

THE IDEA OF REVELATION WITH KARL BARTH
AND WITH MARTIN HEIDEGGER.
THE COMPARABILITY OF THEIR PATTERNS
OF THOUGHT ¹⁾

To start with the difference, the last word of Karl Barth's *Kirchliche Dogmatik* is, "Er" (i. e. He, God), Heidegger's is, "Es", "Es selbst" (i. e. It, Itself). The difference between them is the difference between "He" and "It".

We will now add the similarity, from which follows the comparability. "He" is Mystery (Barth); "It" is Mystery (Heid.). The revelation is that of Mystery, which remains mysterious even during and after the revelation, nay, exactly then it is Mystery of which we cannot ultimately tell anything but that it is "He" or "It" respectively.

Their idea of revelation is intrinsically and of necessity determined by this concept of the Mystery of Being (*Seinsmysterium*) — with Barth God is being; and with Heidegger Being is divine. There is no revelation but revelation of Mystery exactly as being mysterious, there is no revelation but revelation of hiddenness, and therefore any revelation bears an intrinsic limit. Both of them characterize this limit as being eschatologic, and with both of them the eschatology is determined by this conception of revelation, being revelation of hiddenness.

Man, who is addressed by the revelation, which is fully independent of him, because its origin is to be found outside man and his 'faculties' ²⁾, is confronted with the bounds of Mystery as being essentially mysterious.

¹⁾ To avoid misunderstanding, it be emphasized that this essay deals only with Barth's and Heidegger's *pattern* of thought, not with the content of their systems.

²⁾ Heidegger's tenet is that there are three human modes of being,
a. *Das Dasein*, which is knowable, it is open to every-day experience as well as to scientific study.

b. *Existenz*, which refers to man's centre of freedom and self-determination, in which he escapes „das Dasein" and so is unknowable.

c. *Ek-sistenz* (lit. out-standing), i. e. man's inner life, determined by the "Seinsmysterium". It is a power outside man that rules him and even God. It acts on man's Existenz, and has nothing to do with "das Dasein".

With Heid. the essential determination, the ultimate limit of man, which makes him to be "der Mensch der Ek-sistenz" (man of Ek-sistenz), must be understood in the above sense. Exactly man is determined and limited when placed in the "Lichtung des Seins" (light of being), i. e. the light of revelation.

In Heidegger's view this is man's essential finiteness. This finiteness correlates with his theory of the mysterious character of Being, a mystery that constitutes also the essence of man; the essence of Being, i. e. the revelation of Being, is finite. ("Das Sein ist in seinem Wesen endlich").

With Barth, when this eschatology is the end of the matter no longer, then it is so, because he now set forth the divinity of the being of man's being, which implies "Aufhebung" (elevation) of man to the divine mode of being, though he has continually and carefully restricted this deification by means of his eschatology with which he set off in his "Roemerbrief" as a theory of crisis. In his "Römerbrief" the eschatology is conclusion, in his K.D. the eschatology is the penult. So the eschatology retains its critical function, but is subservient to the central idea of the triumph of grace, which does not only throw the light of the revelation of the Mystery as mystery on man, but which let man partake of the mystery of Being, and includes man in this mystery.

Heidegger has been a pure eschatologist so far, but Barth let the pure eschatologism give way to the idea of consumation, because he moved the borderline forward into God's being, with the aid of a speculation *upon the trinity*.

Barth urges passionately that Christian theology should stay outside the grip of philosophy, and absolutely outside that of the sphere of thought of any special science. This intrinsically necessitates that it is linked up with the thesis that the horizon of philosophic, scientific and non-scientific or 'natural' thought is confined. Just like Immanuel Kant made a separation between "Reine Vernunft" and "Praktische Vernunft", restricting the horizon of the former for the sake of the proper place and function of the „Praktische Vernunft“, so Barth has got a demarcation line between genuine theological thought *sarting from* man's "being in the revelation" and thought *about* revelation on the one hand, on the other hand the limited philosophical, scientific and "natural" thought and mode of existence, the radius of which does not touch the domain of revelation.

