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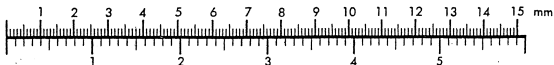
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THE THEOLOGY OF VLADIMIR NIKOLAIEVIC LOSSKY:
AN EXPOSITION AND CRITIQUE

- by -

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ABSTRACT

Part IChapter 1. Introduction: the Man and His Work

p.1

The intellectual life of Russia at the turn of the century was marked by a lively interest in religious questions, and, in some circles, a cautious rapprochement between the intelligentsia and the Orthodox Church. Vladimir Lossky was born into an academic environment which looked more sympathetically upon traditional Christianity than had previously been usual: and the fact of his being brought up in a household both academic and (articulately and critically) Christian tends to set him apart from the religious thinkers of his father's generation (Bulgakov, Berdyaev, and others) who had discovered, or rediscovered, Orthodox faith in adult life after experiencing disillusion with radicalism or Idealism, or both. Lossky's first major theological essay was, in fact, directed against the ethos of Russian 'religious philosophy', especially its preoccupation with the Wisdom of God (Sophia) as a cosmic principle. In this, as in later works, he pleads for a theology rooted in the historical experience of the Church and free from philosophical systems. His commitment to the 'historical experience' of the Church is reflected in his lifelong allegiance to the Patriarchate of Moscow as the only canonically authoritative Russian ecclesial body. His thinking on the relation between Church and culture was clarified in his experiences in the Second War, which also brought him into close association with several Catholic theologians. It was in this context that he first attempted a synthetic presentation of Orthodox dogma in his best-known work, the 'Essai sur la théologie mystique de l'Eglise d'Orient'. In the post-war

period he continued his professional work as a mediaevalist at the Sorbonne, but continued to write on theological questions, developing, in particular, a distinctive approach to the concept of the human person and to the catholicity of the Church. He was much involved in ecumenical gatherings in France and England, and, in Paris, up to the time of his death, assisted in the training of clergy for the Patriarchal jurisdiction (though his hopes for the development of a western-rite group were frustrated).

Chapter 2: The Debate with Bulgakov

p.32.

Superficially, Lossky's theology has much in common with that of Sergei Bulgakov, especially in their attitudes to tradition and catholicity, and Lossky's hostility to Bulgakov is surprising. However, a brief examination of Bulgakov's thought reveals its extensive dependence upon the notion of 'Sophia', the Divine Wisdom, as an all-embracing cosmic reality, both divine and human - a notion which Lossky rejects absolutely as deterministic, destructive of a proper sense of both divine and human freedom. He also condemns Bulgakov's Christology: the idea of 'Godmanhood', fundamental to Bulgakov's theology, jeopardises the reality of Christ's humanity, and tends to reduce the Incarnation to a manifestation of cosmic process. The basic theme of Lossky's critique is that Bulgakov's system, in Christology, ecclesiology, and Trinitarian theology, is dominated by metaphysical presuppositions incompatible with orthodox belief: it is insufficiently apophatic, too preoccupied with concepts. Lossky's own theology shows a marked and conscious reaction away from this kind of conceptualism.

Chapter 3. The Via Negativa

p.64.

The 'negative way' is not, for Losaky, merely a dialectical step in theology, a 'corrective' to affirmative theology: it is the essential ground of all theology. Theology begins in personal encounter with a personal God, an encounter which cannot be expressed in concepts; negative theology, which declines to speak of God in concepts, most closely reflects this basic reality. It is the *μετάνοια*, the conversion and self-sacrifice, of the intellect. The Greek patristic language about meeting God in 'darkness' is simply a 'dogmatic metaphor' for this experience, complementing, not contradicting the imagery of 'light': darkness and light together here represent the experience of transcending the sphere of the intellect. The history of early Christian spirituality shows a gradual movement towards a via media between intellectualism and agnosticism, a position which allows for both the absolute incomprehensibility of God in seipso, and His accessibility to man. This via media is expressed most fully by Gregory Palamas, but is anticipated by the Cappadocians, pseudo-Dionysius, and Maximus. It envisages God 'transcending His transcendence', expressing His unknowable 'essence' in His 'energies', His manifestation in the world. God's self-transcendence calls forth man's 'ecstasy'. The personal encounter of man with God is a mutual movement of self-giving: man is nearest to God and so most fully God-like in this movement. And since God is always fully personal, man is therefore most personal in the act of self-renunciation: negative theology alone is adequately 'personalist'.

Chapter 4. Imago Trinitatis

p.94.

Man is in the image of God because he is personal: he cannot be reduced to his 'nature', to what is common, repeatable and conceptualisable. He is more than an individual of a species; and this

constitutes him in the image of God's trinitarian life, in which individuality is perfectly transcended in full communion. The Church, in which man realises his capacity for communion can also be called imago Trinitatis: it is a plurality of persons, each called and sanctified in a unique manner by the Spirit, sharing one nature, the humanity which Christ has restored and 'deified'. This 'trinitarian' life is what is designated by the term 'catholicity', the existence of the whole in the part. Losky's method in discussing the theology of personality is resolutely Christocentric: the impossibility of interpreting ἰνόςτης as 'individual' is established by an appeal to the inadmissibility of so interpreting it in Christology. Losky's appeal to the Fathers in support of this thesis is, however, problematic: his concern to include the body in the imago Dei, and his understanding of ἰνόςτης both lack a clear and consistent patristic foundation. Although he does genuinely build upon certain Greek patristic ideas, he is, as a 'personalist', essentially and inevitably - a 'post-Augustinian'. The ambiguity of the patristic evidence raises the serious question of how far Losky is justified in criticising Western theology (as he does) according to allegedly patristic criteria.

Chapter 5: The Debate with the West (I)

p.129.

Losky presupposes the unity of Christian theology; if one doctrinal topic is infected with error, the whole theological system is poisoned. In the West, it is the doctrine of the double procession of the Spirit, the filioque, which is the basic error: it suggests that the Spirit is somehow less personal than the Son, rejects the patristic idea that the Father is the sole source or 'cause' of the other persons, and so makes the unity of the Trinity reside not in the person of the Father but in a super-personal 'essence', that which is common to Father

and Son. Western theology opts for a divine essence, in place of the living God of revelation: it is as much in thrall to philosophy as Bulgakov's system. Consequently, it is consistently impersonalist, not only in Trinitarian theology, but in its ecclesiology, its doctrine of grace, and its ascetical theology. Protestantism is as much conditioned as Catholicism by the basic assumption implicit in the filioque that real communion, sharing (in some sense) of substance, is impossible between God and man, because both are encapsulated in their 'essences'. Historically, Losky's critique is often inaccurate and unjust; but he makes a good case, nonetheless, for the dominance, in much of Western theology, of conceptualism and impersonalism. There is little to correspond to Losky's profound apophaticism and 'kenotic' ideal of personality.

Chapter 6: The Debate with the West (II)

p.157.

For Losky, the Palamite distinction of 'essence' from 'energy' is one of the most important safeguards in Eastern theology against a philosophical essentialism. The scholastic's rejection of Palamism is of a piece with his defence of the filioque. Palamism asserts that God communicates Himself fully to creation in His 'energies', although His 'essence' remains incomprehensible and imparticipable; but the energies are not merely relative to creation, since God eternally acts, is eternally *ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ*. Closer examination reveals a good deal of logical strain in Losky's language on this subject, traceable to some serious philosophical confusions in Palamas himself and his precursors. There is, in particular, a certain vacillation between a (broadly) Platonic and a (broadly) Aristotelean understanding of *οὐσία*. Losky seems, at least in later years, to have been aware of some of these confusions, and attempts a cautious restatement, connecting the energies

far more closely with God's personal act of self-transcendence and self-renunciation. And this leads him to modify and clarify his ideas on the filioque, allowing a sense in which it may be affirmed with references to the complete mutual dependence of all three persons in their activity towards each other, and towards creation.

Conclusion to Part I

p.189.

The central theme in Lossky's theology is a particular model of personality, divine and human, as 'kenotic', fulfilled in absolute self-giving. While this idea has some roots in patristic thought, it is quite clearly indebted to other and later sources. It is therefore desirable to turn to a brief examination of Lossky's immediate background in Russian philosophy, identifying some of its basic concerns in order to assess how far Lossky may be said to stand within the same tradition.

Part II

Chapter 7: ^{an} The Definition of/Ethos: Kireevsky to Soloviev.

p.191.

Philosophy in Russia began to develop only in the 19th century. The problems of historical and national identity created by the Petrine reforms perhaps predisposed the Russians to Hegelianism, a philosophy very much rooted in a sense of historical conflict: the basic question of such 19th century Russian thought is the issue between voluntarism and historical determinism - that is, the problem of the relation of individual identity to corporate identity, of individual volition to corporate process. Russian religious philosophy attempts to discover a point of equilibrium between individualism and collectivism, a kind of personalism, in fact, which resolves the tension between the particular and the general by seeing the general in the particular. Different philosophers incline to different sorts of solution, depending largely

upon whether they are (like Kireevsky) more concerned with the history and self-awareness of the Church (in which case they will tend to a very radical voluntarism), or (like Soloviev, and, to a lesser extent, Khomyakov) more interested in global or cosmic patterns (in which case they will tend to some sort of determinism). Soloviev's use of the myth of 'Sophia' was to have an immense influence on those thinkers inclined to the latter school. By the turn of the century, the tension between the impulse to voluntarism and the metaphysical attraction of 'sophiology' has become acute.

Chapter 8: Essays in Synthesis

p.218.

Various attempts to reconcile these two concerns were made.

The brothers Trubetskoi, despite a large debt to Soloviev, move towards a voluntarist and 'historicist' position; Pavel Florensky, while extending the 'sophiological' world-view, insists equally upon the unique value of the individual. He is particularly violently opposed to any kind of theological rationalism and stresses the importance of paradox and antinomy. This is stated still more strongly by Berdyaev, who, however, rejects the whole apparatus of sophiology in an extreme form of personalism. The 'hierarchical personalism' of Nikolai Lossky (Vladimir's father) moves back towards determinism; S.L.Frank adopts an unconventional, but in some ways deeply traditional, approach to the absolute value of the person, but is still hampered by the legacy of sophiology. Losev attempts to develop a form of Neo-Kantianism based on the apophatic recognition of the incomprehensibility of particular, concrete and living, substances. Karsavin (Lossky's teacher at Petersburg), despite his highly personalist and voluntarist understanding of the Fathers, generally presents a very impersonalist metaphysical approach.

No satisfactory resolution of the tensions identified seems to have been possible within the terms of the tradition dependent on Hegelianism and sophiology.

