it. That is why historical development cannot simply be seen as an extension of the organic development of plant, animal, or man. Organic life-development takes place according to specific laws of nature that God has decreed for it in his creation-order. Creatures are not responsible for the process of birth, growth and death of their organism. But historical development, we saw, that which takes place in cultural life, is subject not to natural laws, but to real norms, that is, to rules of what ought to be and which appeal to rational judgment. These norms are given by God as principles which require further concrete form-giving on the part of possessors of historical power.

If all this is the case then one may not, while speaking of vital elements in tradition to which further historical form-giving ought to connect, think of natural givens that require no historical standards of evaluation. In particular one should not think in terms of the "Historical School" of "unconscious historical vital powers" of the "individual national character", which under "God's providential guidance" are operative in the process of history, just as the "vital power" operative in the bodily organism. Such an appeal to "God's guidance in history" can only serve to escape responsibility for the course of cultural development. We say how in this way of thinking "God's guidance" unexpectedly became identical with the "Schicksal" or fate of a nation, and in practice reduced to this that the individual national character itself became "norm". In other words, responsibility for cultural development was relegated to the mysterious "national spirit" that is unalterable anyway and which sure as fate sweeps the members of

the national community along in its development.

Things look quite different if one's view of history is indeed lead by the scriptural motive of creation. In culture-tradition "vital" does not simply mean rooted and alive in the national character; nor does it mean simply that large parts of tradition still are supported by enough historical power to prevent eradication. Both states of affairs are indeed necessary, but they are not sufficient. Truly "vital" in an historical sense is only that part of tradition which is indeed capable of further development in accordance with the norm for cultural disclosure. This norm of cultural disclosure requires differentiation of culture into spheres with their own peculiar nature, so that the creational ordinance, viz. that everything disclose according to its own nature, may also be realized in historical development.

This point is so centrally important for the living issues of the new age, that we may not rest until we have clear insight into the true meaning of the historical norm of differentiation and its root in the creation-order of God.

I have repeatedly spoken of the situation of a still undifferentiated human society. In such a society no life-spheres can as yet develop that have an intrinsic character of their own. The whole of the life of its members is enclosed in the primitive undifferentiated household, clan, gens, etc., each of which possess an exclusive and religious sphere of authority or power. They are only distinguished by their scope, and they fulfil every task for which on a higher level of culture societal sphere develop with specific natures of their own (state, church, school, etc.). The community absorbs each man. The individual person as such is not considered. His entire status is dependent on his membership in the primitive community. Once ostracized out of the community he is without rights -- an outlaw. The same holds for the stranger who does not belong to the clan or the tribal community.

If now one considers the historical aspect of such a primitive community, he will discover that it forms an as yet completely undifferentiated cultural sphere. There are no differentiated spheres of civilization such as those of science, art, trade, church, state, school, etc., which develop after their kind. Culture is still rigidly bound to the needs of the organic development of communal life: its ties are of a vital character. In the same sense the idolatrous religion that puts its stamp upon such culture is a religion of life. In a primitive, undifferentiated culture tradition is all-powerful. Its guardians are the leader-priests who immediately crush any real attempt at renewal as action of which the gods do not approve, and who fearfully guard against the infiltration of foreign influences in the life of the people. If such a culture remains in this undifferentiated state it is closed to cultural intercourse with other peoples. It becomes rigid, merely vegetates upon the past, and stands outside world-history. In this sense it remains bound to organic development of the life of the community which, when the tribe becomes extinct, has disappeared from the scene without a trace. Such is for instance the case with the Papua-tribe of the Marindamin in New Guinea, of which only a few representatives are in existence. For the historical development of the human race this dead culture had nothing to offer. On the other hand Greece and Rome could, after an originally primitive and undifferentiated phase, develop into a real world-culture whose influence continued into the christian-germanic world and which remained one of the foundations of our modern Western civilization.

Medieval society, I have said, was also still largely undifferentiated. But it is evident that, viewed in terms of its historical aspect, there is a vast difference between this medieval culture and for instance the culture of the old pagan germanic tribes of, say, around 100 B.C. Medieval germanic culture, largely through the medium of the church, was tremendously enriched with Graeco-Roman culture, and has undergone the deeply formative influence of Christendom. The Roman-Catholic church institute which gains the power of leadership in medieval cultural development is, as such, a highly differentiated societal bond. Under its leadership science and art flourish. Universities are already being established. While a real body politic is lacking the church functions as organization of the whole of christendom. It transcends the boundaries of tribe and nation and in its canonical law, strongly influenced by Roman Law, produces a world-wide ecclesiastical law. The church is Catholic, i.e., it embraces all christians irrespective of their origin.

But in medieval culture (which itself goes through a number of phases) the actual church institute is, in the final analysis, but the differentiated superstructure of a largely undifferentiated substructure. These relate in the Roman-Catholic view as the area of "grace" to that of "nature". It is indeed the religious groundmotive of nature and grace that is operative as central dynamic force in Western cultural development during the Middle Ages. In the present context it must be noted that this "natural" substructure below the ecclesiastical institute of grace still displayed much that is primitive and undifferentiated. The medieval view is that there is one great community of christendom, the corpus christianum of which the pope is the spiritual head and the emperor the worldly head. One ought not to think here of the modern relation of church and state: there was no differentiated body politic. The emperor is only head of the "natural substructure" of the church and this "substructure" too, is composed of the members of the church. The church is in fact the totality-bond of christendom, which in its superstructure is differentiated, in its substructure undifferentiated. Medieval culture too, is essentially ecclesiastical. Real national differentiation is unknown. The very fact that this substructure is undifferentiated enables the church of those days to control the whole of cultural life. Let us take a closer look at this substructure.

When the old germanic sibs or clans (a patrilinear family-community, comparable to the Roman gens) dissolves, the totalitarian principle that lay at the foundation of this undifferentiated societal sphere continued in germanic countries in the guilds. A guild is originally an artificial clan, a fraternity not based on natural lineage, but on voluntary membership under oath. This last element does not indicate, as the famous historian of jurisprudence O. Gierke held, that the limits of a primitive society are hereby transcended. Investigations have shown that secret "lodges" (communities requiring an oath) were a common feature among primitive peoples. The medieval guild reveals its primitiveness in its totalitarian undifferentiated character. It embraces its members in all spheres of life and can be seen as a model for every possible undifferentiated sphere built upon the basis of voluntary membership. When the medieval town arises the burghers or porters (those who guard the gates) unite in a so-called burgh-guild. When outside the walls merchants establish themselves in merchant-districts they joined in merchant's guilds. The same holds for the later trade-guilds. It is wrong to

think that such guilds were some sort of modern business corporation or combine. Originally they were primitive fraternities that in their ritual still clearly betray their pagan heritage of the old religious communities of the times of Franks. The guild, finally, also served as model for the country boroughs, which in the sources are sometimes explicitly called "guilds".

A second model for the undifferentiated substructure of medieval society was the germanic "Heim", the home or household-community, correlate of the roman familia. This germanic "household" was, just as the roman familia, the religious sphere of authority of the gods of home and hearth, representative of the coherence of the lives of the ancestors and the living members. Their absolute and totalitarian power was exercised by the head of the household in the same way as was done by the roman chief. It was a power of life and death over all who belonged to the household and an absolute proprietary right over them and over household affairs. This power was called "Mund". One became "mundig" if he were released from the Mund of his lord and could establish a Heim of his own. This Mund-principle, in contrast to the guild-principle, was expressive of personal sovereignty of the ruler over those who belonged to him. The first merovingian kings built the entire organization of their realm on this Mund-principle. They established the Frankish empire from A.D. 500 on and gradually subjected all germanic tribes on the european continent. They expanded their religiously rooted household-power far beyond its original limits by subjecting all subordinates to a general Mund, and by bringing the actual governors and military leaders into a narrower, special Mund-sphere. Under this special Mund was also the Frankish church and some categories of subjects who, because of their helpless station depended on royal protection. The old germanic tribal kings already had effected an important extension to their original household-power or Mund through the formation of a so-called trustis, retinue or Gefolgschaft. To it belonged prominent German youths who, under oath, accepted knighthood in royal service and subjected themselves unconditionally to the Mund of their royal "Fuhrer" who had life and death power also over them. The first Frankish kings paid particular attention to the extension of their Gefolgschaft out of which they recruited their palace-aides and their governmental officials. And the later feudal system with its personal subjection of the vassal to his lord took up the basic idea of the Trusties into itself, even though it was of a different origin.

On this primitive and essentially pagan Gefolgschaftsprinzip Hitler--consciously reaching back to this ancient germanic example -- built his Fuhrerstaat. He used this principle as a guide for the totalitarian organization of the whole of life in all of its parts in a deified "great germanic empire". Every sphere of life, including economic enterprise (trade, shop, factory, etc.) was, after the old germanic model, ordered according to the principle of "Fuhrer" and "Gefolgschaft", and thus delivered into exclusive power of a "divine leader". The idea of a differentiated state was explicitly pushed into the background in favour of the old-germanic idea of the nation. But the "german nation" was not encouraged to recall that in the ancient germanic society the principle of sib or clan had constantly pressed its claims over against the Fuhrerprinzip. Even though "study" of these "national beginnings" was raised to an integrating part of popular cultural nurture, mention of the historical truth was carefully avoided. This truth, namely, that the principle of the clan, whenever it would press its claims in society, was forcefully opposed by the Frankish kings, since it meant a threat to the Fuhrerprinzip. The ancient germanic sibs know of no lord and subject. It was a voluntary association and granted its members equal rights.

Not until the Frankish realm collapsed (ninth cent.) could the guilds, based on the sib-principle, develop freely and become a counterbalance to the principles of Mund and Gefolgschaft, which had dispersed into all sorts of noble and feudal relations of lordship and vassalage.