Heidegger shows a pattern of thought which essentially concurs

with Barth's. "Thought", which, to his opinion, is only possible within the revelation orbit of Being (Ek-sistenz), has its own horizon, which is unknown and unknowable to metaphysical, philosophical, scientific and non-scientific, natural thinking. In a sense, he holds, it is even impossible to think but for the "Thought of Being". There is not even scientific thought. Reason is called the most tenacious adversary of the "Denkende Vernunft". This "Vernunft", i. e. understanding, lies within the orbit of the revelation of Being, whereas metaphysics (philosophy) and the sciences are outside. Their horizon is limited.

As to this point, Barth's conception does not differ from Heidegger's in any respect.

Both of them appeal to the original meaning of the German word "Vernunft". "Vernunft", "verneht" (understands). It is essentially dependent of the occurrence of revelation („das Ereignis der Offenbarung"). It is essentially, and of principle, different from reason, of which man can dispose at his pleasure and in his own way.

The similarity of conception is still greater. Barth is moved by a passionate will for rehabilitation of revelation as revelation, and correspondingly, of faith as "Vernunft", i. e. as understanding revelation.

Heidegger's deepest intention is rehabilitation of "das Denken" (thought), which hinges on the revelation of Being, and which is a free gift - the same as faith is with Barth — and which is not, and never can be, man's proper own. Both of them are firmly opposing the idea of a religious a-priority like many German idealists adhered to. For the same reason both of them are also firmly opposing the theory of holiness value to which man were connected by an autonomous "Akt-Erlebnis". (act experience). For so the necessity, the independency, the freedom and the occurrence of revelation would suffer; so revelation would be no longer new, surprising, not an event. That is to say, revelation would lose its revealing character, unveiling of things veiled, discovering of things covered, revealing of things hidden. Subject of revelation is Being, 'He' — Barth — 'It', 'Itself' — Heidegger —. Revelation is a "Geschichte" (a continuous happening; the usual translation, history, won't do here, because the derivation of this word more or less implies some account), a "Seinsgeschichte" (a continuous happening of Being) — Heid. — a „Gottesgeschichte" (a continuous happening of God) — Barth —. Therefore, according to both of them, it holds true that revelation is outside the bounds of

"humanity". It has no connection with the knowable humanity of man like it is known by philosophical or scientific thought. Barth's "No" to Brunner's eristic theology is wholeheartedly shared by Heidegger. Reading his "Humanismus-brief" will suffice to establish the identity of their pattern of thought. "Thought" with Heid. and "Faith" with Barth goes on beyond any human possibility, transcending the familiar, common humanity of man. So, with Barth, no line is running from philosophy to theology, from reason to revelation, from self-knowledge to knowledge of God.

And with Heidegger, it is the same. No single line runs from reason to Vernunft, from metaphysics to "das denkendere Denken" (more thoughtful thought), from Dasein (being) to "das Denken-in-der Ek-sistenz in der Lichtung des Seins" (thought of ek-sistence which occurs in the light of revelation). Reason, the sciences and the natural attitude of man are degeneration phenomena outside the orbit of the revelation of Being; they are revelationally blind and revelationally deaf³).

Both of them deny the right of any critical authority opposing the revelation as they conceive it. For this revelation is its own critic. Revelation itself does not enter the sphere of human experience, or, if it does, it does so in disguise.

The history of human experience goes on within the horizon of the limited humanity.

Both of them render anything within this horizon to the revelationless reason and (or) existence. The 'History' within the sphere of experience, accessible to the professional historian, to their opinion, is quite different from the "Geschichte" (happening) of the revelation of Mystery. Thus rationalism and subjectivism have free play in the former sphere. They think it does not matter, because revelation is beyond the grasp of reason anyway. Though both of them are very anti-rationalistic, they don't attack the rationalistic, and the underlying Renaissancistic, pre-conceptions as far as this limited sphere is concerned. Last century's rationalistic theology and philosophy are left free play; its methods and results in this narrow domain are accepted by Barth. No less Heid- agrees that rationalistic theory and rationalistic methods in the sciences are relatively right. But neither of them makes this concession but for decrying the self-same