Chapter 9: The Ecclesiastical Tradition

p.255.

Not all Russian religious thinkers, however, were identified with this tradition. An 'alternative theology', more dependent on Scripture and the Fathers, and closely associated with monastic groups, existed, represented by men like Philaret of Moscow and Antony of Kiev (of earlier philosophers, Kireevsky is closest to this school). Philaret's emphasis on kenosis, not only in the Incarnation, but in the eternal life of the Trinity, is of great importance for Lossky (and others); and in Antony's works, we find a clear statement of the doctrine of man-in-the-Church as imago Trinitatis, and of a mature personalism and apophaticism strikingly close to Lossky's thought. The major spokesman of this school in the 20th century is Georges Florovsky, who argues for a 're-Hellenisation' of theology and a 'neopatristic synthesis'. Although close to Lossky in many respects (his early writings influenced Lossky a good deal), he lays less emphasis on the person as such, and more on the radical freedom which characterises the person. There are also important differences between their views on the relation between Christ, the Spirit, and the Church. Generally, Florovsky is far closer than Lossky to the ipsissima verba patrum, less willing to revise or extend patristic concepts: Lossky appears as the more original mind of the two.

Conclusion

p.284.

The scope of Lossky's theological synthesis is considerably wider than he himself would have admitted. His work presupposes the continuing debate within Russian religious thought sketched in the preceding chapters, and incorporates the more positive intuitions of this tradition of theistic metaphysics. Lossky's hostility to the conceptual mechanisms of Russian religious philosophy should not blind the student to the extent of his debt to the tradition. To deny this debt is to deny a great part of the creativity and comprehensive vision of Lossky's system, his ability to transcend pathological fundamentalism in a theology which is, in every sense, personal.

PREFACE

It has been well said that 'there are few theologians who are more genuinely and freely rooted in the tradition of their Church than Lossky'.¹ Lossky's classical essay on 'The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church' has, in the last twenty years, achieved the standing almost of a textbook of Eastern Christian dogmatics, and he is generally regarded as a representative spokesman for his tradition. Despite this fact, however, and despite the growing interest in Eastern theology among Christians of the West, no systematic attempt has yet been made to explore Lossky's thought in depth, to relate it in detail both to the patristic tradition to which he looked as normative, and to the Russian religious culture which he viewed with some hostility and suspicion.² I cannot pretend that the present work offers the exhaustive investigation which Lossky's work merits; but I trust that it may serve as a preliminary sketch of the themes which demand attention, and as a necessary clearing of the ground for more detailed study.

I owe a great deal to the generous assistance of very many scholars who have guided and enriched my researches. My supervisor, Canon A.M. Allchin, has, throughout, provided unfailing help and encouragement in

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1. A.M.Allchin, 'The Eastern Orthodox Contribution to the "Debate about God"' (in 'Orthodoxy and the Death of God', ed. Allchin, London, 1971) p.15.
 2. Two excellent short studies of Lossky, have, however, appeared in English: 'Vladimir Lossky: the Witness of an Orthodox Theologian', by A.M.Allchin (Theology, 72, 1969); and 'Lossky and Mystical Theology', by Dom Illtyd Trethowan ('The Downside Review', 92, no. 309, 1974).

every way; his personal acquaintance with Lossky, and reminiscences of his teaching and conversation have been the source of many insights. My thanks are due also to the Revd. Archpriest Boris Bobrinski; M. Olivier Clément (to whom I am specially indebted for the loan of the - very precious - manuscript of Lossky's wartime journal); the Revd Archpriest Georges Florovsky; the Revd Archpriest John Meyendorff; and Dr. Nicolas Zernov. I have benefited greatly from discussions of some of the themes of this thesis with Dr. D. J. Gendle, the Revd. Dr. E. L. Mascall, Miss Elizabeth Moberly, the Revd John Seward, and the Revd Dom Hiltyd Trethowan. All have helped me to understand Lossky's insistence that to do theology is to engage in an exploration of one's personal encounter with God in silence; they have presented to me a model of theological engagement which I have tried, however confusedly and imperfectly, to follow in this study, and I offer them unreserved thanks. Anything of value in the pages that follow belongs not to me but to the catholic communion of minds in Christ, mediated to me by my teachers and friends.

R. D. Williams

Oxford, Lent, 1975.

A NOTE ON REFERENCES

Since the English translations of Lossky's 'Théologie mystique ...' and 'La vision de Dieu' are well known and readily accessible, I have quoted from them rather than from the French originals. Otherwise (with the single exception of Lossky's article on Patriarch Sergius) his works are referred to in their original versions, French or Russian. For convenience' sake, I have regularly used the posthumous collection of articles, 'A l'image et à la ressemblance de Dieu': the provenance of all these articles is recorded in the bibliography to this thesis.

I have made extensive use of transcripts from tape-recordings of lectures delivered by Lossky in 1955-57, now in the ownership of Canon A.M. Allchin. Reference to these is made by date, and page of transcript. References to Lossky's unpublished journal follow the pagination of his manuscript (now in the possession of M. Olivier Clément).

In transliterating Russian names and titles, I have followed what seems to be the simplest and most widespread English practice, without attempting absolute consistency. Translations from the Russian are my own.

The following abbreviations have been used:

(a) Works by Lossky

<u>The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church</u>	M.T.
<u>The Vision of God</u>	V.G.
<u>A l'image et à la ressemblance de Dieu</u>	A l'image
<u>Théologie négative et connaissance de Dieu chez Maître Eckhart.</u>	Eckhart
<u>Théologie dogmatique</u> (Messenger, 46-47, 48, 49, 50)	TD, A, B, C, & D

(b)

V.V. Zenkovsky, <u>History of Russian Philosophy</u> (2 vols)	Zenzovsky, I & II
G.V. Florovsky, <u>Puti Russkogo Bogosloviya</u>	PRB.
N.O. Lossky, <u>History of Russian Philosophy</u>	N.O. Lossky, 'History'.

A.N.Armstrong (ed.) The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Mediaeval Philosophy

CH

Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique

DTC

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Aquinas, Summa Theologica

ST

**Palamas, Défense des saints hesychastes
(ed. & tr. J.Meyendorff)**

Triads

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Periodicals

Contacts: Revue française de l'Orthodoxie

Contacts

The Eastern Churches Quarterly

ECQ

The Greek Orthodox Theological Review

GOTR

Messenger de l'Exarchat du Patriarche russe en Europe occidentale

Messenger

Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques

RSPT

The Scottish Journal of Theology

SJT

St.Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly

SVSQ

St.Vladimir's Theological Quarterly

SVTQ

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PART I

CH. I

INTRODUCTION: THE MAN AND HIS WORK

Vladimir Nikolaievich Lossky was born at Göttingen on the 26th of May (O.S.) 1903, the eldest son of the philosopher Nikolai Onufrievich Lossky and his wife ^{Lyudmila} (Vladimirovna) (née Stoyunin).¹ Both sides of the family had a history of association with the Russian liberal intelligentsia; and Vladimir was brought up at Petersburg in a vigorous intellectual environment. Olivier Clement, in a brief biographical memoir,² speaks of the young Vladimir as powerfully influenced by the 'présence "socratique" de son père':³ very probably, it was early assumed that Vladimir would take up an academic career of some kind. In the event, he did not immediately follow his father into philosophy, but concentrated on historical studies during his time at the university of Petrograd (1919-1922), a fact of some significance in the evaluation of his later thought. He was fortunate in his teachers: I.M. Grevs and L.P. Karsavin were both historians of great gifts, and under Karsavin's direction,

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1. Nikolai Lossky, who was already acquiring a name for his work as a philosophical psychologist in the University of St. Petersburg, had been staying briefly in Göttingen to consult with other scholars working in his discipline; v. N.O. Lossky, 'Vospominaniya: zhizn' i filosofskii put'' (Reminiscences: Life and Philosophical Development), Munich, 1968, pp. 115 ff.
 2. 'Messenger', 30 - 31, 1959, pp. 81-4.
 3. *Ib.*, p. 81.

Vladimir's interests turned towards the religious and social history of Western Europe. ¹ Throughout Vladimir's youth, the intellectual circles of Petersburg were a good deal more open to 'the West' in general than was the contemporary academic and literary world of Moscow, which preserved a more aggressively Slavophil tone; and this again is a fact which explains a good deal in Vladimir's career. ² One of the least narrowly Russian of Orthodox theologians, he never sympathised with, or in any way countenanced, the tendency to treat the Christian culture of pre-Petrine Russian as somehow transcending cultural and historical relativities. Lossky's background in Petersburg, his academic training as an historian, and his particular interest in the history of Western Europe combined to produce in him a deep suspicion of the 'Muscovite' ethos and its characteristic appeal to the 'Russian soul'; in an important sense, he is committed to post-Petrine Russia, and finally (and logically) to post-imperial Russia. There is nothing of the romantic about him: and in this lies the essence of his alienation from so much in Russian culture at the end of the imperial period.

The last days of the Russian empire - like the last days of Byzantium - were characterized by a measure of intellectual activity so intense as to seem almost feverish. Both in Petersburg and in Moscow, discussion circles, including artists, poets, critics, historians, and philosophers, flourished to an unprecedented degree; and, in the words of Nicolas Zernov, ³ 'The artistic and philosophical revival was accompanied by a changed attitude to Christianity in general, and to

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1. Karsavin, although also a philosopher of note (v. infra, ch. 8), held the chair of Mediaeval History, and most of his historical work was devoted to the religious culture of 12th and 13th century Italy. N.O. Lossky's 'History' (p. 299) lists his major publications in this field.
 2. As M. Olivier Clément has pointed out to me.
 3. 'The Russian Religious Renaissance of the 20th Century,' p. 90; the whole of ch.4 of this work gives a very vivid picture of the atmosphere of these discussion groups.

the Orthodox Church in particular'. Large numbers of the Russian intelligentsia were moving away from radicalism and positivism: Symbolism in poetry (and, to a lesser extent, in the graphic arts) and varieties of Idealism in philosophy were becoming more popular, and it is hardly surprising that many of the intelligentsia should begin, cautiously, to look for a rapprochement with the Church, or, at least, to explore the relations between religion and culture. Many, including D. Merezhkovsky and his wife (the poetess Zinaida Hippus), V.V. Rozanov, Vyacheslav Ivanov, and, rather later, Nikolai Berdyaev, continued to regard historic Christianity as requiring some kind of supplement, or even correction; others, such as S.N. Bulgakov, S.L. Frank, A. Elchaninov, and Nicolai Lossky, assumed or returned to communicant membership of the Church, and, on the whole, developed their religious thought in fairly close relation to what they conceived to be ecclesiastical tradition (Bulgakov and Elchaninov were both eventually ordained to the priesthood). In Petersburg, the most significant group was the 'Religio-Philosophical Society', which flourished from 1901 to 1903, initiated by Merezhkovsky and his circle, to provide (as Zinaida Hippus put it) 'an open cultural platform for the free discussion of topics of religious and philosophical interest'.¹ The establishment of the Society was encouraged by representatives of the Church, including the unusually progressive Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, Antony Vadkovsky, and, somewhat surprisingly, Konstantin Pobedonostsev, the notoriously reactionary Procurator of the Holy Synod.² The President of the Society was Sergei Stragorodsky, then Rector of