This then was the fundamental difference between classical roman and medieval germanic cultural development: among the Romans the ancient bonds of lineage definitively lost their significance upon the rise of the roman civitas. The undifferentiated sphere of authority of the roman familia remained limited to its original boundaries. Completely independently, a process of differentiation effected a true body politic and a world-wide ius civile. But in germanic countries the undifferentiated sibs and the equally undifferentiated Heim become contrasting models, for the organization of the profane "substructure" of medieval society, above which only the Roman-Catholic church could form a significant differentiated cultural community.

Did National-Socialism then go in a truly progressive direction when it forced its totalitarian ideas after the model of the old-germanic Fuhrerprinzip upon Western culture? I trust that by now it is clear that a well-founded scriptural answer is possible -- and that this answer at the same time implies an historical judgment concerning the totalitarian tendencies that continue to threaten our cultural development after the fall of National-Socialism.

We uncovered a more specific norm for historical development: the norm which requires cultural differentiation into cultural spheres with a proper nature of their own. This norm can be understood in its scriptural sense only when it is seen in immediate relation to the creation-order. In the light of the creation-motive, historical development ought to bring the wealth of creational structures in their cultural aspect to full, differentiated disclosure. For only in the differentiation of culture can be fully revealed the peculiar nature of the various creational structures.

Historical development is nothing other than the cultural aspect of the great process of becoming which had to continue in all the aspects of temporal reality in order to concretize the wealth of creation-structures in time. But this process of becoming presupposes creation. ^{It is but its fulfillment in time. And time itself is included in creation.} The process of becoming, therefore, is not something independent over against God's creation.

This process of becoming in all its aspects reveals a lawful development from an undifferentiated to a differentiated phase. Organic development of the life begins from the still undifferentiated germ-cell, out of which gradually the separate organs differentiate. The psychical life of a new-born child is still completely undifferentiated and gradually flowers into a differentiation of sensual feeling, logical feeling, feeling for language, art, justice, etc. No different is the course of human societal development. Here too there are undifferentiated forms that in time, in a lengthy process of historical development, come to differentiation into the various societal structures. In its historical aspect this differentiation takes place by way of a cultural "branching off" into the individually characterized power-spheres of science, art, state, economic enterprise, school, voluntary organization, etc.

This cultural differentiation necessarily terminates the absolute and exclusive power of the undifferentiated life-spheres. No single truly differentiated life-sphere can essentially embrace man in all his cultural relationships. Science is as incapable to do this as art; the state as little as the temporal church-institute, the "world" of business, the school or the labour-organization. Why not? Because of these spheres of life are, according to their intrinsic nature each limited in their cultural sphere of power. The power-sphere of the state is typically characterized as that of the power of the sword. This power is undoubtedly tremendous. But it cannot embrace the power of the church, or of art or science. For the cultural power that can be exercised by any one sphere of life is limited by its nature. The church as temporal institute too, cannot claim the whole of cultural power. God did not give the church the historical calling proper to science or art, or proper to the state or economic enterprises. Its spiritual power (such as church-discipline) cannot absorb other power-spheres. Undoubtedly, the ecclesiastical power (guardian of the keys of the kingdom of God) was tremendous in the Middle Ages since the Roman Catholic instituted church embraced the whole of christendom and the papal ban could even suspend the duty of obedience to profane government. But even in those days the church had to recognize the inherent limitation of its power. It was careful never to gird itself with the sword-power of temporal government; it had to leave "profane" science its own cultural sphere of power. It only pressed its ecclesiastical power in matters judged relevant to the "souls of the faithful". And according to its conception of its special task it only demanded leadership of the whole of cultural life. On account of this one must nevertheless speak of an overgrowth of ecclesiastical cultural power. But this was not due to the nature of the spiritual power of the church as such, but to the religious groundmotive that ruled the whole of medieval culture: the motive of nature and grace in its typical roman Catholic formulation. This groundmotive of which the Roman Catholic church as leading cultural power was the bearer, also opposed the differentiation of the "natural substructure" of medieval culture. It possessed a totalitarian propensity to conceive of temporal society in terms of the scheme of a whole and its parts. And this in turn has to do with the fact that in the groundmotive of nature-grace the scriptural motive of creation was overrun by the Greek form-matter motive.

Still, one can only talk of "overgrowth" of the cultural power-sphere of the church if besides the church there are in fact already differentiated cultural spheres such as art, science, etc. When culture still rests in a primitive undifferentiated phase there is but one undifferentiated sphere of power. And insofar as there are more of them such as household, clan, tribe, these are not mutually distinct as to their nature. A process of overgrowth in culture, therefore, presupposes that a process of differentiation has begun and consequently conflicts with norms that God in his creation-order has established for the process of differentiation. Every extreme expansion of the historical power-sphere of a specific life-sphere occurs at the expense of the others and slows their disclosure in an unhealthy way.

Here we have come upon a new parameter, a closer determination of the norm for historical development, and I shall call it the "principle of cultural economy". If we observe carefully it turns out that this principle is nothing other than the principle of sphere-sovereignty in its application to the process of historical development. For, it says that the historical power-spheres of every differentiated

cultural sphere ought to be limited to those boundaries that are set by the nature proper to such a sphere. This is a guarantee that the view of history so far developed is indeed on the track indicated by the scriptural motive of creation. The line of true historical progression then, is marked out by the creational ordinances -- as clearly as one could wish. Wherever a totalitarian image of culture is pictured as the ideal that "supersedes" the hard-won recognition of sphere-sovereignty -- whether the appeal is to ancient germanic usage or to the medieval church -- one can be certain of this: here speaks a reactionary mind. It is as likely to claim the predicate progressive as any new spiritual movement -- but by their fruits we shall know them!

AN ILLUSTRATION: THE DUTCH NATIONAL CHARACTER

We saw that a cultural sphere in which the process of differentiation has not yet begun, remains closed to cultural intercourse among peoples that play a role in world-history. Such a culture is rigidly bound to the organic life-aspect of the community and remains bound to a nature-religion of the "stream of life". Here no science, no independent art, no real body politic, no independent economic life can arise. For all these differentiated life-spheres are in their historical development dependent upon cultural intercourse in world-history.

In this cultural exchange the historical aspect discloses its coherence with the aspect of social intercourse (social forms and conventions). This differentiation of the distinct cultural spheres goes hand in hand with an individualization. In this way real national characteristics develop so that one can speak of French, British, or Dutch culture. A primitive enclosed culture is never national. "National" refers to the individuality a people gains through communal historical events and by being characterized by a disclosed cultural community. And this historical individuality develops in the cultural exchange among civilized peoples. It is therefore something quite different from the peculiarities of a clan or tribe-community, which rests on a vital basis.

National differentiation of culture, then, also falls under the category of cultural disclosure. In the idea of the great germanic empire, propagated by National Socialism, this national element is purposely suppressed. Here too, one can conclude to the reactionary character of National Socialism as historical cultural movement. It fed upon the myth of Blut und Boden which had no patience with national cultural individuality and which replaced it with the nation or primitive "Volk" based on the vital community of race and tribe.

The national character of a people is no product of nature, but the result of cultural formative activity. And this cultural formgiving is subject to the norm that God has established for historical cultural disclosure. Never, therefore, is the national individualization as it has come to be at some point of time, to be elevated to the status of norm. For it may well be that in its individuality it displays any one of traits such as lack of initiative, sectarianism, untrustworthiness, provincialism, or on the other hand, illusion of national grandure, idolatrous adoration of the national culture etc. The norm for national formgiving is a type of cultural individuality which ought to be worked out with increasing purity as a nation's special calling.

So also the Dutch national character ought to be taken as a normative type. The national dutch "spirit" is characterized by its Calvinistic bent and its humaneness, by its concreteness and soberness of style, through its religious and political freedom, through its enterprising spirit sparked by its constant struggle against the sea, through its strong international orientation, its special aptitude for art and natural science, etc. The spiritual earnestness of the dutch character, fruit of its calvinism, implies a strongly principled orientation which places its mark upon the political parties, education and social organization. Undoubtedly, one can claim that it is in harmony with the natural character of the Dutch that the attempted syntheses between mutually contradictory life-and-world views,

precisely in times of spiritual flowering, never were very effective. On the other hand, one may definitely not reduce the antithesis between christianity and humanism to a typically dutch cultural phenomenon. Religion is not determined by the national culture, but vice versa it is religion which brings its formative power to bear on national culture. Since the religious antithesis posited by the scriptural groundmotive has also placed its mark upon the dutch nation (mediated by the cultural power of Calvinism), the permeation of this antithesis into the formation of political parties and social organizations is certainly not to be considered anti-national.

The Dutch Popular Movement fails to do justice to the national dutch character when it expects reinforcement of national consciousness from termination of the antithesis in political and social life. If indeed the scriptural groundmotive of the christian religion no longer were operative in the political and social principles it would mean an essential degeneration of the national character. It would prove that the Dutch had erased the traces of its scriptural calvinistic formation in history.

But, the Dutch Popular Movement may object, is it not true that also humanism has worked formatively upon the national character? The answer is: to be sure, and even in large measure. Viewed strictly historically, it has done far more pioneer's work for recognition of public freedom of conviction than did seventeenth-century calvinism. It has worked formatively on our national scientific and artistic aptitude and upon our political institutions. In all this it indeed had to fulfill a calling of its own. But humanism, before it fell prey to a period of inner decay, was always very much conscious of its antithesis to scriptural calvinism. And especially in the Netherlands it has never hesitated to admit the close connection between its political principles and its life-and-world view, the moment it was confronted again with scriptural christianity. A truly dutch humanism is a principled humanism which, in its own way, gives expression to the spiritual consciousness of our national character. If dutch humanism no longer sees a necessary connection between its religious conviction and the political and social principles, then it has innerly degenerated--in both its world-and-life view and in its historical role of national cultural power. And the whole of the national character degenerates if it becomes unfaithful to its normative historical type.