³) In other words, their pattern of thought is a-cosmistic.

rationalism. The sciences cannot 'think'. They have no authority in the domain of the revelation of Being. Even, they have not the least surmise of this revelation (Heid.). Correspondingly Barth denies that general scientific thought and philosophy have authority and power to deal with the very special domain of revelational history. And it is only this domain that matters, like Heid.'s "thought of Being" is exclusively real thought. "Die Sprache" (speech), which is understood through "Thought" with Heid., has nothing in common with any language a student of linguistics or of language history may across, and which he is qualified to judge about. And with Barth the Word of revelation is so much exclusively a Word of God that this Word is unknowable and unsearchable to the linguist and to any 'natural' man, as it is only understandable in the special existential and supernatural way. Consequently, both hold that the Bible as such is not the Word of God. If this were the case, it would smash both Barth's and Heid.'s ideas of revelation. So it cannot be. In both concepts the idea of revelation has such force that the Bible *cannot* be the Word of God. Essentially the Bible rests within the sphere of the dominion of man, of his little existence, and of his degenerated reason; it is *at his disposal*.

We come across still another analogy between Heid.'s and Barth's ideas of revelation. Revelation is revelation only for so long as no man can dispose of it. Which is positively, it is only revelation, if it can dispose of and decide on man's 'being'.

With both, the concept of 'Being' is the determining background of this concept of revelation, that never is at the disposal of any man before, during or after its occurrence. God is never at anyone's disposal. God's 'subjectivity' (Barth) excludes this for ever. 'Being' is never at anyone's disposal; 'Being' either refuses to reveal itself, or may offer itself for revelation, (Heid.), which is to be determined by the power of 'Being' only. Man, confronted with 'Being' is utterly unmighty. With both, it is just 'Being's grace', when 'Being' grants revelation.

In this respect, too, they are obviously moved by their repulsion of rationalism and Renaissance. "Knowledge is power", the triumphant creed of Renaissance and rationalism, is admitted by both of them. But they countervail it, claiming that the knowledge and power at man's disposal are very restricted, because his power of knowledge is confined within the horizon of the "natural things", of "das Seiende" (the existent things), or, the paltry existence, and does not proceed

to the true and only Essence, i. e. Being and ek-sisting in the orbit of Being (Heid.) or, Being and revelation of Being (Barth). They equal in anti-subjectivism and anti-rationalism, both taking a quite irrationalistic view. That is to say, they got to the bottom of subjectivism and rationalism and now attach to them a legitimate, be it — in their opinion — inconsequential function, with which it, unapproached, may exercise full authority in inferior things.

The unescapable consequence of the above is, that according to Barth the true theological knowledge is incomparable with any other possible human knowledge, having neither a measure nor a mode of being ⁴⁾, common to both — all to the surpassing glory of theology, and to the detriment of the other human modes of knowing, and that likewise it holds good for Heidegger that revelational thinking and the thought of Being have no measure or mode of being ⁵⁾, in common with any other forms of human knowledge — and such to the surpassing glory of the 'thought of Being' and to the disparagement of any other mode of knowing.

Consequently Barth is excluding that theological knowledge may ever be object of general theory of knowledge. It is beyond that. The general theory of knowledge has no knowledge of revelation, neither of "Him"; it is godless, and must needs be so. That is why such theory cannot determine on any possibility or ground of revelational knowledge. No general theory of knowledge can be included in the legitimate prolegomena of ecclesiastical dogma. It has nothing, literally nothing, to do with this dogma. Theologic, revelational knowledge is sui generis, it is something very special, something exclusive. This special knowledge is no species of the common genus of human knowledge, but is absolutely apart from this genus. Anything general, and consequently the general theory of knowledge is of little moment when compared with the very special theological theory of knowledge that matches the very special theological knowledge. Anything general is only relatively general, and being relatively general it is less momentous. So a general theory of knowledge is not general at all, and it cannot decide anything on possibility, nature, content and purpose of revelational knowledge. Revelational knowledge cannot even be dealt with in this theory of knowledge. For there it would

⁴⁾ Knowledge is personified here.