1. Quoted by Tamara Elchaninov in her introduction to 'The Diary of a Russian Priest' (p.12), a posthumous collection of unpublished notes and papers by Alexander Elchaninov.
 2. Zernov, op. cit., p. 90.

the Theological Academy in Petersburg,¹ a theologian of moderately liberal views. Although the Society ceased to exist in the year of Vladimir Lossky's birth, its character and composition show very clearly the concerns of the intellectual world in which he was to grow up. More significantly, perhaps, the truce between the intelligentsia and the Church at this time meant in practice that Vladimir, although the son of a professor, could be brought up also as a faithful son of the Church; unlike the members of his father's generation, he was not obliged to find his own way to Orthodoxy. His impatience, in later years, with the speculations of Bulgakov and Berdyaev, and his lack of sympathy with his father's metaphysics indicate the depth and seriousness of this difference. Men like Bulgakov, who had been deeply involved in Marxism, and had moved to Orthodoxy only gradually, by way of Kantianism and a more conservative Hegelianism, instinctively sought in Christianity answers to the problems raised by their personal philosophical or ideological pilgrimages. Bulgakov was incomprehensible, or almost incomprehensible, to Lossky² not primarily through any culpable blindness on the latter's part, but rather because Lossky could, as it were, take for granted the rapprochement³ between Orthodoxy and the intelligentsia which was so marked a feature of the intellectual ethos of Petersburg in the first two decades of the century;³ whereas, for Bulgakov and his generation, this reconcili-

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1. On Sergei's role, v. Florovsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 470 f; for Zinaida Hippisus's opinion of him, v. Zernov, *op. cit.*, p. 96.
 2. The same incomprehension is even more characteristic of much of Florovsky's PRB, painfully so in his assessment of a man like Pavel Florensky; v. *infra*, ch. 8.
 3. It is also of note that Nikolai Lossky, in common with many of the Petersburg intellectuals, took no part in the writing of the famous symposium 'Vekhi' ('Signposts'; Moscow 1909), though his philosophy is acknowledged as an influence by some contributors. Written largely by ex-radicals (Struve, Bulgakov, Berdyaev, Frank and others), 'Vekhi' was conditioned, to a great extent, by a fierce hostility towards atheistic radicalism and 'nihilism', and a Slavophil nostalgia for the 'Christian peasant kingdom'. T.G. Masaryk's discussion ('The Spirit of Russia', II, ch.21, esp. pp.435-9), which stresses the Slavophil tendency of the book, is of interest in this connexion.

ation was a new development, and still, in some respects, problematic.

2.

Lossky began his university career in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution; it is hardly surprising that his studies were not permitted to continue without interruption. The continuing vigour of religious life and thought in the University of Petrograd in the years immediately following the Revolution, and the foundation of a private theological academy by several of the Petrograd academics (including Nikolai Lossky)¹ were phenomena highly unwelcome to the new government. In 1922, those non-Marxist intellectuals who had not been involved in the civil war were given the chance by Lenin of leaving Russia; among those who left were Bulgakov and Berdyaev. Nikolai and Vladimir Lossky opted to remain, and were, accordingly, forced to leave in the 'Second Deportation' (November, 1923). They settled in Prague, still, at that time, a major centre of the Russian Diaspora, and, from 1923 to October 1924, Vladimir continued his studies in the Czech division of the Charles University, and the Russian 'academy' of N.P. Kondakov (an informal institution chiefly devoted to Byzantine studies).² During this period he continued to develop the interest in the Western Middle Ages initiated in Petrograd; but he rapidly became convinced that Prague could not provide a satisfactory intellectual stimulus, and, in November of 1924, he moved to Paris, and began to study at the Sorbonne. With only brief intermissions, he was to spend the remainder of his life in Paris, and to devote his 'professional' work to the Sorbonne.

1. V. Zernov, op. cit., pp. 205-6. Nikolai Lossky describes the Revolution and the years immediately following in ch.7 of 'Vospominaniya' (pp. 201-21).

2. N.O. Lossky, op. cit. p. 226.

His teachers at the Sorbonne included Ferdinand Lot, the historian,¹ and Etienne Gilson. With the latter in particular he enjoyed considerable rapport: Gilson, past question the greatest exponent in this century of mediaeval Christian thought, provided, in his work, the combination of scholarly rigour with creative personal interpretation and thorough involvement in his material which was to characterise the best of Lossky's own work. Although he initially proposed to write his doctoral thesis on a purely historical subject,² his interest in mediaeval philosophy had been too much stimulated by Gilson's teaching for him to rest content with such a topic. In 1927, on the completion of his preliminary studies, he began work on the thought of Meister Eckhart; the next few years were chiefly given to intensive research in France and Germany on manuscript sources - unpublished treatises by Eckhart, and material in the Bibliothèque Nationale relating to the period of Eckhart's residence in the University of Paris.³ Also in 1927, thanks to his friendship with Lot, he began working on the Bulletin du Cange:⁴ the passionate concern of his best theological work for the precise use of words grew out of a thorough apprenticeship in philology. At the same time, he was extending his acquaintance with the history of Eastern Christian thought: Eckhart's consistent stress on the incomprehensibility of God led Lossky back to the foundations of the via negativa in Alexandrian theology, in

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1. Lot's interest in the development of the Grail legends obviously left an impression on Lossky's mind; as we shall see, Lossky, in his wartime journal, treats the Grail cycle as a very significant testimony to the mediaeval Western religious mentality after the Schism of 1054.
 2. On 'mediaeval communes in Provence', according to N.C. Lossky (op. cit., p. 227).
 3. V. the brief note on Lossky in the periodical which carried his first publication 'Seminarium Kondakovianum', III Prague 1929, p. 330.
 4. A publication devoted to the philological study of mediaeval Latin.

the writings of the Cappodocian Fathers, and, above all, in the Corpus Areopagiticum. His earliest publications, in 1929 and 1930 respectively, were studies of the Areopagite's understanding of negative theology, and of the concept of 'analogy' in the Corpus. ¹ Already, in these articles, Lossky manifests an interest in the theology of Gregory Palamas and the controversies which, in the 14th century, attended Palamas's teaching on the distinction between *οὐσία* and *ἐνέργεια* in God. Despite the wide diffusion of Palamas's mystical writings in the Christian East (they were liberally anthologised in the popular collection called the 'Philokalia', or, in Russian, 'Dobrotolyubie'), very little critical work on Palamism had appeared; Lossky claimed, in later years, ² that he first became aware of Palamism only as a student in the Sorbonne, through the medium of the lectures of Charles Diehl, one of the leading French Byzantinists of the day. Diehl's attitude, like that of most Byzantinists of his school, ³ was one of contempt and derision for what seemed merely a fantastic intellectual aberration generated by monastic fanaticism; but Lossky, unable to accept so negative a judgement, was prompted to investigate the question further, and, by the time of the publication of his first articles, the importance of what he was later ⁴ to call 'the Palamite synthesis' as a principle of interpretation in patristic studies had become clear to him. It is noteworthy that this antedates the publication of the first two extended scholarly studies of

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1. This latter essay is an excellent example of Lossky's ability for conscientious analysis of the nuances of a single word: his listing and discussion of the ten major senses of *ἀναλογία* occupies 18 pages.
 2. Lecture, 17/11/55, p. 12.
 3. Compare the assessments of Henri Grégoire & Hippolyte Delehaye in 'Byzantium' (ed. N. Baines & H. Moss, Oxford, 1948), pp. 114-16, 158.
 4. In 'La vision de Dieu'.

Palamas: ¹ Lossky has a good claim to be regarded as the first swallow of the 'neo-Palamite' summer which has so coloured Orthodox theology during the last 30 years, and for this alone he would merit a prominent place in the history of Eastern Christian thought in this century.

3.

In 1928, the year of his marriage to Madeleine Shapiro, ² Lossky, together with a number of younger Russian emigrés (including his close friend Evgraph Kovalevsky), established the 'Brotherhood of Saint Photius', an informal organisation whose ideal was to defend the universality of Orthodox Christianity, to witness to the fact that Orthodoxy was not and could not be coterminous with the 'religious dimensions' of Greek or Russian culture. Throughout his life, despite an unremitting hostility to much of the Western religious ethos, ³ Lossky retained great affection and admiration for figures like Bernard of Clairvaux and Francis of Assisi. ⁴ He clearly regarded it as a part of his theological vocation to identify not only the points of serious divergence between Eastern and Western Christendom, but also the points of convergences, the hidden Orthodoxy of the West. He possessed already a very clear sense of what was implied in the affirmation of the Church's catholicity; and the theo-

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1. D. Staniloae, 'Viața și învățătura sfântului Grigorie Palama; cu trei tratate traduse' ('The Life and Teaching of St. Gregory Palamas; with three Tractates Translated'), Sibiu, 1938; and B. Krivoshein, 'Asketicheskoe i bogoslovskoe uchenie sv. Grigoriya Palamy. ('The Ascetic and Theological Teaching of St. Gregory Palamas'), 'Seminarium Kondakovianum', VIII, Prague, 1936 (E.T. in E.C.Q. Jan.-Oct. 1938).
 2. The daughter of a Russian Jewish family, converted while studying Greek at the Sorbonne, and an enthusiastic student of the Eastern Fathers; v. N.O. Lossky, op. cit., p. 245.
 3. V. infra, ch. 4.
 4. On his devotion to Francis, v. N.O. Lossky, op. cit., pp. 227-8.

logical articulation of this sense permeates much of his work, even, in a way, his work on Eckhart. Paradoxically, it was precisely his lack of Slavophil particularism which underlay his continuing allegiance to the Patriarchate of Moscow. Those emigrés who had fought in the civil war, and the majority of those expelled in 1922 and 1923 continued to feel, in greater or lesser degree, that the attitude adopted by the Patriarchate towards the Soviet State was unduly compromising; the most reactionary simply refused to acknowledge the legitimacy either of the Soviet Government or of the ecclesiastical administration in Moscow headed by Sergei Stragorodsky, who now held the odd position of 'deputy to the locum tenens of the Patriarchal Throne'.¹ The increasingly strained relations between Metropolitan Sergei and the emigrés came to a head in 1930 when Sergei repudiated the Patriarchal Exarch in Paris, Metropolitan Evlogy; Evlogy, with the majority of the Parisian emigrés (including the influential group associated with the theological institute of Saint-Serge)² and the French parishes, submitted, in 1931, to the direct jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch. Among the minority who remained loyal to Sergei were the members of the Brotherhood of Saint Photius: their position was to become increasingly difficult in the years ahead.