DISCLOSURE

Cultural differentiation leads to the rise of national individuality. It also opens the way for personal individual potential to make itself felt in history. Individual personality is no longer absorbed by the undifferentiated community that determines the whole of cultural endeavour, but is provided with the opportunity of free development of its talents or genius. It is at this point that individual moulders of history come upon the scene, whose formative activity has world-wide historical significance. In primitive, closed cultural circles individual characteristics certainly are not lacking. But this cultural individuality displays a relative conformity in successive generations, maintained by the power of a fixed tradition. To be sure, exceptionally talented individuals do occur, as had indeed repeatedly been noted by investigators. But their influence remains limited to the narrow boundaries of the closed community. Disclosed culture, on the other hand, takes on individual forms of world-historical importance, forms on which individual leaders place their mark.

At this point real historical consciousness also awakens, which begins to distinguish the historically significant from the insignificant, and the urge to symbolic recording of the memorable in story, monument, inscription, etc. In the relatively uniform life of the closed, primitive culture the muse of history does not yet find materials for his chronicle. For real historical writing there is no historical consciousness in such a culture. Among every undeveloped people one finds certain strange myths concerning the origin of the community and of the world. But really historical information concerning the development of their culture one seeks in vain. For this, critical distantiation with respect to the past is lacking. Only real disclosure of culture gives rise to that peculiar connection with the aspect of language, whose nucleus is precisely symbolic representation of de-sign-ation by words or signs. Thus the presence of a monument, historical inscription or chronicle is a reliable criterion to determine that a culture has passed beyond its undifferentiated stage.

Without doubt all sorts of remnants of primitive forms continue to exist even in very highly developed and disclosed cultures. Think of old pagan customs still with us today: Easter-fires, Santa Claus, etc. But such remnants are no longer alive in our culture. They are fossils, petrified remains of tradition, classified as "folklore".

National Socialism tried to blow new life into the petrified remains of a primitive-pagan germanic culture. They would have to take a place of honour in the culture of the "race". The National Socialistic myth of Blut und Boden demanded it! It is unlikely that a deeper fall, a darker reactionary spirit will arise in world-history. But all of this is explicable only by reason of the overgrowth of a directionless historicism which has lost all consciousness of historical distance in the face of the dead remains of tradition.

Be that as it may, once the process of differentiation in culture has begun in earnest, the connections with the later aspects of reality become disclosed at every point, as in the case of the aspect of language. The relatedness of the historical aspect to that of the aesthetic aspect of beautiful harmony which becomes evident in the process of differentiation, may serve as another example. Only if the principle of cultural economy is observed is harmonious cultural development guaranteed, while every transgression of the historical norm expressed in this principle leads to dis-harmony in historical development. Examples of such dis-harmony are legion. In the days of the "Enlightenment" the influence of the "humanistic ideal of science" grants the natural sciences virtually unlimited power in Western culture. All progress in the history of mankind is expected to come from the further development of science. The first victim of this humanistic deification of science, insofar as it also penetrated into the church, was the life of faith. Modernism, the pulpit-message of enlightened preachers, strangled scriptural faith and spread a spirit of rationalism. The miracles and mysteries of faith of God's revelation are outdated for the "enlightened". After all, science has a natural explanation for everything! Economic life, juridical and moral life were infected by a spirit of superficial utilitarianism and individualism. The state was seen as an artificial product that can be constructed out of its "elements", like a compound in a laboratory. Even art fell prey to the influence of the rationalistic spirit of the age. It was subjected to rigid rational rules and stiffened slogans.

In the long run culture cannot live under such "imperialism" on the part of the natural sciences. A judgment takes place in history, in which is disclosed the relation of the historical to the juridical aspect of reality. Under God's guidance the French Revolution executed this judgment. And after its liquidation in the great struggle for the freedom of nations against the conqueror Napoleon it is followed by a period of reaction; the Restauration. In a similar way the medieval overgrowth of ecclesiastical cultural power, which subordinates every cultural expression to its authorized leadership, was followed by the counterforce of an individualism that wants to sever all bonds and that rejects every authorized faith.

And how great a judgment of history has been executed over the excessive expansion of the cultural power of historical science in recent historicist and relativistic years? the first phase of this judgment is passed: the unspeakably bloody and reactionary regime of Nazidom as degenerated spiritual offspring of modern historicism! Totalitarian "racial" ideals, inspired by the myth of Blut und Boden which brought Western culture into the twilight of pagan religions. But totalitarian ideals, backed by the sword-power of a mighty modern state! The totalitarian community of the German Race, embodied in a totalitarian state. The sword-power of this German Nazi-state expands without bounds and attempts to break all opposition from other cultural spheres. Science and art, nurture and education, economic and political life, labour-organizations and philanthropy -- everything is pressed into the service of the great germanic ideal of Race and made a segment of the all-embracing state. The totalitarian state leads to a totalitarian battle of the nations in which no distinction is made between soldier and civilian, in which great cities with their stores of cultural treasures are turned into smoking ruins. Indeed God's judgment in world-history!

The second World war has ended. But has the political and military defeat of the totalitarian states also delivered us from the spirit of modern historicism with its overestimation of the national community, with its flight into the all-embracing whole? Do we not see all around us infiltration of totalitarian notions? To be sure, few clamour for centralized state-power. "Functional decentralisation" is wanted, unburdening of the central organs by engaging "new societal organs" and recognition of autonomy and self-determination of them under governmental supervision. But not recognized is the great creational principle of sphere-sovereignty rooted in the peculiar nature of the life-spheres according to their creational structures. Not recognized is the divine ordinance for historical development, rooted in this creational principle: the norm of differentiation, which demands that the creational structures be disclosed also in the cultural aspect of human society, and the norm of culture economy, which grants to every differentiated life-sphere no greater expansion of its cultural power than accords with its peculiar nature. Many still live in the relativistic and levelling world of thought of historicism. There is talk of democracy in industry without reflection on the question whether democracy as typical political organizational form can be transplanted to economic life. There is talk of autonomy and self-determination of life-spheres within the state, as if the problem here were simply analogous to that of the relation of the state to its autonomous parts. Precisely today, when the pendulum of world-history is, in view of the whole international situation, extremely unlikely to swing back from community-absolutization to overestimation of individual freedom -- today the danger of totalitarian ideas, in whatever guise, is greater than ever.

That's why the scriptural antithesis must continue to press its claims in the political and social life of today. It has perhaps never been as badly needed as in these times of spiritual uprootedness and drifting principles. Antithesis. Not to divide the nation, but to save the better parts of our national character. For we have unfolded the scriptural view of history driven by the scriptural motive of creation. But the indivisible one-ness of the scriptural groundmotive demands that we now place it under the full light of the radical fall and the redemption through Jesus Christ. For disharmony in the historical process of cultural development can ultimately only be understood in terms of the fall, and the antithesis in terms of the scriptural motive of redemption.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for the success of any business and for the protection of the interests of all parties involved. The document then outlines the various methods and procedures that should be followed to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the records. It also discusses the importance of regular audits and the role of the auditor in verifying the accuracy of the records. The document concludes by stating that the proper maintenance of records is a fundamental responsibility of every business owner and manager.

CHAPTER FOUR

FAITH AND CULTURE

FAITH: THE LIMITING FUNCTION

We have seen how in the process of cultural disclosure the relatedness of the historical aspect and the later aspects of reality come into view. I traced this disclosure up to and including the juridical aspect. In the "judgment of God in world-history" historical development points forward to the juridical aspect of the divine creation-order.

This connection between justice and history reveals itself in a typical way in political life. In war, for example, the government's neglect of national defense avenges itself. According to its typical intrinsic nature and law the state is historically founded in a monopolistic territorial power of the sword. Only on the basis of this historical power it can fulfill its typical qualification as public juridical community of government and nation. It is a typical historico-political norm that the state ought to, before all else, concretize and maintain this typical foundation of its legal existence as independent power. If the state fails to do this it does not deserve its independence. This is the moment of truth in Hegel's claim that a nation must prove its right to existence in war, and that history reveals a "higher justice". But it rested on a dangerous confusion of might and right, a typical consequence of the historicist view of reality. As such, historical power is never just. But the norm in historical development which God has established for the power-formation of states can never be understood outside of its connection with the juridical norm. The ordinances of God as they obtain for the various aspects of created reality display everywhere an indissoluble mutual coherence, because they find their root-unity in the one religious basic commandment of love to God with the whole of one's heart. In this God's creation-order reveals its integrality once again. Hegel denied the validity of national right. International relations were for him governed by the "right of the stronger". Only under recognition of the demand of justice as peculiarly natured aspect of society one can speak of the execution of a divine judgment in history, revealed in the historical power-struggle. Indeed, without this connection with justice this power-struggle could never assume the features of an historical judgment (Gericht).

When it was shown that transgression of the norm of culture-economy by way of an excessive expansion of the power-sphere of some specific cultural sphere necessarily is avenged by history. I assumed that the differentiated life-spheres of this disclosed culture do in fact have an original right. Juridically too, they are sovereign in their own sphere, that is to say, they do not derive their right to develop according to their nature and law of life from the state. A state law that would essentially violate their juridical sphere-sovereignty cannot be acknowledged as binding. The state did not receive absolute, unlimited juridical power from God. It does not possess total sovereignty over life-spheres of a different nature, but merely has its own sphere-sovereignty accorded to it by God and limited by its proper nature and law for existence. It is this coherence with

this truly juridical sphere-sovereignty as juridical divine ordinance that makes it possible with regard to the cultural aspect to speak of a world-historical right to recognition of a life-sphere's own peculiar sphere of power.

Acknowledgment of this historical cultural right leads to that love of culture which is a first requirement for an harmonious development of civilization. But only when science, art, commerce, etc. in freedom follow their own law of life is it possible for cultural love to flourish, while without this moral zeal for the fulfillment of the historical task a culture dries up and withers away. If science and art be bound to a totalitarian state or church they soon lose their inner truth. Their practitioners are no longer inspired by love for their cultural task; they become instruments in the hands of a tyrannical regime that violates their right to a life of their own. Here the bond between the historical and the moral is disclosed! For the moral aspect of reality has at its core the principle of love, insofar as it is revealed in temporal life-relationships. This principle of moral love differentiates in accordance with the various life-spheres into general neighbourly love, in love for parents and children, patriotic love, in love of truth in the circle of the sciences, in love of beauty in art, etc.