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appear as a mere particular case within the frame of generally possible knowledge, and therefore general knowledge cannot recognize the special revelation or the knowledge of this revelation. The same as it cannot comprehend God or the knowledge about God. Thus, anyone proving God to exist, or not to exist, by means of such theory proves only that he proves nothing about God, and that he himself does not know anything of God. Otherwise he would not have dared wanting to prove anything about God. Anyway, he does not speak about God. God as Origin is an idol according to Barth. So atheism is innocent, since it is powerless and worthless. For it has no authority.

Heid.'s method is quite the same. His concept of Being, too, is the concept of the Exclusive, and general knowledge as such is unable to deal sensefully with base, limit, content or purpose of the revelation of Being; for this revelation and revelational knowledge (Thought) is not a particular species of the genus of human knowledge, neither part of the horizon of human knowledge. The revelation of Being is something special, breaking through all known and knowable categories of knowledge. The theory of the knowledge of Being cannot be subordinated to some theory of general knowledge. Therefore, according to Heid., Nietzsche's nihilism was finally innocent, since it was powerless and worthless. For it had no authority as far as the problem of Being was concerned.

Now we come to a, as we think, extremely important parallel in their pattern of thought; i. e. their idea of the Special as being the Exclusive, the Incomparable, The Unique, the Surprising, the Unexpected, the Unpredictable, the Essence of Being and of the revelation of Being as well. With both of them this idea is predominant. According to Barth God is so much special that even his unknowableness is unknowable to us, and the knowledge of the unknowableness of his unknowableness may be only imparted to us by his revelation. According to Heid., Being is so much unknowable that, in the possible case of absence of revelation, man is forced to turn exclusively to "das Seiende" (the existent things), including himself, as to the master of the existent, which is a state of oblivion of Being that will only finish, if Being denies its revelation no longer. Thus, Nietzsche did not understand his own nihilism. In Heid.'s opinion, he just could not understand it because he lived in the dark period

of "Seinsverweigerung" (Being's denial) and thus he had no possibility of knowing that mankind in his day was condemned to surrender to the futility that the existent as such really is.

With Barth, philosophical agnosticism as such cannot support the revelational theory that God is unknowable outside the sphere of divine Self-revelation, and with Heid. Nietzsche's nihilism cannot support Heid.'s because Nietzsche could not know the ontologic difference between Being and the existent, and thus he could not understand the essence of nihilism.

In Barth's concurrent pattern of thought, all natural knowledge of God, natural theology and the theory of analogia entis must needs be deceptive, as in these systems the knowledge about God would be based on a *general* idea, and God, neither his revelation, would not be exclusively special. The same pattern of thought, with Heid., causes all "onto-theology" to be false, because it cannot take into account the special, exclusive nature of the mystery of Being and of the revelation of this mystery. Both fight natural theology, implying the Aristotelian idea of God in Thomism, and general revelation with the same weapons. For both start from the a-prioristic dogma of the unique incomparable and absolutely mysterious nature of Being, of "Er" and "Es-selbst" respectively.

Consequently their idea of revelation is primarily the idea of special revelation from a special Archè, and this specialty degrades all things general to secondary, relative, limited, subsidiary, worthless and incompetent things. Like in S. Kierkegaard's system the category of the Individual, so with Barth and Heid. the category of the Special, as being the Exclusive, plays a dominant rôle.

So it follows that truths, supposed to be eternal, perpetual, independent of history, are never revealed. The basic ideas of Rationalism were conceived as being perpetual, super-historical, eternal; in other words they attached to them general validity, general rationality and unchangeableness. Barth and Heidegger, on the other hand, like to oppose the rationalistic idea of eternity and perpetuality to that of special temporariness, the idea of the general rationality to that of special reality, that of general obligation to that of special validity, the idea of the eternal Truth to that of the special historic truth, and likewise the idea of a general, natural revelation, lying within the grasp of the rational faculty for knowing, to that of a special, non-natural revelation that must first provide man with a proper organ of knowledge before he can acquire exclusive, revealed knowledge.