Losaky's allegiance to the Patriarchate is a factor of no little importance in the development of his thought. His decision in 1931 represents a break not merely with the reactionary elements in the emigration, but also with those like Bulgakov and Berdyaev, who, while accepting that the pre-Revolutionary order in Russia could not be restored,³ nevertheless felt themselves to be, in some sense, the true

1. He was, in effect, acting Patriarch; on the background to this, v. I. Ware, 'The Orthodox Church', pp. 161-164.
 2. Saint-Serge at this time was the chief intellectual centre of the emigration, with Bulgakov as its Rector; on its early history, v. D. Lewis, 'St. Sergius in Paris', London, 1954.
 3. V. Zernov, op. cit., pp. 226-7, 231.

heirs and spokesmen of 'Russian Orthodoxy', of a tradition deeply rooted in the world of Soloviev and Dostoyevsky, in 19th century populism and Idealism, and preserving some points of contact with the 'new religious consciousness' of the turn of the century. For Lossky such a position was untenable: it represented a cavalier attitude to the 'given' historical situation of the Russian Church, an implicit refusal to recognise that the Church could continue to function authentically in a dechristianised society, and therefore, an implicit belief that the Church was necessarily bound to certain cultural or national structures, a belief strongly criticized by Metropolitan Sergei himself.¹ Lossky could not emulate his fellow-emigrés' tendency to emphasize the 'Russian-ness' of their Orthodoxy;² such an emphasis militated against the catholicity of Orthodox faith. His faithfulness to the jurisdiction of Moscow was bound to his faithfulness to the historical Church and its strict canonical ordering, and his faith in the capacity of this Church to transcend the tragedies and ambiguities of any particular historical or canonical situation by virtue of its catholicity. There is here, perhaps, a foreshadowing of his later emphasis³ on the dangers of failing to recognize that the Church, like its Head, is a union without confusion of the divine and human natures, of the absolute and trans-historical with the relative and historical; and that neither can be denied without making shipwreck of any adequate theology of the Incarnation.

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1. V.O. Clément, op. cit. p. 82. The theological basis of Lossky's position is stated clearly in his brief article, 'Ecueils ecclésiologiques', 'Messager', 1, 1950, pp. 21-28.
 2. This was reflected in his consistent refusal to regard Dostoyevsky as a quasi-theological authority (as many Russian theologians did, and still do): nowhere does he quote Dostoyevsky in a theological context, only once (and that critically) in an historical study ('Le Staréts Ambroise', 'Contacts', 40, 1962, p.230).
 3. V. e.g., K.T., pp. 175-6, 186-90.

The conflict between the adherents of the Patriarchate and the followers of Metropolitan Evlogy reached its most serious and bitter point in 1935 and 1936. Bulgakov had published, in 1933, his major Christological study, 'Agnets Bozhii' ('The Lamb of God'), in which his theories about 'Sophia', the Wisdom of God, considered as a concrete cosmic principle, were applied to the theology of the Incarnation, Bulgakov had written relatively little theology before this, nothing, certainly, on the scale of 'Agnets Bozhii'. The work aroused not a little discussion; the more theologically conservative emigrés were suspicious, and the Brotherhood of Saint Photius, at the request of Metropolitan Sergei, sent a report on Bulgakov's theology to Moscow.¹ In 1935, the bishops of the Patriarchate issued an 'ukaz' criticising and finally condemning Bulgakov's system, largely on the initiative of Sergei himself and his own report on Bulgakov to the Russian hierarchy. The ukaz criticised the 'Gnostic' aspects of Bulgakov's 'Sophiology',² accused Bulgakov of confusing, in his understanding of Sophia, natural attributes with personal existence in the Godhead,³ and rejected his account of the doctrine of the image of God in man, and his belief in the uncreatedness of the human soul.⁴ Bulgakov, in his reply, defended himself on particular points, but also accused Sergei of a kind of papalist absolutism in pronouncing on a doctrinal question sin_e consensu ecclesiae.⁵ Feeling ran very high in Paris, and the Brotherhood of Saint Photius was almost universally vilified, as both obscurantist and

1. 'O Sofii, Premudrosti Bozhiei: Ukaz Moskovskoi Patriarkhii i Dokladnya Zapiski Prof. Prot. S. Bulgakova i Mitropolita Evlogiya' ('On Sophia, the Wisdom of God: the Ukaz of the Moscow Patriarchate and Commentaries by Professor the Archpriest S. Bulgakov and Metropolitan Evlogy), Paris, 1935, p. 5.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 6-7.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 7-9.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 9, 12.

5. *Ib.*, pp. 25, 53.

'bolshevist'.¹ The emigré periodical 'Vozrozhdenie' ('Renaissance') attacked the Brotherhood, and refused to publish a letter of explanation from Lossky; another letter from Lossky to Bulgakov was not answered, and a request to Berdyaev to allow the Brotherhood's defence to appear in 'Put'' (still the foremost theological and philosophical organ of the emigration) elicited a harsh, almost abusive, response.² In a letter to his father, dated the 26th of November, 1935,³ Lossky describes a meeting between members of the Brotherhood and supporters of Bulgakov (including Berdyaev, G.P. Fedotov and Konstantin Kochulsky): the latter group, whose behaviour was anything but conciliatory, emerges with little credit. Throughout the period of the controversy, they seem to have deliberately impeded any reconciliation between Bulgakov and the Brotherhood, and must bear a large part of the responsibility for the bitterness generated.⁴

In 1936, the Brotherhood published a substantial pamphlet, by Lossky, 'Spor o Sofii: "Dokladnaya Zapiska" prot. S. Bulgakova i smysl Ukaza Moskovskoi Patriarkhii' ('The Debate on Sophia: the "Commentary" of Archpriest St. Bulgakov and the Meaning of the Ukaz of the Moscow Patriarchate'). This was not merely a reply to Bulgakov, but something of a theological manifesto in its own right, and as such will require a longer discussion in the next chapter. Essentially, it is a protest against what Lossky sees as Bulgakov's divorcing of theology from the canonically regulated life of the Church and the subordination of

1. N.O. Lossky, op. cit., p. 267.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 267-8. However, an Open Letter from Lossky to Berdyaev was allowed to appear in 'Put', no. 50, 1936, pp. 27-32.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 268-71.

4. Nikolai Lossky, a friend of Bulgakov's, though critical of his theology, defended (in a letter to Bulgakov, dated the 7th of January, 1936; v. N.O. Lossky, op. cit. p. 273) his son's right to do what he conceived to be his duty to the Church: he seems to have played a considerable part in preparing the ground for a personal reconciliation between Vladimir and Bulgakov.

theology to speculative metaphysics. In Lossky's eyes, Bulgakov^{em}, in common with most of the Russian intelligentsia, does not experience ecclesiastical tradition as a living reality, but has a merely anti-quarian interest in it as 'a monument to ecclesiastical culture'.¹

'Spor o Sofii' crystallises very sharply what it was that distinguished Lossky from the older generation of Russian religious thinkers; it reveals the strength of his commitment to the visible, concrete ecclesiastical institution, and his suspicion of any hints of Gnostic mystagogy. Needless to say, its publication did not improve the situation in Paris. Lossky and his group were now identified even further with reaction and oppression: Berdyaev (predictably) made dark allusions to Dostoyevsky's Inquisitor, and, in a letter to Nikolai Lossky,² complained that Vladimir's position was 'not in the traditional liberal spirit of the Stoyunin and Lossky families'. It was some time before Lossky was able to re-establish personal contact with Bulgakov; but, as we have indicated, this was due to the hostility of Bulgakov's supporters rather than to Bulgakov himself. When, eventually, they began to correspond, Bulgakov's attitude was characteristically generous: and in the last of his letters to Lossky,³ he encouraged him to turn his attention to constructive rather than controversial theological writing. It is curious to reflect that, as Lossky's brother, Boris, comments, the writing of MT may owe something to Bulgakov's exhortations and his recognition of Lossky's genius. Lossky's personal affection for the older man was demonstrated eight years later when he and his wife, despite the difficulties caused by the war, returned to Paris for Bulgakov's funeral in 1944.⁴ However,

1. 'Spor o Sofii', pp. 18-19.

2. Quoted by Boris Lossky in a note to his father's 'Vospominaniya', p. 330 (n.35). For Berdyaev's attitude, c.f. his article translated in 'Orient und Occident' 1, March 1936 (pp. 30-38, 'Der Geist des Grossinquisitors').

3. Referred to by Boris Lossky, *ibid.*

4. *Ib.*, n. 36.

the memory of the controversy was not easily effaced: Lossky was never invited to speak at Saint-Serge, even in the days when he was widely recognized as one of the foremost theological intellects in the emigration.