The last and at the same time the all-controlling connection opened up in the process of historical development is that between history and faith. For ultimately the entire direction revealed in the process of cultural disclosure is determined by the faith of the leading cultural powers. The religious ground-motive that moves all of the cultural development in a phase of history first manifests itself in time in the faith-life of those who are called to historical form-giving. The connection between faith and history requires special attention because of the exceptional position which the aspect of faith occupies in the temporal world-order: this aspect is the last in temporal reality; it lies at the boundary of time and eternity.

Although faith functions at the edge of time it may not be confused with the religious root-unity of the heart, soul or spirit of the whole of human existence. Out of the heart are the issues of temporal life, and that includes the life of faith. All men have faith as subjective function of their inner consciousness whether they be Christ-believers or whether their faith reveals the direction of apostasy. In terms of direction and content there is apostate faith and the kind of faith that can only become operative in a man by the Spirit of God. But both function within the structure of the same temporal function of consciousness that God accorded to human nature at creation. And both are enclosed within the same border-aspect of temporal reality, in which all temporal creatures other than man function objectively. All things temporal are object of the subjective faith-function, just as their colour and taste are object of sensory perception, or their logical characteristics are object of our conceptualization, etc.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" -- these are the majestic opening words of the book of Genesis. This revelation ought to determine the content of our creation-faith. Heaven and earth, together with everything that unfolded in them, are in time object of this faith or object of apostate faith that has turned its back to the Word-revelation of God. In pagan religion of life which refers the becoming of all things to an eternal flux of the stream of life things are also objects of primitive faith. And the same holds for the modern evolutionist

who holds that all that lives has come forth out of one original germ. But for him who believes the scriptures all things are object of creation-faith. There is even a whole sphere of things that are characterized by their objective qualifying function (their very meaning) in the life of faith. Think of a church-building, whose entire structure is marked by its objective meaning in worship. In communion bread and wine receive a special objective function in faith-life as symbols of the crucified body and shed blood of the Saviour and in this symbolism they serve to strengthen the life of faith. If the reality of bread and wine were limited to the aspects investigated by natural science and chemistry this could not be meaningful. But they have an object-function in all the later aspects of reality and hence also in the last, the aspect of faith. One must therefore distinguish clearly (a) the faith-aspect of reality; (b) the subjective function of believing which man possesses in this aspect; (c) the objective function that all temporal things have in it; and (d) the content of our subjective faith. Our subjective faith-function is subject to the revelation of God as norm for faith, and takes its departure from the religious root of our temporal life: the heart, soul or spirit of a man. In the fall the heart of man turned away from God and an idolatrous religious groundmotive took hold of his faith and the whole of his temporal life. Only the Spirit of God causes our heart to be reborn in Christ and causes a radical reversal of the direction also of our temporal function of faith.

Dr. Abraham Kuyper was probably the first to regain (for theology) this scriptural insight into faith as a creational function of the inner life of human nature, having its own essence. In Scholasticism it had been completely lost under pressure of the unscriptural groundmotive of nature and grace. In Roman Catholic Scholasticism faith was identified with belief in Roman Catholic doctrine. It was conceived as the supra-natural gift of grace to the intellect, by means of which the intellect could accept the supra-natural*extension of the "natural", logical function of thought. It remained mere intellectual assent, by means of a higher light which transcends the limits of natural reason. In the Scholastic conception, then, insight into the proper nature of the faith-function within the limiting aspect of temporal reality had been utterly lost. This insight was impossible on account of the Greek notion of human nature, accepted by Scholasticism, and totally dominated by the religious form-matter motive. After the greek example "human nature" was conceived of as composed of a "material body" and a "rational (characterized by the logical thought-function) soul".**In greek philosophy faith had from the beginning been depreciated in favour of the theoretical function of thought; it belonged to the realm of the lower representations bound to sensory imagination. Theoretical thought is the only road to truth in the greek view, while "belief" is but subjective opinion (doxa) without reliable grounds. Hence, when Scholasticism accepted this greek view of "human nature" which was radically in conflict with the creation-motive of Holy Writ, there was no alternative but to transfer faith to a supra-temporal realm. For, the faith-function was, according to the Greek view, not worthy of a place in the "rational soul". For that reason it was now completely excluded from "human nature" and relegated to the "realm of grace".

Dialectical theology (Barth, Brunner, etc.) did not escape the unscriptural ground-motive of nature and grace either, even if here the view of "natural life" is no longer greek, but humanistic. "Nature" is here identified with "sin". In this way one can indeed acknowledge the humanistic view of nature to be radically sinful in

* saving values. In this way the faith-function became a supra-natural

its pride, and yet not replace it with another, scriptural view. For "nature" and "grace" are divided by a yawning gap. Christian faith, divine gift of grace as it is, has not a single point of connection with "sinful human nature". It is here conceived as a one-sided activity of God which goes on quite beyond human action.

Over against all these wanderings away from the revelation of the Word, influenced by unscriptural religious groundmotives, Kuyper's scriptural view of the faith-function must firmly be upheld. For it has everything to do with the view concerning the scope of the antithesis in temporal life, And it has everything to do with the scriptural view of history. That's why the nature and place of the function of faith in temporal life must be investigated further. The connection between faith and history led us to a closer investigation of the place of the faith-aspect in the entire order of the aspects of reality. The exceptional locus of faith in temporal life is completely misunderstood if it is not seen in its quality of border-position in time with regard to eternity. It is the last, the limiting aspect of temporal reality and at the same time the window facing eternity.

Faith cannot exist without revelation from God. It is its nature to be oriented to that revelation. In Unspiritual and ambiguous language usage the term "faith" often has the sense of "belief", opinion, uncertain knowledge. This was the sense in which greek philosophy preferred to take the term, for it saw the true road to knowledge of the gods in theoretical thought. True faith, however, is the exact opposite of uncertain opinion. At the core of its meaning it is: ultimate certainty in time concerning the reliable Ground of one's existence, in being touched in the heart of one's being by a revelation from God as Origin of all things. There is no real faith, no matter how deeply it has fallen ^{away} from the Truth, that is not oriented to such divine revelation. That's why its core is not sufficiently indicated in terms such as "intuitive certainty" or "evidence". Revelation connects the temporal with the eternal. God is the Eternal One who reveals himself to man in time. The fulness of divine revelation is in Christ Jesus, the Word become flesh. And precisely this revelation of God is the great skandalon for the arrogant thought of the apostate: man does not want this revelation because it threatens his supposed self-sufficiency. He wants to keep God at infinite theoretical distance in order to speculate about him in peace as the "most perfect Being" far removed from anything touching temporal life. But God does not heed the division of time and eternity mapped out by human theory. He reveals himself in the midst of time and the sinner of whom Christ has taken hold and who has heard this revelation prays: Lord have mercy upon us. We have covered your world with hate, evil, blood and tears. And look, you are there and you see it all! Revelation of God in his Word and in the works of his hands! It causes the fire of the antithesis to descend upon the earth; it divides parents and children; it sets friend against friend; it drives rifts within the nation; it turns man against himself "Think not that I have come to bring peace on earth", says the Saviour, "I did not come to bring peace but the sword".

It is this unbreakable connectedness with the revelation of God that grants the faith-function (and the faith-aspect in which it works) its limiting position between time and eternity. As such, the faith-function is enclosed within the temporal world-order; it belongs to temporal life, in the same way as our organic and psychological functions or our logical and lingual functions, etc. This is evident from the

structure of the faith-aspect in which -- like every other temporal aspect -- the coherence with every other aspect of temporal reality is expressed. The aspect of faith is the last in the temporal order; the others precede it. But it is related to that which transcends time: The absolute Ground and Origin of the whole of temporal life.

The nuclear moment of its structure described above directly points beyond time to the religious root and origin of our entire temporal existence. But this core-moment is inseparably bound up with a whole series of moments that point back (retro-cipate) to the nuclear moments of all the earlier aspects. First, to that of the moral aspect. There is no faith in the real sense of the word without worship. Here faith has a moral analogy: It is to love as core of the moral aspect to which faith-worship refers. But the nature of worship is to be oriented to God. It cannot be directed to a creature except it become idolatry. This implies at the same time that magic--as it is met with among pagan nations, but also even in medieval christendom and the time of the Renaissance -- cannot be its very nature be service of God (or service of gods). To be sure, magic is impossible without some specific faith. But as such it is directed to "control" of natural forces, for which purpose improper means are being used. In essence it is not an act of service which intends the worship of a god.

In the structure of faith, there is, further, necessarily a juridical analogy, by which the faith-aspect is inseparably connected to the juridical. For the God who reveals himself to man has a right to the worship of faith. This divine right to the worship of man is, of course, no "right" in its original juridical sense. It is not on a par with the right of a buyer to his goods or the right of an owner to his property. It is but a juridical analogy in the meaning of faith which, like the moral analogy, points beyond time to the religious relation of dependence in which man stands before God. Similarly, the justification by faith of which the scriptures speak is a juridical analogy, never to be understood in a technically legal sense. Still, all these juridical analogies can be grasped in their pistical (pistis = faith) meaning only in coherence with the juridical aspect of reality, with which the aspect of faith is inseparably bound up in the temporal order. Divine revelation is directed to the heart, to the religious center center of existence, and from there to the whole of one's temporal life in the total coherence of its aspects. Without calling upon the juridical aspect it is not possible to understand God's justice and claims whose meanings are given in faith.

The intrinsic structure of faith furthermore displays an analogy of the aesthetic aspect. In faith we necessarily find the moment of pistical harmony by which man is brought into a true relation of communion with God. This pistical harmony as such is not aesthetic. Every attempt to conceive of the life of faith as aesthetic invariably leads to a denaturalization of it. But the aspect of faith is indeed interwoven with the aesthetic aspect, precisely because faith orients all aspects of reality toward God as the Origin.