Barth's as well as Heidegger's idea of revelation must be grasped from this anti-rationalistic and irrationalistic way of thought. They may be summarized in the one word, Special. But they are special in a special sense, in an exclusive sense surpassing any idiomatic scope, and applying the word special in such very special sense that it cannot be but a mere pointer, and one that points deficiently for all that, to the essential sense of this speciality. Revealing revelation, here, becomes the transcendent marginal idea of this "special theology" (of Barth) and of this special theory of Being (of Heidegger).

No wonder the supremacy of their irrationalistic idea of revelation leads up to the consequence that the "special" revelation and revelational knowledge disjoint man (the 'general' one), and must needs rob him of all his (general) securities. First of all the security of human self-affirmation, the clearest elaboration of which is found, as they think, in Cartesius' Archimedean point, the 'Cogito'. Any philosophy hinging on this 'cogito' is the other extreme of their theology or thought respectively hinging on revealing revelation. According to Barth, "I am," to have some sense, must follow from "God is" and should be equally special as God's being and revelation are. On the other hand, man is deprived of any other security, and he even holds forth that "our" theology should be "de-secured". Of course it should, for if not, how could his idea of revelation possibly function fully with its special specialty? That is why Barth makes out knowledge of faith, granted to us through revelation, to be something like a flash, degrading to worthlessness the next moment, for conceived as achievement it would constitute an unacceptable contrariety to revealing revelation. Consequently, knowledge of faith should be made eschatologic and dynamic.

In the same way, and moved by an identical idea of revelation, Heidegger let the revelation of fear deprive man of any security, the scientific security, the every-day-life security, the paltry-existential security, all that exists withdraws from him, so does his own self, as "Dasein" (existence) by the agent of the "Nichtung des Nichts" (nullifying action of Nothingsness). Only in this way Barth can let his theology be "pure theology", and Heid. can let his thought of Being be pure "thought". The marginal idea of revealing revelation won't let them be otherwise. Only in this way revelation will be revelation of the hiddenness, only so the hiddenness does not evade,

neither the flashing revelation stop to be revealing. Only so the Special will stay to be specially special.

It is self-evident that so faith and revelation come to stay in holy isolation. It is self-evident also to Barth. And this being so implies that e. g. his argument against Jean-Paul Sartre must needs be concluded by the statement that Sartre cannot possibly know what Nothingness, and what nought is, because Sartre does not know anything of the speciality of the revealing revelation. Barth's argumentation does not touch the actual tenets of Sartre's existentialism at all, though he pretends to refute them seriously. Barth's point, that the atheist Sartre does not really deny God, may seem new and surprising, on reconsideration we may see that he started from this very presupposition. Heid., basing himself on his recent "Ek-sistenz"-idea is likewise withdrawing thoroughly from Sartre's existentialism, disproving it (rightly) as pure subjectivism. Barth's praise, that Sartre is a "manly thinker", is also a consequence of his idea of revelation, as Sartre, whilst not knowing anything of revelation and its exclusive specialty, in spite of this wants to endure revelationless human life undismayed.

It is worthwhile to compare Barth's argumentation against Sartre with Heidegger's comment on Nietzsche in his "Holzwege" and in his "Was heiszt Denken?". Then we may notice that Heid. in a same protecting, well-meaning, appreciating, but nevertheless predetermined way dismisses Nietzsche's nihilism seriously. Assuming a gracious as well as merciless attitude of superiority, he disposed of Nietzsche in advance by means of his own idea of revealing revelation.

For, Barth's idea of revelation is his ivory tower, — precisely like Heid.'s "Thought of Being" is his ivory tower — from where he understands everybody, whilst no one can understand him. The unapproachable one.

On the other hand, one could claim an equal right, be it an equally relative one, to speak of affinity between Barth's revelational theology and Sartre's subjectivistic liberty-existentialism. And Heidegger exalts Nietzsche far above his predecessors, for having almost touched the edge of the revealing revelation, be it quite unconsciously, as Heidegger asserts. Moreover, Barth's and Heidegger's fight against what must be pseudo-revelation or distortion of revelation in their eyes, against general natural theology and the natural theory of Being, can have only preparatory significance to them, because Sartre and Nietzsche broke already with a false idea of Being, or, a false idea

of God respectively, and in this relation (connection) asserted the one, that "God" — like he was known to him, and thus a pseudo-God — "is dead" and the other "there is no God". Thanks to their demolition work the empty space can now more easily be filled with the idea of special revelation. Be it indirectly, they did pave the way for the new, revealed idea of revelation, though they did it unknowingly and incomprehensibly and negatively.