A more encouraging sign in 1936 was the establishment in Paris of a group of Orthodox following the Latin rite, under the jurisdiction of Moscow.¹ This revolutionary development was a great achievement for the Brotherhood, and, for a time, the future of indigenous French Orthodoxy seemed secure. Lossky's commitment to France was to be further developed and deepened in the years of the war.² The French defeat in 1940 affected him greatly: he left Paris on June 13th, 1940, as the German troops were advancing, and began to make his way southwards on foot. In the first week of his journey, he recorded his experiences and reflections in a remarkable journal which he entitled 'Sept jours sur les routes de France'.³ He begins (after describing his first experiences on the road) by meditating on the significance of Joan of Arc. God's calling on Joan is the divine initiative manifested at the point where human hope ceases, and theological rationalisations become 'semblables aux dires insensés des amis raisonnables de Job'.⁴ Yet Joan is called to perform a purely relative and limited task, to fight not for absolute but for local and national values; and this kind of struggle, Lossky maintains, is the only just war.⁵ The concept of a

1. Fr Evgraphy Kovalevsky took a leading part in this, and was later to head the group. Most of this new community were convert Old Catholics, their leader being Mgr Louis-Charles Winnaert. V. Ware, op. cit. p. 193, Clément, op. cit., p. 82, N.O. Lossky, op. cit. p. 274.
2. He had become a French citizen in 1939.
3. Never published; the autograph is in the possession of M. Olivier Clément.
4. 'Sept jours....' p. 10.
5. 'En tant qu'une guerre peut être appelée juste'; ib. p. 14.

crusade, a holy war, whether for 'freedom', 'democracy', 'Western civilisation', or whatever, is a heresy: these are pseudo-absolutes, and the one true absolute, the Church of Christ, cannot be defended by violence, as Peter's sword could not defend Christ in Gethsemane. ¹ Any effort to dignify a war by appealing to absolute principles is a confusion of God's justice with ours: if we pray for victory, we must appeal not to God's justice but to His mercy. ² Our only refuge from the enemy is in God, not in any comfortable conviction of the justice of our cause; and, in God, 'notre combat se transportera sur un autre terrain': human conflict becomes a reflection of the basic conflict at the roots of man's experience, his struggle with God, 'Combat purifiant et salutaire'. ³

The affirmation of relative and local values leads Lossky to consider the tension in French culture between the 'Gallic' and the 'Roman' spirit. ⁴ Passing a site south of Orleans which was used for tribal assemblies in pre-Roman days, he reflects that 'La Gaule a toujours connu l'autorité suprême des conciles, "gallicane" avant le christianisme'; ⁵ but this primitive sense of free conciliarity has been overlaid by a Latinising process in all branches of French culture since the 16th century ('Rabelais fût, peut-être, le dernier Gaulois de la littérature française'), it has been swallowed up in the myth of the unity of the Latin world. ⁶ Roman inflexibility triumphed in the gradual 'secularisation' of Western Christendom after the days of Charlemagne, the first to confuse the spiritual with the temporal (and, significantly, the first great defender of the

1. Ib., pp. 12-13.
 2. Ib., pp. 15-16.
 3. Ib., p. 32.
 4. Ib., pp. 26-7, 39-41.
 5. Ib., p. 39.
 6. Ib., pp. 40-1.

filiogue) in a way which Byzantium never did. ¹ The Western Church was infected by the model of a purely secular kind of authority, autocratically imposing uniformity: only in France under the Capetians (especially St. Louis) did the conciliar spirit survive and revive in the Middle Ages. ² Mediæval France united diverse cultural groups into 'une même famille spirituelle', as - in a rather different way - mediæval Byzantium generated a spiritual and cultural commonwealth in which younger states could grow out of barbarism into maturity and national identity. ³ However, national identity, the 'soul' of a nation is not an entity with a life dependent of particular human beings; national particularity, the national soul, the national 'destiny', none of these can be adequately described by organic metaphors. Such language (Lossky is perhaps thinking of philosophers of history like Spengler) fails because it neglects the unpredictable, 'surd' element of human freedom. ⁴ The national soul is built 'par des millions de volontés libres, ordonnée par la volonté divine, secourue dans ses voies par les Saints'. ⁵ And this free symphony of distinct wills is the pattern not only for the building-up of a single nation, but also for relations within the community of nations: not the universalisation of what is local, but a 'catholicity' which 'se fonde sur la diversité et la richesse de territoires chrétiens gardant [s] leurs traditions'. ⁶ The failing of Latin Christianity is in its replacing of this concrete harmony with the abstract and cerebral 'internationalism' of Latin culture, absolutising a local intellectual culture. The antithesis of this, 'Germanism', is the imposition of excessively concrete forms of local culture, the

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1. *Ib.*, p. 49.
 2. *Ib.*, pp. 49-50.
 3. *Ib.*, pp. 56-7.
 4. *Ib.*, pp. 58-9.
 5. *Ib.*, p. 59.
 6. *Ib.*, p. 61.

absolutising of particular forms of ethnic and political life.¹ The significance of France is in her achievement of a via media between these two; and, as such, she has the potentiality of becoming 'un foyer de régénération dans l'Occident chrétien dans l'Europe qui se déchristianise.'²

Lossky sees the history of Western Europe as profoundly tragic, permeated by a sense of loss. The Crusades are truly religious movements, though not, perhaps, in the sense in which the mediaevals thought they were: they represent 'un pèlerinage immense',³ a search for the lost Eastern land where the Apostle John lived eternally, ruling over his flock. They are a reflexion of the same 'vague inquiétude religieuse' which produced the Grail cycle, 'où la calice de la Cène symboliserait la plénitude des dons du Saint-Esprit, la plénitude chrétienne'.⁴ Yet-again, tragically-the Crusades became a war against the Christian East, and brought back the seeds of religious war to the West in the Manichaeian heresy which provoked the first war of religion in France, the Albigensian Crusade.⁵ However, the record of historical mistakes and failures is not the final truth for humanity. Lossky has already spoken of the way in which every historical conflict directs us to man's conflict with God, man's injustice before God:⁶ but the acceptance of this conflict as being basic to human history is, for the Christian, bound up with the acceptance of the fact that the 'horizontal' line of history is broken by the 'vertical' line of the Incarnation. 'L' intersection de ces deux lignes forme la figure de la croix. Accepter notre catastrophe

1. *Ib.*, pp. 61-2.

2. *Ib.*, p. 62; a little later (pp. 70-71), Lossky remarks on the harmony in France between nature and culture and between past and present. In Germany, the beauty of the landscape is 'inhuman' wherever it is not dominated by man, there is a sense of opposition between nature and man. Italy ('un pays ~~vase~~') fails to integrate either nature and culture or history and the contemporary world.

3. *Ib.*, p. 76.

4. *Ib.*, p. 77.

5. *Ib.*, p. 77.

6. *C.f. ib.*, p. 16: 'Seigneur, nous sommes toujours injustes devant Vous et notre justice est nulle'.

historique dans toute son horreur, comme une croix que Dieu nous offre, c'est trouver l'issue, la seule voie: la ligne verticale qui est la voie vers Dieu'.¹ Historical tragedy demands the eschatological resolution which only God can provide, and God calls Christians to be 'Apôtres des temps derniers'.² No-one can tell what the 'dawn' will bring when it come-the reawakening of the Church on earth, or the actual coming of the eschaton; in any case, the Christian must give an eschatological witness, 'pour éclairer nos pas sur la route à travers la nuit de France et du monde'.³

'Sept jours' is an unusual and moving document which gives us a rare insight into the extent to which Lossky's theological thinking was rooted in and bound up with his response to contemporary history, and especially to the French experience of the Occupation (which was so significant to so many French thinkers, from Sartre to Simone Weil). The historical sections of the journal are, of course, highly impressionistic: Lossky's interpretation of Gallicanism, for instance, would not be a tenable scholarly thesis,⁴ and most of what he claims as the peculiar fruit of the French genius (such as the unification of diverse ethnic and cultural traditions) could be paralleled in many other nations (including Germany and Italy). Indeed, it seems at times as though Lossky has adopted a characteristically 'Slavophil' viewpoint, merely substituting 'France' for 'Russia' throughout. However, the insistence upon the importance of each national tradition in its integrity and distinctness acts as a corrective to unbalanced Francophilia.

1. Ib., p. 67.
 2. Ib., p. 82.
 3. Ib., p. 84.
 4. He ignores the extent to which 17th century Gallicanism was a political movement, deriving its impetus from Louis XIV's absolutism, rather than some kind of popular ecclesiastical movement towards conciliarism.

This insistence is very near the heart of Lossky's theological concern in its defence of catholicity, the perfect harmony of the individual (or, better, particular) and the collective, not in any organic, given structure, but created by the free consent of human persons. This was to be his model for the Church. It is difficult to decide whether the reflections of 'Sept jours' grew out of an already more or less developed ecclesiology, or whether the meditations on the 'national soul' prompted by the War laid the foundations for a theology of the Church. Since the theme of catholicity was, in one form or another, significant for a great many Russian theologians,¹ and had been explored in some detail by Lossky's rather senior contemporary, Georges Florovsky,² it is likely that the theological seed was sown well before 1940; but it is undeniable that the experience of 1940 seems to have greatly broadened, deepened and concretised Lossky's understanding of the concept.³

'Catholicity' appears in 'Sept jours' as a via media between the extremes of 'Latinism' and 'Germanism', and here again, a characteristic feature of Lossky's later work is foreshadowed. Especially in the closing years of his life, Lossky saw Orthodoxy as holding a perfect, it precarious, balance between the totalitarianism of Rome and the absolutised individualism of the Reform;⁴ and this tendency to a somewhat Hegelian schematising of religious and cultural history is reflected throughout his theology in innumerable ways. As we shall see later, it sometimes leads

1. *Infra*, chs. 7 to 9, for a fuller discussion.

2. V. esp. his articles, 'Yevkharistiya i Sobornost' ('Eucharist and Sobornost', 'Put', no. 19, pp. 3-22), 'Bogoslovskie otryvki' ('Theological Fragments', 'Put', no. 31, pp. 3-29, esp. pp. 19-29), and 'Sobornost: the Catholicity of the Church' ('The Church of God: an Anglo-Russian Symposium by Members of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius', ed. E.L. Mascall, London 1934, pp. 53-74).

3. There is not really very much development of it in 'Spor o Sofii', for instance (v. *infra*, ch. 2); though, as we have noted already, a particular approach to the question of catholicity is implicit in Lossky's attitudes to the Patriarchate and to the establishment of an Orthodox Western rite group.

4. *Infra*, ch. 5.