The aspect of faith also reveals its intrinsic structural coherence with the economic aspect of reality. There is no true faith without readiness to sacrifice. Even among pagans the sacrifice is an essential expression of the life of faith. The true sacrificial readiness of the christian faith rests upon a valuation of temporal over against eternal goods. Christ's last answer in the discussion with the rich

young man who asked: "What must I do to have eternal life?" is: "Go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven." Here the economic analogy in faith comes clearly into view; all temporal possessions outside of Christ cannot be valued above the treasure which the Kingdom of God guarantees us. It must be sacrificed for the one "pearl of great value" as Christ says in the parable. Again, the valuation of faith is not itself economic, but is inseparably interwoven with economic valuation.

Essential to the structure of faith is also the analogy with the aspect of social intercourse. Inherent to the life of faith is the "walk" with God, and communion with the saints. This pistical intercourse is of a spiritual nature and cannot be reduced to intercourse in its social sense, which is subject to the intrinsically social norms of politeness, tact, etc. But it refers to the core-moment of this aspect and binds faith to it.

The structure of faith also possesses a lingual analogy. In its nucleus the meaning of the lingual aspect is symbolic signification by means of signs (words, gestures, signals, etc.). And inherent to faith is a true pistical symbolism in which the revelation of God is signified. This lingual analogy in the meaning of faith is not reducible to the original function of language. Holy Scripture signifies for us the true Word-revelation of God. But this revelation can only be understood in faith guided by the Holy Spirit which operates in the religious groundmotive of the Word-revelation. As long as scripture is read with unbelieving heart one can indeed grasp the lingual meaning of the words and sentences but the true meaning for faith inevitably escapes one. That's why exegesis of scripture is not simply a linguistic matter to be left to expert philologists. It is not even a purely theological concern which merely requires solid scientific, theological knowledge. A Jewish rabbi reads Isaiah 53 differently from a believing Christian; and a modernistic theologian will not hear the prophecy of the atoning suffering and death of the Mediator. He who has not seen the religious groundmotive of scripture is without the key to knowledge of faith. And this religious groundmotive is not a theory that can be understood scientifically. It is the all-controlling dynamic power of God's Spirit which must open one's heart to what God has to say and which from there on has to disclose the faith-meaning of scripture. But, even though the lingual analogy in the structure of faith is not to be reduced to language in its original meaning, it cannot exist without it.

Exegesis of scripture may not be a mere linguistic business; it is not possible without linguistic explication either. It is hardly necessary to explain the dangers of so-called "allegorical" exegesis of scripture, as it was practiced in the first centuries of the christian church by gnosticism and the greek churchfathers influenced by greek thought. God has bound his Word-revelation to scripture and there the pistical^{meaning} is bound to the lingual meaning. Whoever severs this bond does not follow the guidance of God's Spirit but rather his own arbitrary views and cannot understand the pistical meaning of scripture.*

Earlier we came upon the unbreakable bond between faith and history which at that time I approached from the side of (modal) history. The process of disclosure in historical development appeared necessarily led by faith driven by a religious groundmotive.

In the structure of the aspect of faith itself this coherence with the historical is expressed in an historical analogy: the form-giving to faith in the line of development of divine revelation as norm for faith. This form-giving occurs in the doctrine or teachings of faith which -- they are the living possession of the community -- may not be confused with dogmatic theology as scientific theory concerning doctrine. The teachings of the christian faith can only be established and maintained by ecclesiastical authority on the basis of the Word of God. By their nature theoretical theories concerning these doctrines can never demand assent with ecclesiastical authority. On the one hand they cannot do this because science as such has no doctrinal authority,, and on the other because the church lacks authority in matters theoretical. The confusion of ecclesiastical dogma (articles of faith) and theological dogmatics (scientific theory about dogma) is a persistent source of division and even schism in the church. Ecclesiastical dogma itself has its historical development in close relation to the historical power-struggle between the true church and heresies; it is engaged in a struggle of life and death to maintain the scriptural groundmotive of the christian religion. Heresies continually arose in theological and philosophical circles that allowed themselves to be guided by unscriptural groundmotives. Hence the church was forced to seek theological information in the formulation of its dogma. But in doing so it was always concerned to uphold the disputed article of faith, and not to impose a theological theory about it as binding.

The ecclesiastical dogma, the church's teachings of faith, which essentially have no other task than to give clear and certain expression to the religious ground-motive of the Word of God, can always be held accountable before that Word. But the divine Word-revelation itself also has in terms of its faith-aspect an intrinsic coherence with history. It displays a progression from Old to New Testament; and the New Testament is historically grounded in this, that Christ appeared. But this does not mean that God's revelation in its function of norm for faith, would be an historical phenomenon. This misconception is rather the fundamental error of historicism, which absolutizes the historical aspect of reality and therefore denies every solid ground for truth. This error becomes fully transparent only when one has seen both the inherent, proper nature of faith and its intrinsic coherence with the aspect of historical development. In its structure the faith-aspect reveals an historical analogy, but this analogy retains its character of faith. Revelation retains its eternal truth for faith -- which at its core points beyond time. In its temporal aspect as norm for faith revelation displays from Old to New Testament a progressive disclosure of divine Truth. But in this progression too, as historically founded, the divine norm for faith retains its own nature in the face of historical development.

Faith also shows a logical analogy in its structure, and this assures its indissoluble connectedness with the aspect of logical thought. By nature faith is a sure knowledge, resting on spiritual discernment. It is not blind suggestion, but is able to give account of its grounds; in so far forth it is founded in logical distinguishing and cannot exist without it. But faith's spiritual discernment of truth remains in principle of a different sort than logical conceptual distinguishing. It remains oriented to things eternal which transcend human conceptualization and that, according to Paul, can only be "spiritually discerned", that is to say, in complete religious surrender of the heart to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

To sure knowledge of faith in its spiritual discernment is by its nature correlated with unshakable trust. In this moment the analogy of the aspect of feeling comes to expression in the faith-aspect: the trust of faith is never without a feeling of security, but it is not itself an emotion, for emotions undergo changes and depend on moods. The trust of faith never seeks its reliable ground in feeling and mood, but only and simply in the Word of God.

All these traits assure the peculiar nature proper to the true life of faith. In faith-life faith maintains its inherent coherence with the organic aspect of human existence. The life of faith has a maturation of its own from child to adult which is inseparably joined with organic life-development. But it retains its own, irreducible character and obeys its own law. It is spiritually nourished by prayer, preaching of the Word, and use of the sacraments. This "spiritual nourishment" must be related to the developmental stages in faith-life. The apostle Paul speaks of "feeding with milk" the children in faith who cannot yet bear "solid food". The relation between the function of faith and the organic function that the apostle explicitly mentions also points to the intimate relation of faith and the senses: we receive the Spirit by "hearing with faith". The Greek, who held that philosophic theory is the only true way to knowledge of God, would simply have considered this statement proof positive of his judgment concerning the worthlessness of faith for the knowledge of truth. The "rational soul" must disengage itself from the deceptive appearance of reality caused by the senses.

It happens that the relation between faith and history, evident from both sides, places us before very difficult questions. Concluded was that to the life of faith also accrues disclosure and deepening, just as we must speak of a process of historical-cultural disclosure. In every aspect prior to faith we can distinguish a "closed" and an "open" state or condition. We speak of a closed state of an aspect when it reveals only the retrocipatory relatedness with earlier aspects, and of an "open", or "opened up", or "disclosed" state, when also the anticipatory moments unfold, i.e. those analogies that intrinsically connect that aspect with later ones. Thus, for instance, the feeling-life of an animal is still in a closed state. It is still rigidly bound to the senses of the living organism and cannot rise above the sensory level. In the case of man, on the other hand, one can speak of open or disclosed feeling-life, since in logical feeling, historical feeling, lingual feeling, aesthetic feeling, juridical feeling, etc., the coherence with the later aspects becomes manifest. But how are we to conceive the process of disclosure in the life of faith? And how to think of a closed state in this case? For the aspect of faith, is the last aspect, at the border of temporal reality. There are, then, no later aspects to follow. A second problem is this: how is it possible that under the direction of an apostate faith, dominated by an idolatrous groundmotive it is still true that real cultural disclosure takes place? What influence does such apostate faith have on the way in which this cultural disclosure occurs in historical development? Not until these extremely important questions are answered are we in a position to really understand the significance of the antithesis between the Christian religion and the idolatrous groundmotives for historical development.

FAITH AT ITS LOWEST EBB....

Cultural disclosure in history is led by faith. The historical (cultural) aspect of reality is, like any other aspect, in either a closed or an opened-up condition. In the closed state the aspect reveals itself only in its inner coherence with earlier aspects, and is then still rigidly bound to them. In the process of disclosure the inner connections with the later aspects of reality unfold, and this disclosure deepens, enriches, the entire meaning of the aspect.

Meanwhile it is also beyond doubt that a primitive, still completely closed culture is, in its undifferentiated character, totally in the hold of a belief, a faith. The student of the life of a primitive people is inevitably struck by the connection of this whole community with worship and phenomena of faith. How is it possible that here too, faith has the leadership in life, but that this does not lead to real disclosure in the cultural and later aspects of society? Can we perhaps also speak of a closed and an open state of the aspect of faith? That was the first question we raised just above, and related to a basic problem concerning the relation of faith and history.

Christian theology has always distinguished between the general revelation of God in "nature" (i. e. in the whole of God's work of creation) and the general and special Word-revelation. It seems reasonable that we would look for our starting-point for tracing the specific sense in which we may speak of a "closed structure" of the faith-function in "revelation in nature". But we must at the same time be attentive to the original relation between God's "natural revelation" in all the works of his hands, and the general Word-revelation. God, creating the World, has revealed himself in that creation both in its religious root (the heart of man) and in its temporal order and coherence. But from the very beginning this revelation of God in all the works of his hands was borne upon and explained by the Word-revelation which at first, also after the fall, was not limited to some, but directed to the whole of mankind. With Abraham begins an independent development of Word-revelation (no longer universal) of which the people of Israel become the bearers for a time until the coming in the flesh of the Word Himself. In this Word-revelation God speaks to man who ought to listen in faith. In this faithful listening to the Word of God the true meaning of God's revelation in the "nature of creation", in "all the works of his hands" shows itself to the insight of faith. That is why the fall away from God began in that man no longer listened to his Word, that he turned away in his heart from that Word and with that, he closed the human faith-function for the divine address.