This means that both Barth and Heidegger got to the bottom of nihilism and atheism, and are now fighting nihilism and atheism with their new, revealed idea of revelation, but it is a sham fight, for they don't attack actual nihilism and atheism. The nihilism and atheism they attack are negative presuppositions of their new idea of Revelation. This nihilism and this atheism are negative concepts of their own make that must be met, and are met, by their idea of Revelation, i. e. their idea should keep clear of Sartre's and Nietzsche's criticism; it should transcend this criticism in such a way that, on the one hand, this criticism is acceptable to the full — and in this sense it suits their new thought for demolishing the 'old' thought — but, on the other hand, the new idea of revelation should be unassailable.

Their idea of revelation ought to meet the requirement that it be impregnable to nihilistic and atheistic criticism. The idea of the specific speciality is to ward it off. And it works. It is the safe-guard, the security of their systems.

The inevitable consequences of the above are some more identical points. Both of them apply the idea of transcending in an anti-subjectivistic way, which of course is the other extreme of the religious a-priority of Renaissance religiosity, so that transcending is not a particular mode of the human (subjective and autonomous) existence like Sartre and Jaspers hold, and like even Heidegger himself did before, in his "Sein und Zeit", but so that transcending is granted to man from elsewhere, and so that he transcends his own self, that he is being transcended to another mode of being. "Thought of Being" and the "Parousie of Being" are either bestowed on him or are denied to him (Heidegger).

The belief in the revelation is an attribute of God's subjectivity, and is granted to man concurrently with, and in, another mode of being differing from that of his created „humanity", in the divine mode of being which transcends any creatureliness (Barth).

To stand in "Ek-sistenz" is, being transcended beyond one's own

existence, being taken into the world of "die Transzendenz — schlechthin" (mere transcendency) (Heidegger). Theology is theology of God's doings, a "Gottesgeschichte" (God's continuous happening) (Barth); the theory of "being" is a theory of the "history of being" of the "Essence" of Being, the essence of which is the continuous happening of Being (Heidegger).

Theology cannot provide a fundament for a "believing", "Christian" world conception and way of life (Barth). "Thought of Being" does not import at all in matters of theory and real life (Heidegger). So Barth's secularisation of the "world" and Heid.'s profanation of the existent run parallel. Both of them mention the relative independency of the sciences and (anthropologic) philosophy. For, both keep humanity qua talis out of the dimension of the revelation and of the revelational religion (which is called faith by Barth, and thought by Heid.). This domain, taken on its own merits, is apart from Being (Heid.), and it shows — taken as such, and considered as such — no analogy with the world of God's doings (Barth). Barth's analogia relationis, or, analogia operationis, as he conceives it, is, by itself, not showing any analogy, which has obvious consequences for his "ethics", e. g. involving the indissolubleness of "Marriage". Grace does not "recreate" nature, which is colonized by grace, according to Barth, whereas dwelling in the "Huld" (benevolence) of Being's proximity does not exert any tangible influence upon any science, culture or behaviour. (Heid.)

The world is worldly, and this veil of worldliness means that it necessarily cloaks any revelation of God, and that it renders the relation of any "Gestalt" (form) of revelation to its "Gehalt" (content) to be a paradox. The "Gegenwurf" (rebound) of Being inevitably flings "Dasein" (human existence) back into "das Seiende" (the world of the existent things), which is, as such, void of Being (Heidegger).

All philosophic insight has its origin — unknown to philosophy itself — in „theology" (Barth). All philosophy and any science originates from "Thought of Being" (Heid.). But according to both, philosophy cannot possibly have any reminiscence of its own origin, neither can it trace the way back (this latter mainly in opposition to Hegel).