Lossky perilously near flat distortion of historical fact for the sake of ideological symmetry. Generally, Lossky is free from the tendency, so prevalent in 19th century Russian thought, to indulge in sweeping generalisations about the religious history of mankind; but, particularly at the end of his life, in his last courses of lectures, it seems that the heritage of Russian Hegelianism was not completely forgotten. However, his rejection of organic models for social and ecclesiastical history saves him from the determinism which Hegelian schematising commonly implies.¹ And, indeed, only his voluntarism enables him to see certain historical patterns as genuinely tragic: the religious history of the West after the Schism has this character because it is a history of free personal struggle and search for God within a religious ethos which the free decisions of earlier generations have made remote from God. Determinism cannot accommodate this dialectic of the frustrated and frustrating play of the human will. Lossky's analysis of the 'vague inquietude' of the mediaeval Western Christian mind again foreshadows much in his later work, especially his understanding of Luther,² a rebel on behalf of the rights of the human person and the direct experience of the Spirit, yet unable to free himself from the unbalanced objectivism of mediaeval Catholicism; and so obliged to objectify and absolutise his own individual experience, conditioned by what he protested against. Further, in N.T.³ and later, Lossky interprets the Western experience of the 'dark night' in terms of the pervasive sense of loss in Western Christendom resulting from the Schism, when the West opted for the filioque and so cut itself off from 'la plénitude des dons du Saint-Esprit'. What-

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1. In this respect, Lossky is closer to Kireevsky than to almost any other Russian philosopher of history; v. infra, ch. 7. For Lossky's highly appreciative view of Kireevsky as 'un ascète de la pensée' v. his article, 'Le Starets Macaire', 'Contacts', 37, 1962, esp. pp. 16-17.
 2. V., e.g., 2/2/56, pp. 4-10.
 3. Pp. 225-7; infra, ch. 5.

ever one's judgment on the validity of Lossky's theses on this subject, his treatment of it is nuanced and not insensitive: we should not be misled by occasional unguarded expressions or exaggerated assertions into regarding Lossky simply as an Hegelian malgré lui.¹

'Sept jours' marks something of a watershed in Lossky's career. The insights yielded by his critique of Bulgakow receive, in this journal, their first, tentative but positive, development. Further stimulation was provided during the years of the war by the meetings of theologians and philosophers which Lossky attended at the house of Marcel Morel;² it was for this group that, in 1941 and 1942, Lossky prepared the series of addresses on Orthodox theology, which, in 1944, was to become the 'Essai sur la théologie mystique de l'Eglise d'Orient', his most important, influential, and widely-read work. The 'Essai' was the first book on Orthodox theology published in Western Europe to attempt a strict and scholarly presentation of its subject as a unified whole, both rationally and historically coherent.³ Lossky had been much impressed by Florovsky's theological work in the 1930's, including his two volumes on the Eastern Fathers,⁴ and his masterpiece, 'Puti Russkago Bogosloviya' ('The Paths of Russian Theology'); and the 'Essai'

1. It should be borne in mind that 'Sept jours' was apparently not designed for publication; had it been so, Lossky would very probably have modified and refined the somewhat broad outlines of this embryonic philosophy of history.
2. The wartime conditions which unexpectedly brought together thinkers from different Christian traditions had a marked effect on the ethos of practically all French theology in the next two decades.
3. It is this historical concern which, more than anything else, sets it apart from more 'impressionistic' introductions like Bulgakov's 'L'Orthodoxie' (Paris 1932; E.T., revised, 'The Orthodox Church', London, 1935).
4. 'Vostochnye Ottsy IV-go Veka' ('Eastern Fathers of the 4th Century', Paris 1931), and 'Vizantiiskie Ottsy V-VIII-go Veka' ('Byzantine Fathers of the 5th to the 8th Century', Paris 1933); both books embody courses of lectures delivered at Saint-Serge.

is, beyond question, partly a response to Florovsky's demand, often reiterated,¹ for the ressourcement of Orthodox theology, a return to the Fathers, a 'neo-patristic synthesis'.² However, we should not overlook another, rather different factor impelling Lossky to the creation of such a highly systematic work. Most of the other members of More's group (including Maurice de Gandillac, Louis Massignon and Gabriel Marcel) were Roman Catholics, as were most of Lossky's colleagues at the Sorbonne; and many, especially those who were pupils or associates of Gilson, had been considerably influenced by neo-Thomism. Gilson (as an historian of philosophy) and Maritain (as a metaphysician) had exhibited Thomism as a creative force, unifying Catholicism both historically and philosophically; far more than a mere text-book system, but, rather, a theological and metaphysical language capable of responding adequately to the questionings of contemporary thought; a philosophy which could beat secular existentialism at its own game, rejecting static, Platonic 'essentialism', and proposing a dynamic and voluntarist understanding of being. Is it not probable that Lossky was, in some degree, concerned to demonstrate that Orthodoxy could offer an equally coherent and viable world-view? It would however, be misleading to believe that (as has sometimes been said) Gregory Palamas plays the role of an Aquinas in the 'Essai'; no single figure occupies such a place. The metaphysical structure presupposed in parts of the book is basically that of Damascene and Maximus the Confessor, but this is always of secondary importance: the point of the work is to attempt an outline of a whole ethos of theology and spirituality, shared by a very large number of theologians, from the 1st century to the 20th, crystallised in classical

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1. V., e.g., 'Bogoslovskie otryvki', pp. 14 ff.; 'Vostochnye Ottsy', p. 5; PRB, pp. v-vi, ch. IX, *passim*, esp. pp. 506-7, 509-11.
 2. V. his paper for the Congress of Orthodox Theologians in Athens in 1936, 'Patristics and Modern Theology' ('Procès - verbaux du premier Congrès de Théologie Orthodoxe', Athens, 1939, pp. 238-242).

form in figures such as Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus, Palamas, and Philaret of Moscow. If the 'Essai' presents a 'system', as in many ways it does, it is not an intellectual synthesis dependent on any one figure of genius, but a 'tradition of life', in which worship and spirituality cannot for a moment be separated from theology. 'There is no Christian mysticism without theology; but, above all, there is no theology without mysticism'.¹

The 'Essai' is, of course, far more than an anthology of patristic opinions: part of the aim of the present goes beyond the Fathers. It is interesting, though, to observe that, in some of his interpretations of the Fathers, Lossky is indebted also to contemporary Catholic scholarship. Henri de Lubac's 'Catholicisme',² and Hans Urs von Balthasar's 'Kosmische Liturgie' (a study of Maximus)³ are quoted more than once, and von Balthasar in particular seems to have influenced Lossky's understanding of the use of *ὕπocτacis* by the later Greek Fathers.⁴ Both works are symptomatic of the general revival of interest at this time in the Greek Fathers among Catholic scholars: a revival in some ways reflecting the concerns of the neo-Thomists in its concentration upon the dynamic and voluntarist, or 'existentialist', elements in Greek patristic thought. Von Balthasar is especially concerned, in 'Kosmische Liturgie', to present Maximus's thought as a highly significant stage on the way to Thomist 'existentialism': Maximus, like Gregory of Nyssa, has grasped the importance for Christian theology of the level of 'existence', as opposed to the static, conceptual level of essence.⁵ The hitherto neutral term *ὕπocτacis* assumes in Maximus a great importance as expressing this non-conceptualisable 'act of being';⁶ though Maximus is nowhere near the

1. M.T., p. 9.

2. Paris, 1938.

3. Friburg-im-Breisgau, 1941; French tr., 'Liturgie cosmique', Paris (Aubier) 1947.

4. V. *infra*, ch. 4.

5. 'Liturgie cosmique', pp. 21-2.

6. *Ib.*, pp. 22, 158, 164-172.

precision of scholastic definition, and does not clearly distinguish the two senses, existential and personal, of the term, nor the distinction of ὑπόστασις from εἶναι, οὐσία, and ὑπόθεσις. 'Cependant c'est bien dans cette direction que nous allons lorsque nous voyons surgir à côté de la vieille ordonnance aristotélicienne des essences, cet ordre nouveau de l'existence et de la personne'.¹ In a related study of Gregory of Nyssa,² von Balthasar has much to say about that Father's affinities with and relevance to contemporary existentialism, though he is suspicious of what, in 'Liturgie Cosmique',³ he calls the 'divinisation de l'inquiétude', to which Gregory and modern existentialists are inclined, a rather exaggerated dynamism, which over-dramatises religious and moral life. However, both Gregory and Maximus have recognised the inadequacies of Greek philosophy in dealing with what is not reducible to essence or concept, and so are well on the way to the fully Christian metaphysic of St Thomas. Now, obviously, Lossky would not assent to a view which placed Aquinas at the pinnacle of theological development; and, in later years he was mildly critical of von Balthasar's analysis,⁴ claiming that, despite everything, it remained on the ontological level, while the question of personality is not (and was not for the Greek Fathers) a merely ontological question, as it takes us beyond what we usually mean by 'being' into the Trinitarian life of God. Nevertheless, von Balthasar's identification of an existentialist and personalist scheme in Gregory and Maximus, supported as it was by great erudition and scholarly regour, clearly left its mark. 'Spor o Sofii' had already noted the importance of the Chalcedonian 'nature-person' distinction;⁵

1. *Ib.*, p. 21.

2. 'Présence et pensée', Paris, Beauchesne, 1942; Lossky very rarely refers to this except in some of his lectures.

3. P. 83.

4. V. 'A l'image', pp. 120-1.

5. And, of course, it is a theme to be found in some earlier Russian theologians, notably Metropolitan Antony Khrapovitsky; v. infra, ch. 9.

von Balthasar was at least partially responsible for filling in the outlines of this intuition from the historical point of view. From this time onwards, the tension between the categories of 'nature' and 'person' was to be fundamental to Lossky's thought: it is a unifying theme in the 'Essai', it provides material for a large number of articles, and it is the controlling notion in the treatment of a great diversity of theological topics in the lectures. It is, I believe, reasonable to regard von Balthasar's influence as important in this connexion.

At the end of the War, the group which had gathered around More decided to establish a periodical in which could be embodied the shared insights gained in their discussions; and in 1945 the first number of 'Dieu Vivant: perspectives religieuses et philosophiques' appeared. The 'Comité Directeur' consisted of Maurice de Gandillac, Louis Massignon and More himself; the 'Comité de Lecture' of Pierre Burgelin, Jean Hyppolite, Lossky and Marcel. This first issue contains a statement of intentions¹ which tells us a good deal about what Lossky and his friends regarded as theological priorities. As we might expect, there is an emphasis on the eschatological dimension of Christian faith; but this is very definitely seen as complementary to the incarnational element, and connected to it by the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh.² It is not an eschatology divorced from the historical world; and this is shown in an openness to currents of thought in the contemporary world, represented by the inclusion of a non-Christian like Hyppolite in the Comité de Lecture.³ However, no material is to be included on socio-political questions; not that they are insignificant, but the Christian understanding

1. A 4-page leaflet (pp. not numbered), not bound with the remainder of the issue.

2. *Ib.*, pp. (2-3).

3. *Ib.*, p. (3).

of them must grow out of the rediscovery of eschatology and grace.¹

'Dieu Vivant' proposes to look to the Fathers for its spiritual, theological and exegetical roots, in an attempt to recover 'une culture chrétienne à la fois centrée sur l'Écriture et ouverte aux courants contemporains'.² The 'Liminaire' of the first issue elaborates some of this: it outlines³ the contribution which diverse Christian traditions can and should make to each other's understanding of the gospel (emphasising the importance of the Orthodox interest in *Θεωσις* and the uncreated light of God's presence), and stresses the real unity of Christians in the Communion of Saints.⁴ However, this sense of a unified Christian 'theological culture' implies no doctrinal relativism; just as the openness professed by 'Dieu Vivant' towards secular and non-Christian cultures is not an essay in syncretism.⁵ The journal wishes to share its vision with 'tous les fils d'Abraham', and to regard for instance, Oriental religions in an eschatological perspective, as pre-figurings of the coming reality of Christ.⁶ Appropriately, the first number contains articles by Monchanin on the spirituality of the desert,⁷ von Balthasar on Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, and Lossky on Palamism; there is also an essay by Daniélou, a translation of one of Newman's sermons, and reviews of de Lubac's 'Corpus Mysticum'; and a French translation of some work by Barth. The theological ethos of 'Dieu Vivant' was thus firmly established from the beginning, and it continued as the most significant French organ of that deeply traditionalist but far from reactio-

1. *Ib.*, pp. (3-4).