God's revelation in the whole of his creation and first of all in the heart of man, turned into a judgment in this apostasy from Word-revelation. Where the heart shut itself in and turned from God, there the faith-function was also closed to the light of the Word of God. But this faith-function remained in the boundary-position between time and eternity. According to its very nature it could not leave off orienting itself to a reliable ground for truth and life revealed in creation. But now "firm ground" was sought within creation itself, in an idolatrous absolutization of the relative, Its direction became apostate: natural faith turned into un-belief before the Word of God.

By "closed structure of faith" then, I mean the limit of its apostate capacity: faith fallen away to its deepest depth. In the light of the Word-revelation this limit may be searched out in the creation-order itself. It must be at that point where apostate faith makes every disclosure of the historical cultural aspect and the other normed ones impossible. If now this is the limiting point in the apostate direction of the life of faith we have the same time the answer to our first question (i.e. can we speak of a closed and an open condition in the aspect of faith?). It is important for one's view of history to gain insight into this limit of the fall of faith, since only then it is possible to understand primitive culture. In this closed structure faith can never be the starting-point for positive development and disclosure of the faith-life creationally implanted in man. Much rather we ought to see this condition as the limit of the devolution, the degeneration and decadence of it. But it is possible that this closed structure function as starting-point for disclosure in the process of pistical apostasy and this must be dealt with later.

The starting-point for positive disclosure and deepening of the life of faith to the fulness of the christian faith, on the other hand, must be sought in the structure of the faith-function as it was originally created into man, viz. in its openness before the divine Word-revelation. After the fall, however, this positive disclosure is possible only by way of God's Spirit in grace operating in the unlocking of hearts. No new faith-function is being created here, but this disclosure of the fallen function of faith nevertheless consists in a radical turn-about of the direction of faith, as such dependent upon rebirth of the heart--a conversio that the fallen nature of man himself can never bring about.

If now the faith-function even at the limits of its apostasy from Word-revelation cannot occur outside of the structure of the aspect of faith as such, but remains bound by its law, the divine revelation--then the question arises as to which principle of divine revelation continues to control as real faith-norm--above all human decrees and arbitrariness -- even the faith that has fallen deepest. This "closed" revelational principle may, as I said above, be traced out of the temporal creation-order itself by the light of God's Word. The closed structure of an aspect, we saw, is always characterized by its strict chains, its inert dependence upon earlier aspects. On a closed historical level of development the whole of cultural life is statically bound to the emotional and organic aspects of reality. The apostate faith that has a hold upon such a primitive culture will accordingly direct itself to deification of mysterious (and closed) "forces of nature" that control life and death, fruitfulness and sterility, and in general the entire vital-emotional aspects of the primitive society. And on account of its rigid ties to the emotional feeling-drives belief in the gods will often be founded on fear -- even though one must certainly not attempt to explain the origin of primitive religion in terms of fear. This is just as impossible as the attempt of the French sociologist E. Durkheim to explain the origin of primitive religion out of social organization. It is the mysterious, the incomprehensible divine revelation that fills man with fear and trembling. In this deification of the closed forces of nature human existence in its normative functions is chained to "non-rational nature". The "night of nature" covers the primitive community. The greek "matter-motive" of the old nature-religions, on the strength of which the "ever-flowing stream of life" is deified, filled the primitive greek with fear of the blind death-fate (Anangke), which inevitably and unpredictably comes for him and cuts off every hope of a better future. In this "closed" state the faith-function has no other

revelational principle as norm than the divinity that reveals himself within the "closed forces of nature", and ought to be worshipped with sacrifices and rites.

This closed revelational principle becomes a curse and a judgment for man in the degeneration of his faith-life. But it is nevertheless grounded in the divine creation-order and hence super-arbitrary. Word-revelation, therefore, which is fulfilled in Christ Jesus, does not do away with it (God does in fact reveal himself in the forces of nature), but rather uncovers its true meaning by its relatedness to the groundmotive and the root-unity of divine Self-revelation: creation, fall, and redemption through Jesus Christ.

To this closed revelational principle (the revelation of God in the forces of nature) primitive faith often gave positive form in most fantastic ways. As soon as man's heart and faith are closed to the Word-revelation, he begins to interpret the divine revelational principle as faith-norm on his own. And deification of the uncromprehended forces of nature stimulates the imagination in many ways. Wild and barbaric myths are spun around the primitive "nature-gods" which strike the "unlightened" Westerner as markedly pathological and which he -- to the further glory of his "superiority" -- prefers to "explain" in a raticnal, natural-scientific way.[†] But such attempts at "rational explanation" are utterly unsound. Goethe already ridiculed them in his Faust when he lets the "enlightened" one in his powerless indignation over faith in demons and spiritual apparitions say these priceless words:
Bist du noch immer da? Das ist ja unerhort!
Verschwinde doch! wir haben aufgeklärt!

Over against this we hear the word of our Lord: "This kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting." (Matt. 17:21). Indeed, whoever holds that belief in nature-demons has been radically eradicated by modern natural science forgets that a whole array of "modern" demons stands ready to occupy the vacant places in the apostate life of faith. Superstition is stronger than natural science, since its origin is not the mind but the religious root of human existence estranged from the Word-revelation of God.

Faith is in a "closed condition" at the limits of its apostasy from the revelation of the Word. At that point it has fallen to primitive deification of uncomprehended forces of nature that control the sensual-vital sides of society. In this closed condition of his faith-life man lacks any awareness that he transcends the inorganic and the plant and animal kingdoms.

The disintegration and dispersion of awareness of personality which has been noted among many primitive-pagan peoples, comes to peculiar expression in the so-called mana-belief. The wellknown ethnologist Codrington was the first to call the attention of the scientific world to it in his book about the Melanesians (1891). Since then it has been shown that under different names it was current among many primitive peoples across the face of the earth. Out of the lively debate that developed after the discovery of this mana concerning its real meaning, one can distill the following as tentative results: this faith is characterized by a peculiar fluidity, a strange interflux of the "natural" and the "super-natural", of the "personal" and the "impersonal". Mana is a mysterious life-force which rises above the familiar, everyday face of life and which incarnates itself as it were in fragments in mythical figures -- which can be plants, animals, spirits, a whole clan or tribe, but also inorganic things (rocks, stones, etc.) that are striking by reason of size or shape.

In Totemism -- markedly influenced by mana-belief -- in which a clan worships a given animal or plant as male or female prime ancestor, the clan-members identify themselves with the totem. They are eagles or kangaroos, or date-palms, etc. This clearly shows how diffuse and dispersed awareness of personality is in this closed structure of faith-life. And again the unbreakable relation between self-knowledge and knowledge of God here proves its truth.

It is undoubtedly noteworthy that next to the beliefs that imaginatively revolve around the mysterious life-force, many primitive peoples also appear to have a vague notion of a highest divinity, which however, has no direct dealings with man and who is not accorded any organized worship. Is this to be understood as a remnant of the general Word-revelation among these peoples? One should be careful here: information is too vague and too often contradictory to warrant this conclusion. In any case, this faith-representation of a "highest god" had no influence upon primitive society that can be indicated: the really "operative" beliefs are here indeed in a closed state.

....AND ITS DIRECTION

The central problem which now demands attention is that concerning the process of disclosure of the life of faith in an apostate direction. How is such disclosure to be understood and how is it possible? Answer to this question is of eminent importance, also for the idea of historical development, since that always takes place under leadership of faith.

It is simply undeniable that there is such a thing as a process of disclosure of faith in apostate direction after a period of primitive and diffuse "nature-belief", in the religions of those pagan peoples who have been leaders in world-history. And this process of disclosure is directly related to the fact that these peoples leave their more or less primitive cultural condition behind them. Among the greeks, for instance, we note a clear transition from the originally primitive nature-religions, in which the impersonal and form-less stream of life was worshipped, to a phase of culture-religion in which the gods became idealized human cultural powers of superhuman personal form and Gestalt. In its process of development and disclosure idolatry transcends the primitive nature-belief and orients itself to the revelation of God in the normative aspects of temporal reality. Fallen man begins to conceive his gods in idealized, personal shapes. He gives cultural form to his idolatrous faith. Led by this faith-disclosure the historical norm of differentiation (explained above) too, begins to obtain in greek cultural development. This in turn is coupled to individualization of culture within a more encompassing and truly national cultural community.

From a quite different point of view the famous german scholar Ernst Cassirer has called attention to this state of affairs. In totemistic primitive societies, he observes, the individuality of the members is still completely swallowed up by the whole. But as soon as belief in personal gods breaks through the individual also begins to free himself from being absorbed by the societal relations. At last the individual receives with respect to the life of clan and tribe his independence, and, as it were, his own "personal face". Bound up with this trend toward the individual there is simultaneously a new tendency toward the general. More embracing and differentiated societal entities rise above the narrower unities of tribe or group. The personal culture-gods are the first national gods of the greeks and as

such they are even the creators of the common Hellenic consciousness. They are the general gods of the greek tribes, bound neither to a single place of district, nor to a specific place of worship. And so a liberation is achieved toward personal consciousness and an elevation to national consciousness in one and the same process of disclosure of apostate faith. Indeed, disclosure of faith away from divine Word-revelation can be understood only as a process of man becoming self-conscious in his apostasy.

In its structure the faith-function has no moments (analogies) that are related to later aspects of reality, for faith is the last in the temporal order. To disclose, apostate faith can indeed reach only for the apostate religious root of human existence: human self-consciousness.