The theologic anthropology unsettles any philosophic anthropology, it is the only true anthropology, nay, it is surpassing anthropology as it is the theory of "das Sein des Seienden" (being of the existing

men) (Barth). "Thought of Being" in "Ek-sistence" unhinges all philosophy and any science itself being the only true anthropology, nay, surpassing anthropology, for Thought of Being is the "essence" of man (Heidegger).

Being of existing man is his (non-created, transcendent) divineness, granted to man by grace (Barth). "Being" of "existence" is "Being there" (Da-sein), which means being "in There", i. e. in the grace of the Gleam of "Being" (Lichtung des Seins), by which the existence is liberated from there-being-ness (Da-seiendheit) (Heidegger).

The revelation is a choice of God, a decision of God, which takes "time", and has got time (Barth). The revelation is the "essence", the "Being" of being, and so, an "event" in which Being gives itself (Es gibt) in a limited way to "das Dasein" (those being here), by its own free will (Heidegger).

Only in the continuous happening of grace, man is truly "happening", and only so he is happening (Barth).

Only in the "Gleam of Being" man is truly "happening", and only so he is happening, no history, and surpassing the state of being fallen away in the world of "die illustrierte Zeitung" (The illustrated Times) (Heidegger).

Orthodoxy, believing in formulated truths, intrudes on the continuous happening of God's revelation (Barth). Faith, because it provides answers, is intrusion on the freedom of Being's revelation, because the attitude of "merely asking" fails (Heidegger).

This fundamental identity of their ideas of revelation, like pointed out above, is based on their fundamental anti-subjectivistic and anti-rationalistic views, whatever other differences there may be in their pattern of thought, even where the idea of revelation is concerned.

The nature of their basic views is not only anti-subjectivistic and anti-rationalistic. If this were so, their idea of revelation would not essentially differ from the existentialistic idea of revelation like that developed by K. Jaspers, for his speculative theory of myth and "Chiffre" (figure) attributes finally the power of revelation to free human existence autonomously reading the "Chiffre-Schrift" (figure — writ).

Heidegger and Barth join in their confutation of such a subjectivistic view. They are anti-subjectivistic. They want to break away from the religiosity of the new-Protestantism (Barth), and from that of the Renaissance, which is the religious adoration of the humanity of

autonomous man. To Heidegger it is self-evident that he must consequently break away from Christianity too, at least from the Christian onto-theology, and above all from the Reformation with its interest in subjective, personal security of salvation.

To Barth it is self-evident that, doing so, he opens up a way to a real reformational theory of revelation, as opposed to Renaissance, Roman-Catholicism, and Protestant orthodoxy.

What fails is their confrontation in connection with this point just now. What is the reason that Heidegger arrives at neo-paganism along this path, and that Barth, going the same route, does not even surmise the possibility of neo-paganism? What else could it be than that they root in the same soil, that unconsciously, they start from a same a-priori conviction that cannot be justified by their irrationalistic and anti-subjectivistic way of thought, and which conviction would break to pieces on the necessary pre-suppositions of their pattern of thought?

But is it not consequently proving that they, who are children as well as guides of the irrationalistic spirit of our day, are uncritical towards this spirit, and that they uncritically unite with this spirit, one from his neo-paganistic stand-point, the other from the Christianizing one?

Anyway, from this comparison and this fundamental comparability we may draw the conclusion that the pattern of thought, after which Barth drew his "Christian theologic" idea of revelation, has no single defence against an absolutely neo-paganistic religiosity. It fails wholly as a weapon against unbelief. His "systematic theology as apologetics" is unmighty to exclude neo-paganistic religiosity. As apologetic weapon it will work as a boomerang towards those that handle it.

S. U. ZUIDEMA

Note.

For finding the references of Barth's idea of revelation see my essay "Theologie en Wijsbegeerte in de 'Kirchliche Dogmatik'" van Karl Barth.

Philosophia Reformata, XVIII, pp. 77—138, J. H. Kok N.V., Kampen, and for Heidegger's see my essay "De Plaats der Theologie in het Denken van Martin Heidegger", Vox theologica, Assen, Juli 1955.