2. *Ib.*, p. (4): on the question of exegesis, the editors look also to writers such as Bloy and Claudel, refusing to sacrifice literary insight and creative interpretation to the exigencies of the critical method.

3. 'Dieu Vivant' 1, pp. 6-7.

4. *Ib.*, p. 10.

5. *Ib.*, pp. 11-12.

6. *Ibid.*,

7. The 'Liminaire' mentions the importance of figures like Monchanin and de Foucauld in the encounter with non-Christian faiths (*ib.*, pp. 11-12).

nary Catholicism exemplified par excellence by Daniélou, de Labac and von Balthasar. Its kinship with Lossky's style of theology is very clear, and continued even after Lossky ceased to write for the journal.

There is something distinctly Barthian about *Dieu Vivant's* insistence on the primacy of Biblical and eschatological faith; and indeed the emergence of '*Dieu Vivant*' from the experience of the Second World War has something in common with the emergence of '*Der Römerbrief*' from that of the First War. However, the most important non-Barthian aspect of '*Dieu Vivant's*' programme is its attitude to secular philosophy as '*présupposant une expérience spirituelle susceptible d'enrichir un jour les expressions humaines de la vraie foi*'.¹ This attitude was certainly shared by Lossky, though it is rarely that it finds any expression in his work or his teaching.² It appears more in the circumstances of his work, his readiness to share in the intellectual life of the Institut National pour la Recherche Scientifique and the Ecole des Hautes Etudes;³ and especially in his connexion with the Collège philosophique under Jean Wahl,⁴ where, in the 1950's he delivered several of his most original papers (including '*L'apogée et la théologie trinitaire*', and the brilliant '*La notion théologique de la personne humaine*') at various conferences. What Clément calls⁵ '*La présence créatrice d'un théologien au coeur du mouvement des idées*' was clearly a central part of Lossky's theological witness. Almost equally important, however, was the growth of his ecumenical activity, especially through his contacts with the English Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, whose conferences he attended regularly until his death. It is no exaggeration to say that, in

1. Statement of intentions, p. (3).

2. V. '*A l'image*', p. 118, for a very guarded and rather ambiguous reference to Heidegger.

3. O. Clément, op. cit. p. 83; it was at the Ecole that he delivered the lectures on which '*La vision de Dieu*' was based.

4. Ibid.; Lossky had met Wahl, one of the foremost French exponents and historians of the existentialist movement, in 1939, and always held him in great respect.

5. Ibid.

many English ecumenical circles, Lossky came to hold the position, occupied by Bulgakov before the War, of chief spokesman for the Orthodox viewpoint. ¹ It was at these and other ecumenical gatherings that Lossky developed and maintained his theory (already outlined in the 'Essai') that the filioque controversy was the key to practically all the major differences between the East and the West, and not merely a verbal debate on a peripheral subject; ² a view which, despite its intransigence, won a good deal of respect from his opponents.

Ironically, however, while his reputation as a theologian was growing abroad, his personal isolation in Paris was increasing. In 1948, the Patriarchate of Moscow held a Council (in celebration of the 500th anniversary of Moscow's ecclesiastical independence) ³ at which, predictably, a number of strongly anti-Catholic statements were made. This caused Lossky great embarrassment: several of his Catholic friends, including Daniélou and de Lubac, pressed him to dissociate himself publicly from these pronouncements, but he felt unable to do so, in loyalty to the Patriarchate. As a result, his relations with Daniélou, de Lubac, and others, became severely strained; and it is noteworthy that Lossky did not contribute to 'Dieu Vivant' after 1948. ⁴ More serious, however, and more painful, was the break, in 1953, between Evgraph Kovalesky and the Patriarchate. Up to this date, the progress of French Orthodoxy had seemed promising: in 1945, the 'Institut- St-Denis' had been established, with Lossky as dean, to provide theological education, in French, for adherents of the Western-rite group, especially ordinands, and, although its numbers remained small, it served a useful purpose; and the presence

1. V. the appreciation by D.J. Chitty, in the obituary issue of the 'Messenger' (30-1, 1959; pp. 89-90); and c.f. the remarks of Louis Bouyer (ib., pp. 96-7).
 2. *Imra*, chs. 4 and 5.
 3. V. W.C. Fletcher, 'Religion and Soviet Foreign Policy, 1945-70', OUP, 1973, pp. 27-8.
 4. I owe this account of the matter to M. Olivier Clément.

of Lossky, lecturing on church history and dogmatics, guaranteed its intellectual respectability.¹ The reasons for Kovalevsky's defection from the Patriarchate and ~~ecclesiastical submission to the~~ jurisdiction of the Synod of the Russian Church in Exile are not clear;² but whatever they were, they failed to satisfy Lossky. Apart from the rupture of a long-standing friendship, this event was, for Lossky, the collapse of much that he had worked for since his first arrival in Paris. He was left very much alone in his last years.³ Between 1955 and 1958, he lectured informally to very small groups of theological students belonging to the Patriarchal jurisdiction, but did no other theological teaching; as we have noted, St-Serge never made use of his talents. In Clément's words⁴ 'il parlait en désert'.

Meanwhile, his scholarly work continued. His work on Eckhart, which had been proceeding steadily since 1945, was slowly nearing completion; and his reputation as a patristic and Byzantine expert was further enhanced by his contributions to the Augustinian Congress at Paris in 1954⁵ and the Second International Conference for Patristic Studies at Oxford in the following year.⁶ According to Clément,⁷ he was, in his last years, considering the writing of a comparative study of Rhineland mysticism and Palamism (almost contemporary developments), designed to illustrate the way in which 'mystical theology' in the West, orthodox in

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1. V. O. Clément, op. cit., pp. 82-3; N.O. Lossky, op. cit. p. 316.
 2. There is a short memoir of Kovalevsky in 'Présence Orthodoxe' (the journal of the Western-rite group), no. 9-10, 1970, pp. 6-7; it does not mention this episode.
 3. Though his sense of isolation must have been mitigated by a visit to Russia (his first since 1923) in Aug. 1956, at the invitation of the Patriarchate: a rather belated, but nonetheless genuine, recognition of his services to the throne of Moscow.
 4. In conversation with the writer, January 1973.
 5. 'Les éléments de "théologie négative" dans la pensée augustinien' (Augustinus Magister; Congrès international augustinien, Paris, 21-4 Sept. 1954; pub. 'Etudes Augustiniennes'; pp. 575-81.
 6. 'Le problème de la "Vision face à face" et la Tradition patristique de Byzance', Studio Patristica II, Berlin, 1957, pp. 513-37.
 7. 'Messenger', 30-1, pp. 204-5.

its intuitions, was frustrated and distorted by 'filloquiste' theology: 'Les grands contemplatifs de la fin du moyen-âge ont certes pressenti la réalité-directement participée-de la grâce increée, de la vision de Dieu comme communion existentielle, mais ils n'ont pu la fonder sur la théologie ni sur l'ecclésiologie. Et la revendication "personnaliste" puis, par déracinement ecclésial, individualiste de Luther, sortira pour une part de la Theologie Deutsch'.¹ Such ideas were scattered throughout his work, but the nearest he comes to any extended exposition of them is in some of his lectures on the Reformation: there is enough there to indicate how interesting and valuable a full-length study from his pen would have been. Clément also mentions² two further projects of Lossky's: 'une grande dogmatique orthodoxe', a more systematic development of the themes he had treated in the M.T. and in his various articles, with more attention paid to methodology and presuppositions (again, some of his ideas on the subject are to be found in unpublished lectures); and a further study of Bulgakov's thought. It is clear from the lectures that Bulgakov had continued to fascinate Lossky: especially in his treatment of Trinitarian theology, Lossky seems constantly aware of Bulgakov as a controversial interlocutor. More positively, Lossky's tentative reworking and clarification of the Palamite scheme³ is, in some ways, (as Clément suggests)⁴ an attempt to answer some of Bulgakov's questions, and to incorporate into the Orthodox tradition what was true in his intuitions and speculations.

Lossky's tragically sudden death (7th February, 1958) cut short all these projects: even the thesis on Eckhart was left incomplete.⁵

1. *Ib.*, p. 205.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 204-5.

3. *Infra*, ch. 6.

4. *Op. cit.*, p. 205.

5. It was completed by Clément, and the Sorbonne awarded the 'doctorat ès-lettres' posthumously; v. de Gandillac's foreword to the book (to which Gilson himself contributed a highly laudatory preface).

Despite the invaluable work of M. Clément and others in collecting, editing and publishing various papers in easily accessible form, and in distilling the contents of some of his lectures in the lucid and elegant summaries published in the 'Messenger' ¹ in 1964 and 1965, it is impossible not to lament the fact that Lossky died with so much yet to be accomplished. It is particularly regrettable that he was never able to set out, in print, at length, his conception of the nature and purpose of theology; as it is, the student is obliged to rely upon scattered remarks in the published works, and the rather ad hoc treatment of the subject in some of the lectures. For this reason, I have chosen to begin with a consideration of the Sophia controversy and its ramifications, since this is the point in Lossky's career at which his antagonism to speculative Idealist theology, of the characteristic 19th century Russian type, crystallises. Yet, superficially, his theology continued to have a good deal in common with Bulgakov's, as we shall see; my purpose in the next chapter will be to examine at some length what lies behind this deceptive harmony ² to discover the theological criteria by which Lossky judged Bulgakov, and according to which he was able to be constructing what he saw as an alternative system.