In its apostate direction faith rises above the rigid closedness of primitive nature-faith as soon as man becomes conscious of the supremacy of his "rational" or normative aspects of temporal reality. Science, culture, art or morality then become the object of deification. And in this process of increasing self-awareness in faith fallen man becomes conscious of his freedom to shape his historical future with design -- in constant strife with the power of tradition. As long as faith remains closed, tradition is all-powerful in society. The inscriptions of the Egyptian pyramids are probably the oldest documents we have of the gradual rise of apostate human faith toward deification of the juridical and moral functions of personality. Here one can see how in belief in immortality the moral conception of the human ego becomes increasingly accentuated. It is correlate with the representations of the god of the dead, Osiris, who in older texts is still half animal and is forced by way of magical formulae, to accept the souls of the dead, but who is gradually conceived as judge of good and evil. Magic is replaced by a plea of the soul before its divine judge in which the soul defends its right to a favourable judgment.

Guided by this disclosure in apostate direction now, a process of historical disclosure takes place as well. It too, must therefore go in an apostate direction. How does this direction reveal itself?

Just above we saw how real disclosure of the life of faith in a direction away from the Word-revelation is possible. Now we must find out how cultural disclosure in historical development takes place under the guidance of such apostate faith.

The apostate direction of faith is always revealed in deification, absolutization, overestimation of specific aspects of creation. If therefore, such faith gains hegemony in cultural disclosure the immediate result will be that the norm for culture-economy will be breached and a sharp disharmony will rend cultural life.

I would briefly bring together my earlier expositions about this. In the search for a criterion to distinguish an essentially healthy progressive direction from a reactionary one in historical development I pointed out that God has subjected historical development to norms. These norms or standards of measure must be traced in the entire coherence of the divine creation-order, that is to say, they must be read off from the interrelations by which the historical has been fitted into temporal reality together with the other aspects. We noted that in a "closed"

* function over the "non-rational" forces of nature. Man begins to see himself and his gods in the light of the "rational"

or primitive condition culture still displays a totally undifferentiated character. Here culture is utterly closed off from the fruitful cultural intercourse of the nations that are taken up into the process of world-history. Tradition is all-powerful. The entire communal life of primitive peoples is in the grasp of a pagan nature-belief which in its closed state makes true cultural disclosure impossible. A first criterion for real disclosure of a culture was uncovered in the norm of differentiation. This norm turned out to contain nothing but the principle of sphere-sovereignty as grounded in God's creation-order: God created everything after its kind, according to its nature. In the historical norm of cultural differentiation this creational principle revealed itself in its historical aspect. It says that true disclosure of culture is possible only when it unfolds in differentiated cultural spheres of state and church, science and art, trade and commerce, etc. where each can reveal its own inherent nature and where each possesses its own historical power-sphere. But we also noted that this differentiation-process can unfold in accordance with the order established by God only if the norm of cultural harmony (or balance) is taken into account, which gives expression to the intrinsic coherence between*norm implies that every excessive expansion of the power-sphere of*conflicts with harmony in cultural sphere (i.e. church or state) conflicts with harmony in cultural development and necessarily occurs at the cost of healthy growth of the other cultural spheres. Such disharmony avenges itself in the historical world-judgment and calls forth a reaction on the part of the threatened sphere. Now, excessive power-expansion of a given cultural sphere is always led by an apostate faith: that sphere is being absolutized and deified.

In the eighteenth century, the time of the 'Enlightenment', the whole of Western culture was dominated by the humanistic faith in the omnipotence of the modern science of nature. The ideal was control of reality by finding the laws of nature, since they determine the course of events in a closed chain of cause and effect. The method of the new science of nature was foisted upon every other science as being the only, true method. It came down to analysis of complex phenomena into their "simplest parts" whose relations were to be determined in mathematical equations. It can hardly be denied that under influence of the humanistic science-ideal the natural science developed immensely. Behind natural-scientific investigations the science-ideal stood as religious dynamic force. It even took hold of believing christian natural scientists, even if some (think of Pascal) strongly protested this overstretching of the natural-scientific methods of thought. The historical influence of this ideal of science did not remain limited to the cultural sphere of science: driven by faith it reached out to every other cultural area. Enlightenment through the progress in science, which will explain everything rationally -- that was the shibboleth of the times. All "progress" of humanity was expected from it. Human society too came to be viewed in all its aspects after the model of the 'natural-scientific method'. It had to be broken down into its "simplest elements", the "individuals". This gave rise to an individualistic view of human society which had no eye for the inner nature of societal relationships such as church, state, family, etc. Morality became individualistic and was built on no deeper principle than that of utility. In the shape of "modernism" the enlightenment-faith entered the churches and ruined christian faith-life wherever it gained a hold. In economic life it led to enthronement of the 'homo economicus', the fictitious man led exclusively by his own economic interest. Even art did not escape the influence of this enlightenment-faith, and became slave to rigid, rationalistic forms of "classicism". Healthy development of the other cultural spheres was therefore out of the question. The cultural power of

* the historical and the economic aspects of reality. This historical

* a given differentiated cultural sphere (i.e. church or state)

natural science had expanded far beyond its boundaries at the cost of the other spheres of Western civilization.

Still, it would be one-sided if one would fail to note of how great significance the faith of the Enlightenment has been for the unfolding of Western civilization. The Enlightenment has been truly formative in history and has been busy in cultural disclosure--also beyond the area of actual natural science and the technology built on it. In economy it has opened the way towards development of individual initiative, which, in spite of its originally individualistic bent, greatly developed economic life. In jurisprudence it has untiringly pleaded for the individual rights of man which form the foundation of our civil law today; and for the ending of those undifferentiated juridical relations where parts of governmental authority were considered "commercial goods". The Enlightenment has laid many cornerstones for the modern constitutional state (Rechtsstaat). In the area of criminal law it has contributed to the advent of more humane views, to the abolishment of the rack and the ending of witch-trials. Without ceasing it has pleaded for freedom of public expression of opinion and freedom of religion. In all these things the Enlightenment could indeed work formatively in history because here it followed the line of real cultural disclosure. In order to concretize its revolutionary ideas it had to adapt itself to the divine ordinances. In the power-struggle with tradition they were deflected under pressure of the norm for historical continuity, so that they lost their moments of subjective arbitrariness. They had to be adapted also to the influence of the Reformation which -- even if it played a secondary role -- could still assert itself in the historical development.

But the bleak reverse of the Enlightenment accomplishments for Western civilization, i.e. the dissolution through its individualism and its rationalism, presented Western society with shrill disharmony. The "judgment" of world-history fell upon the "Enlightenment" and called forth the reaction of historicism and community-imperialism.

A truly scriptural view of history, however, cannot solicit aid against "enlightened notions" from the side of historicism, which opposed the Aufklärung in a reactionary way. It is not permissible for a truly scriptural view of history to deny the fruitful and therapeutic elements in the historical influence of the Enlightenment.

These must be prized as fruits of common grace, no less than the good elements in the historicist view of reality. Every cultural movement, no matter how hostile to God must be recognized in its historical worth insofar as it has really contributed to cultural disclosure as measured by the standard of the divinely-positing norms for cultural development. A truly scriptural view of history cannot be narrow-minded. It shares neither the optimistic faith in a rectilinear progress of man, nor the pessimistic belief that the fall of the West is at hand; behind the great process of cultural development it sees the war waged in the root of creation between the civitas Dei and the civitas terrena, the Kingdom of God in Christ Jesus and the kingdom of darkness. It knows that this battle was decided on Golgotha and that the victory of the Kingdom of God is sure. It knows that in the power-struggle for the historical future of Western civilization the great antithesis obtains between the groundmotive of the divine Word-revelation and the groundmotive of the apostate spirit. It knows, too that God makes use of the apostate powers in culture to effectuate further unfolding of the forces wherewith he endowed his creation.

Through blood and tears, through revolution and reaction, the process of historical development reaches to the day of judgment, and the Christian is called to take part in the great struggle of history--to take part in it integrally, with the whole of his being and powers, in the name of Him to whom has been given all authority in heaven and on earth. The outcome is sure. And hence no event can rob him of the tranquility that befits a conqueror.

CONCLUSION

And so we have come to see the groundmotive of the christian religion, i.e. creation, fall, and redemption through Jesus Christ as a spiritual dynamic force which radically, that is in the radix, the root, turns the whole of one's life around, once and as soon as it does indeed take full command of one's attitude of life and thought.

We saw how it moulds our view of history and offers us a standard of measure to distinguish a truly progressive from a masked reactionary trend. We saw how all-embracing is the significance for the burning issues of the "new age". How it unmasks the dangerous community-ideology with its totalitarian tendencies; how in opposition to the so-called "dynamic" spirit of our times which refuses to recognize fixed foundations for life and expects all from "movement" it posits the unmoveable solidity of God's creation-order. We have come to know the divine radicalism of this groundmotive touching the root of our lives. I trust that all will acknowledge that it will not permit of ambiguity and of "limping with two opinions" in our lives.

Count then, the "cost" of taking seriously this radical, because scriptural christianity. Consider which side to join in the oppressive spiritual battle of our times. Know that compromise is no option. Either the groundmotive of the christian religion works radically, or "strange gods" claim the service of our lives. There is no middle-of-the-road. Let him for whom this antithesis is too radical ask himself whether less radical christianity is not like salt that has lost its savour. For this I state the antithesis as radically as I do: that the Word of God in all its two-edged sharpness be experienced again as a spiritual storm striking its lightning into our lives and clearing the humid air. If it be no longer experienced as a spiritual power, one's whole heart surrendered, then it will remain barren in that life. Then too the great battle it necessarily engenders can be "avoided". Mere man cannot wage this battle: the spiritual dunamis of the Word of God wages it in us and sweeps us along in spite of our "flesh and blood".

