

to patristic thought the medieval procedure of combining theology and metaphysics. I would grant that some such combination is inevitable in the long run; but I would urge that prior problems have to be resolved before a theologically acceptable metaphysics can be thought out and, further, that a modern cast of thought is needed before the stages can be successfully distinguished.

In relative terms the Christian position was intermediate between the polytheism of the pagans and the solitary monotheism of the Jews. But this amounted to a doctrine that the Father was God, the Son was God, the Father was not the Son, and there was but one God. Religiously this was mystery. Philosophically it was contradiction or, at least, paradox.

Now not only the contradiction but also the paradox and the mystery as well can be eliminated in any of three ways. One may claim (1) that while the Son is God and the Father is not the Son, still Father and Son are not one God but two, or (2) that while there is but one God and the Son is God, still the Son is the Father and so God must be one, or (3) that while the Father is not the Son and there is but one God, still the Son is not God. The first position is ditheism, the second pure monotheism, and the third adoptionism or Arianism. And each of the three may be advanced either explicitly or in some implicit form.

It happens that a number of orthodox Christian writers honestly expounded views that turned out to be unorthodox; and this happened all the more commonly when spontaneously people took for granted philosophic views that were incompatible with Christian doctrine. In fact, it happened not only in the antenicene period but also continues to happen

today. So it is a matter worthy of some consideration.

Spontaneously then human beings fall into error about what is meant by reality. For they begin life before they learn to speak. During that infancy they learn a good deal but since as yet they do not speak their knowledge is in a very strict sense tacit knowledge. Moreover, as they learn to speak, bit by bit they come to correct notions and assumptions they had tacitly developed. But a thorough scrutiny involves a thorough revision, and a thorough revision amounts to a total reconstruction. The infant's world is a world mediated by sense and sensitive consciousness. The adult's world is a world mediated by an integration of conscious intentionality on the levels of sense, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility. An adult may not live in his world as an infant in his. Adults of one place and time may not live as adults of quite different places and times. Not only does knowledge advance, but more radically the criteria relevant to the advance of knowledge become better known, more accurately applied, more extensively implemented. Hence for an adult to live on the level of his time and place he has to be a philosopher, and a philosophy that is sound enough for one time and place may prove unsound in another.

What the infant comes tacitly to take for granted is that reality is in space and time. What he learns by himself and through others constitutes his store of common sense. Even when intelligence enlarges his world, still it does not do so without an appeal to data of sense or of consciousness.

it does not advert to the possibility that negative comparative judgments at times signify real distinctions; and the absence of real distinctions results in the consubstantiality and monophysitism of which Wilson speaks.

Eric Voegelin is correct inasmuch as he discerns in a mythical context a serious intention in the myth. Amon was unknown since his characteristic lay beyond the usual appellations of divinity; he was not the god of a place, of Bethel or Memphis, the god of a person, of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or Laban, the god of tribal or national worship, the god of human affect or activity as Venus or Mars, not the Platonic demiurge as distinct from the Platonic subsistent idea of Goodness itself. Still such being "beyond" was his characteristic, not only negative but primarily positive; for he was the source of the dignity and power of the lesser deities.

With deutero-Isaiah the lesser deities are reduced to man-made idols. With the Law and the Prophets and Hebrew historiography there is clearly proclaimed Justin's "one who created and sustains us." With the remission of sins through Jesus we meet our Father who not only creates and sustains us but also restores to dignity and power the repenting human conscience.

Grammatical and Metaphysical Christology

One of the later turns of linguistic analysis conceives its role and function as a grammar, if you will a higher ^{philosophical} grammar, that assures or at least seeks the clarity of otherwise puzzling statements (Burrell 1979, Index). I find it a very happy turn inasmuch much modern opinion is prone to attribute

between the recourse to grammatical technique in Greek conciliar thought and, on the other hand, the heading into metaphysical systems that arose in medieval theology.

In both periods trinitarian and christological issues were ventilated. In both there were employed terms that have been given a technical meaning or even have a technical origin. But in the medieval period terms tended to be defined and definitions moved towards systematization. In the patristic period explanations of meaning are appeals to usage (persons are what there are three of in the Trinity; natures are what there are two of in Christ) or the product of reflection on usage (the Father and Son are consubstantial because what ever is true of the Father also is true of the Son except that the Son is not the Father).

Again, Stoicism in the Fathers from Clement of Rome to Clement of Alexandria has been studied (Spanneut), but it seems to amount to a varying affinity with a twofold source. The nobility of Stoic ethics had an appeal for Christians in the age of the martyrs, while the materialism of the Stoics is reflected in the naive realism of ecclesiastical writers whose childhood realism ("real" refers to the already out there now) had not been purified by philosophic reflection. Similarly, the dependence of Origen on Middle Platonism is a common theme but I find it difficult not to agree with Hal Koch's contention: "It cannot be brought out strongly enough that Origen himself was not a metaphysician in the proper sense of the word" (19).

between the markedly grammatical significance of Greek conciliar and patristic thought and, on the other hand, the metaphysical achievements and aberrations of medieval and subsequent theologians.

This difference, of course, bears on the history of dogma, not indeed the whole of it, but a component part. As Augustine, so also Anselm urged that, if one is to understand, one must begin by believing. Vincent of Lerins pointed out the consequence: understanding with wisdom and knowledge develop over time; but the beliefs that are more fully understood are unchanged. (DS 3020). A history of unchanging belief begins, for instance, with René Arnou's contrast of Christian belief both with pagan polytheism and the solitary monotheism of the Jews. But a history of developing wisdom, understanding, and knowledge follows belief through its changing cultural settings. It is to such interaction of religious understanding and culture that a study of horizons and transpositions is relevant. So our starting point may be found in Voegelin's remark: "If the community of the Gospel had not entered the culture of the time by entering its life of reason, it would have remained an obscure sect and probably would have disappeared from history; we know the fate of Judeo-Christianity" (Voegelin 1971, 60).

heresies were the first fruits of such entries into the culture of the time (Bauser) so that only ultimately there resulted the clarification of a negative transposition. Still our immediate concern is the manner in which the clarification was effected. Was it an appeal to the meaning of ordinary language? Or did it consist in adopting and adapting some metaphysical view of reality?