Without ceasing I try to impress all this upon those who will listen. It is meant for those who are christian in conviction too. For I believe that, if only this groundmotive of God's Word, and the groundmotive alone, had been held fast by all of christendom we would never have witnessed the great divisions and schisms in that body of Christ called church. The murky spring of all really principled schisms and dissensions lies hidden in the sinful propensity always at work in the heart of man to weaken the integral and radical meaning of the divine Word. Fallen man cannot hear the truth; even when it has taken hold of him we will yet seek to escape the whole of it. The creation-motive hits this fallen world so hard that man has to see his utter lostness before a God whom he cannot escape anywhere, as in the words of the great 139th Psalm:

Whither shall I flee from Thy presence?

If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there!

If I make my bed in Sheol, Thou art there!

This: that man cannot maintain one atom of his being before his Creator as his own, that nowhere in creation he can find a foothold leading to a place to hide his sinful existence away from God -- This he cannot bear. The threefold ground-motive of the Word is indivisibly one. When the integral character of the creation-motive is slighted, the radical sense of fall and redemption become incomprehensible. Vice versa, whoever tampers with the radical meaning of fall and redemption can no longer see the full power and scope of the creation-motive in his life.

TRANSITION

When it first arrived upon the scene, however, in the Hellenistic (late-greek) world of thought, the pure concretization of this indivisible groundmotive was threatened from all sides. Already in these first centuries the christian church had to fight for its life, to keep it safe from being smothered by the greek groundmotive and its allies (in time, the greek motive combined with Eastern ones, especially Persian "Zoroastrianism"). Every one of these groundmotives was dualistically divided against itself. Torn by inner contradiction they were since they did not know God as Creator; as absolute Origin of all things, and because they did not know the root of man's own being. They were directed toward idols.

In previous sections the greek groundmotive has been discussed at some length. It was the motive of form and matter, originating in the unreconciled conflict in the greek religious consciousness between the older religion of nature and the newer culture-religion of the Olympian gods.⁺ In its later development the spiritual momentum of the innerly divided religious groundmotive led to acceptance of a twofold origin of the world. Even where greek thinkers acknowledged the existence of a cosmic order whose origin could be attributed only to divine design, a divine plan, they nevertheless categorically denied divine creation. Everything that has come to be can only be due to divine formgiving to formless matter already available. They could but conceive of this divine formgiving in terms of human cultural activity. The "rational deity" is then merely a "heavenly architect" forming a given material after a free design, but not able to forestall the blind autonomous workings of the matter-principle. To this greek idea of the divine a dualistic conception of human nature was directly related. Man's self-knowledge does indeed depend on his knowledge of God. Just as the rational deity, then, from whom proceeds all formation, finds over against himself the autonomy of the principle of matter, so is human nature a principle duality of a "rational soul" and an earthly, "material body". The "rational soul" is here concentrated in theoretical thinking which is divine. It is the invisible "form" of human existence and at least the "faculty" or power of theoretical thought is immortal.

But the material body is the "matter" of man's being, subjected to the stream of life and to blind fate.

It was not overly difficult to combine this greek groundmotive in the Hellenistic period with the dualistic groundmotives of the eastern religions with which the Greeks were becoming acquainted. Persian Zoroastrian religion had as groundmotive a battle between the divine principle of light and the evil principle of darkness; the greek form-motive could therefore easily be identified with the zoroastrian motive of light, and the motive of matter with the evil principle of darkness.

The enormous danger for the christian church, should this greek-zoroastrian groundmotive overrun the pure groundmotive of divine revelation, is evident. This could be but a struggle of life and death! It is in this battle that the dogma of the divine essential unity of the Father and the Son (Word of Logos) and soon also both of these with the Holy Spirit (as third person of the divine Being) is formulated. This foundational doctrine of the christian church was not meant as theological theory, but as a -- necessarily imperfect -- formulation of the living confession of the community of Christ in which the pure groundmotive sought expression. Specifically, it broke the dangerous influence of Gnosticism during the early centuries of the christian church and for theology it regained a purely scriptural point of departure.

Greek and eastern influence had caused this gnostic movement to fall back on acceptance of a duality in the origin of creation. It distinguished between a lower "Creator God" of the Old Testament and a higher "Redeemer God" of the New Testament. The former was the God of the Jews, who could not be perfect since at creation he had touched unclean matter. And just as greek philosophy had raised philosophic theory as the way to true knowledge of god far above belief, so also Gnosticism placed gnosis or contemplative theo-theory above the scriptural faith of the christian community.

Especially by upholding the unbreakable unity of the Old and New Testaments the christian church of these times could under guidance of God overcome the religious dualism that this Gnosticism had insinuated, and that drives a wedge between creation and redemption. But the greek groundmotive stealthily infiltrated christian thought in other ways.

The christian church was forced to fight for its life at the very introduction of the Gospel into the greek world of thought against the religious groundmotive of greek culture that threatened to overrun the scriptural one. Greek and eastern dualism would break apart the indivisible unity of the groundmotive of the Word. A wedge was being driven between creation and redemption, between the God of the Old and the God of the New Testament. And in line with greek philosophy the gnosis, the contemplative theoretical knowledge of God was recommended at the cost of the christian faith. This had been the dangerous achievement of "Christian Gnosticism". Earlier the apostle John had already been forced to warn against a forerunner of it, the sect of the Nicolaitans.

But next to this influence of the greek groundmotive is evident among the so-called apostolic churchfathers who had taken upon themselves the defence of the christian religion against greek thought. Especially the greek churchfathers found it hard to conceive of creation other than as divine formgiving to matter. And since they could not consider matter divine, they hesitated to recognize the Word by which all things were created and which became flesh in Jesus Christ as completely equal to God.

The word (Logos) was accordingly degraded to "semi-god", standing halfway between God and creature as "Mediator". Here too, contemplative theoretical knowledge of God, worked out in a philosophical theology, was valued above faith. In this way the christian religion tended to be denatured to a mere "higher moral ethic". Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross was relegated to the background in favour of the idea of the "divine teacher" who had supposedly preached a higher moral walk of life. Thus the christian religion was robbed of its indivisibility and radicality. Neither creation, nor fall, nor redemption were understood in the pure scriptural meaning, and even after the christian church had laid down the doctrine of the Trinity the influence of the greek religious groundmotive, by way of greek philosophy, still continued in the thought of the fathers of the church.

The orthodox direction of christian thought reached a high point in Augustine. Up until the thirteenth century he was to place his stamp on christiantheorizing and even since then he retained no mean influence. The groundmotive of his thinking is undoubtedly scriptural and after his conversion his powerful, talented intellect increasingly draw from this source. But christian theological development became confronted with philosophical problems whose solution could not be staved off. And insofar as the church fathers had been philosophically educated -- Augustine very much so -- they had lived themselves into the greek way of thinking, thus appropriating also its views of cosmic order, human nature, and human society. They now attempt to purify these conceptions of their pagan elements and to "fit" them to the christian religion. They failed to see, however, that these were rooted in a pagan religious groundmotive. They failed to see that this groundmotive did not merely control some elements, but that it dominated the entire foundation and elaboration. In other words, they failed to see that the groundmotive of the christian religion, by reason of its radical character, demands inner reformation*they sought accommodation; they sought to adapt pagan thought and divine Word-revelation.

And so the basis was laid for Scholasticism -- right up to the presentday it stands in the way of the complete unfolding in a truly reformational direction of the christian attitude of life and thought. The search is for a synthesis between the christian religion and greek thinking. And it was considered attainable if only philosophy (in the greek sense) could be made serviceable to christian theology. Augustine denies philosophy any autonomy, i. e. any independence with respect to the christian faith. That is to say: he does indeed recognize that the christian faith ought to lead philosophical thought, on pain of being dominated by some apostate faith. As such this idea is utterly scriptural, but the search for accommodation and synthesis led him to work it out in an unacceptable way: philosophy (not innerly reformed, but largely taken as it stood) was not to develop independently, but would have to be subjected to theological dogmatics. Philosophical problems were to be dealt with within a theological frame of reference. In this way only it would be possible to christianize philosophy. As if theological theory and christian religion were one and the same!

Influence of the greek conception of contemplative theory as the way to true knowledge of god is undeniable here. The famous Aristotle had raised metaphysics (philosophical theory concerning the first principles) which culminated in philosophical knowledge of god or "theology" to "queen of the sciences". She was to control all other sciences as her slaves. who were never allowed to contradict her. Augustine merely transplanted this greek notion of "philosophical theory" to christian theology as theory concerning the christian confession.

* also of one's scientific Weltbild and view of temporal life. Instead of reformation

Augustine did take the groundmotive of Word-revelation in its purity. But he could not radically work it out because by way of greek philosophy the greek groundmotive had a firm hold upon his entire world-and-life view. Consider how he reads the creation-account: the "earth without form and void" is, according to him, still unformed "matter" which he however -- opposed to the greek notion -- considers created by God. The relation of "soul and "body" in man he conceives completely within the framework of the greek form-matter motive. For him too the soul is an immortal substance marked by the faculty of theoretical thought. The "body" is the mere "material body", the vehicle of the "rational soul". Divine revelation concerning the religious root-unity of human existence is lost in the overgrowth of greek dualism. And especially in his teachings regarding "original sin" the greek matter-motive gains a dangerous practical influence on his life-stance. "Original sin" is sexual desire. That's why marriage could be no more than therapeutic in connection with unbridled sensual lust in sexual life -- a notion that has loaded down christian marriage-morality for centuries. At this point it was forgotten that original sin is seated in the heart and not in some temporal natural drive. The sexual drive as such came to be viewed as sinful and sexual asceticism was propagated as a higher christian way. This was not scriptural: it traces its lineage to Plato who explained psychical drives in terms of the workings of the principle of dark matter. And still, Augustine maintains the scriptural teaching of the radical fall, the depravity in the root of human nature.

The example clearly shows how even in this great father of the church the spiritual power of the greek groundmotive called forth dangerous counterforces against the groundmotive of the Word. It is not right to conceal this out of love and respect for Augustine. Insight into these matters where he is not to be followed need not detract from this love and respect. For, it is urgently necessary that we, openly and irrespective of person or station, choose sides in the issue: Reformation or Accommodation. This issue dominates the christian life also today. And not but the groundmotive of God's Word-revelation can give us the answer.