1. Nos. 46-50.

2. Apart, that is, from the personal factors and cultural differences already mentioned in this chapter.

CH. II

THE DEBATE WITH BULGAKOV

A reader of Bulgakov's 'The Orthodox Church' who was also familiar with Lossky's M.T. might be forgiven for supposing both works to be broadly representative of the same religious ethos; and large parts of 'Le Paraclet'¹ and 'Nevesta Agntsa',² and of many of Bulgakov's articles in the '30's and '40's' will sound very familiar to the student of Lossky. The violence of the controversy in 1936 seems almost inexplicable. The concern which Lossky shows in M.T. for uniting Scripture and Tradition in the single continuum of the Church's communal life is paralleled at the very beginning of 'The Orthodox Church' by a chapter³ on 'The Church as Tradition'; and a statement such as: 'Tradition is not a sort of archaeology, which by its shadows connects the present with the past, nor a law - it is the fact that the life of the Church remains always identical with itself'⁴ seems oddly at variance with Lossky's accusation⁵ that Bulgakov's attitude

1. Paris, Aubier, 1946; a translation of 'Uteshitel'; Paris, YMCA, 1936, the second volume of Bulgakov's great trilogy (of which 'Agnets Bozhii' is the first part).

2. Paris, YMCA, 1945; the final volume of the trilogy.

3. Ch. II, pp. 18-47

4. Ib., p. 37.

5. 'Spor', pp. 18-19; supra, p. 9.

to tradition is antiquarian. Both the first and second chapters of 'The Orthodox Church' speak, precisely as does Lossky, of the Church as the perfect symphony of diverse men, overcoming their individualism in the mutual love of the Eucharistic community,¹ so that 'each man in the Church lives the life of all men in the Church'.² For Bulgakov, as for Lossky, the essence of the distinctively Orthodox doctrine of the Church is its profound understanding of catholicity, as not simply identical with 'ecumenicity' but as relating to the opening of the individual subject to the wealth of communal life and thought. 'Each member of the Church is "Catholic" inasmuch as he is in union with the Church invisible, in the truth'.³ Neither catholicity nor even true ecumenicity is a matter of 'quantitative predominance': 'where two or three are gathered together ...' This view of catholicity is found, expressed in almost identical words, even in Bulgakov's earliest extended religious essay, 'Svet Nevechernii' ('The Unfading Light'),⁴ where he refers to Athanasius's defiance of the numerical majority in the Church on behalf of the authentic catholic and ecumenical faith. In like vein, Lossky was later⁵ to cite the example of Maximus the Confessor. Bulgakov, predictably, makes extensive use of the term 'sobornost' in writing about catholicity in the Church; Lossky consistently avoids the word in M.T., and, later,⁶ launches a weighty (and not unmerited) attack on the Slavophil mystique associated with it. Yet the similarities between their interpretations of the underlying theological concept are striking. Again, both agree that orthodoxy and holiness are inseparable, that

1. V. esp. *Op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

2. *Ib.*, p. 14.

3. *Ib.*, p. 76.

4. Moscow, 1917; pp. 55-6.

5. V. 'A l'image', p. 173.

6. V. *infra*, pp. 71-2.

growth in the apprehension of dogmatic truth is growth in the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church, the Spirit Who is the sole guarantor of truth.¹ In short, there seem at first sight to be no significant differences between Bulgakov and Lossky in their presentations of the Orthodox idea of the Church: even the distinction suggested by Congar² between Lossky's acceptance of the authority of general councils and Bulgakov's hesitations between this position and Khomyakov's more negative attitude to councils is not completely convincing when we compare relevant passages from M.T.³ and 'The Orthodox Church'.⁴ What impresses the reader is that both with one voice reject the notion of any criterion of orthodoxy external to the life of the Church itself.

Whence, then, their disagreement? First of all, it is essential to realise that 'The Orthodox Church' is one of Bulgakov's least 'typical' works. It is intended as an uncontroversial introduction to Orthodoxy, and Bulgakov scrupulously attempts (not always successfully) to exclude his own particular theological prepossessions, notably his sophiological doctrine. As has been indicated, it would be possible to compile a list of passages from a wide selection of his works to which Lossky could have had no objection; but in their original context, and in the context of Bulgakov's whole system, they may assume a rather different colouring. Even 'The Orthodox Church' as we have noted,⁵ is a work with very little directly historical undergirding.⁶ The primary

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1. 'The Orthodox Church', pp. 42-6, 77-8, 82-3, etc., on the application of this to the study and exegesis of Scripture, v. pp. 34-5, 36.
 2. 'Tradition and Traditions', pp. 105 n. 3, 106 n. 3.
 3. E.g., p. 188.
 4. E.g., pp. 87-8.
 5. *Supra*.
 6. Congar ('Divided Christendom', pp. 214-18) discusses the absence in what he calls 'Slavophile ecclesiology' of the sense of the historical evolution of an institution or society.

datum is the Church as it exists here and now and in eternity. Revealingly, Bulgakov claims ¹ that 'The Church exists, it is "given" in a certain sense independently of its historic origin; it took form because it already existed in the divine, superhuman plan. It exists in us, not as an institution or society, but first of all as a spiritual certainty, a special experience, a new life'. The two poles of Bulgakov's ecclesiology are the eternal and cosmic divine plan and the present experience of the believer: between these, the contingent historicity of the Church, 'the Church as founded by Jesus Christ', in Congar's words, ² is somewhat obscured. The Church as 'the eternal and foundation of creation created before all things' ³ is a problematic notion. In the sense that the Church reflects the unity - in - plurality of the Holy Trinity, and that man is, from the first, created in the image of this unity - in - plurality, ⁴ well and good; Lossky would have agreed whole-heartedly. ⁵ But the picture of the Church as the Ideal Cosmos in God's plan reduces the historical and empirical Church to near - insignificance. Despite Bulgakov's good intentions, his sophiological perspective has coloured his expressions here: his ecclesiology is irrevocably bound to sophiology, and any attempt to understand his thought is bound to take into consideration the doctrine of Sophia. I propose, then, to offer a necessarily brief and sketchy survey of this theme and its place in Bulgakov's theology. ⁶

1. Op. cit., pp. 11-12.

2. 'Divided Christendom', p. 216, n. 2.

3. 'The Orthodox Church', p. 15.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 13, 15.

5. *Infra*, ch. 4.

6. In much of what follows, I have been greatly helped by the comments and suggestions of Mr. Philip Walters of the London School of Economics, who is working on a thesis on Bulgakov's intellectual development up to the time of the Revolution.

2. Bulgakov began his academic career as an orthodox Marxist teacher of economics, but, in the last years of the 19th century, he moved away from his original position, at first towards revisionism, then to Kantian transcendentalism and Idealism, and finally to Orthodox Christianity.¹ His rejection of Marxism was closely bound up with a growing awareness of what might be called the 'anti-humanist' tendencies on that system, its 'abolition of the problem of personality and of the care for it'.² Marxism is concerned with abstraction and genera, with the class and never the individual: the class - or, more specifically, the particular class in whom historical destiny is invested, the proletariat, - becomes the source and the norm of value. The proletariat's role is that of the elect, the saints of the Most High, in the messianic war of revolution.³ Marxism thus nullifies the notion of individual or personal rights because it makes the notion of value totally immanent in the historical process and the interactions of collectives: the welfare of the person as such, of any particular person, is peripheral and, ultimately, dispensable.⁴ Yet this rigid collectivism co-exists with a curiously individualistic mystique of the revolutionary hero in Russian radicalism:⁵ the hero is the isolated free man, setting himself over against the unfree mass for whose liberation he struggles, the anarchist, the nihilist, to whom all is permitted, the 'mangod' ('chelovekobog') whose spectre Bulgakov conjures up in a notable essay on Feuerbach.⁶ Bulgakov's aim in his own work is a reconstruction of ethics on the basis of ontology:⁷ that is, a derivation of value not from the human collective, the historical process, or the individual nihilist, but from the structures of being, from 'the way things are'.

1. Some useful biographical details may be found in Zernov, 'Renaissance', ch. 6, esp. pp. 138-150; on the intellectual background, v. Masaryk, II, pp. 351-4.
2. 'Dva grada' ('Two Cities'), Moscow, 1911, (I), p. 75 (v. N.O. Lossky, 'History', p. 198).
3. Ib. (II), pp. 116-18 (v. N.O. Lossky, ib., pp. 198-9).
4. Ib. (I), pp. 75 f., 93-4, (II), p. 30 (v. N.O. Lossky, ib., p. 198).
5. Ib. (II), pp. 191 f., 198 (N.O. Lossky, ib., pp. 200-1).
6. Ib. (I), ch. 1.
7. 'O marksizma i idealizmu', St Petersburg, 1903 pp. xix-xx.

This is where the concept of Sophia becomes all-important.

His first use of 'Sophia' appears in 'Filosofiya khozyaistva' ('The Philosophy of Economics', Moscow, 1912), where it means something like a 'world-soul', the 'creative subject' of cosmic process: Sophia is that in creation which evolves, throughout human history, towards the fulfilment of God's purposes.¹ Thus the idea of value receives a transcendental grounding in the objective will of God drawing creation to Himself. Yet this scheme, in fact, does not solve the other part of the problem, the role of the person as such: it merely replaces one kind of collectivism (the historical dialectic) with another (Sophianic evolution), and human freedom is left no less obscured. Bulgakov planned a second part for 'Filosofiya khozyaistva', designed to deal with ethics and eschatology, but it was never written: the juxtaposition of these two subjects² is significant, suggesting that Bulgakov would have been able to introduce a genuinely ethical and voluntarist dimension into his thought only through reference to the apocalypse. The ethical purity of the Christian ascetic ('podvizhnik'), as opposed to the radical 'hero', is preserved by his eschatological mentality, his perennial voluntary struggle to live and act with reference to the apocalypse, the ultimate revealing of cosmic purpose.³ The polarity between extreme collectivism and extreme individualism is not really resolved; the 'podvizhnik' differs from the 'hero' (as Bulgakov explains in his 'Vekhi' essay) in being characterised by humility and self-abnegation, but he remains, in some sense, an individual standing over against the world and society. The Church as yet plays little part in Bulgakov's thought: the 'podvizhnik' gives himself in humility to an eternal and universal purpose rather

1. V. Zenkovsky II, p. 902.

2. As Mr. Philip Walters has pointed out to me.

3. There are adumbrations of this view in Bulgakov's contribution to 'Vekhi', but it was never fully developed in his later work; though c.f. 'Svet nevechernii', pp. 204-10.

than to the fellowship of Christian men.

Thus far, Bulgakov's 'Sophiology' was indebted chiefly to Vladimir Soloviev (1853-1900), the first Russian philosopher to make extensive use of the concept. However, he felt some dissatisfaction with Soloviev's system, and came increasingly under the influence - personal as well as intellectual - of Fr Pavel Florensky, ¹ one of the most remarkable minds of the day, whose magnum opus, 'Stolp i utvershdenie istiny' ('The Pillar and Ground of Truth', Moscow, 1911), offered a reconstructed Sophiological scheme in which, ostensibly at least, the tradition of the Church was assigned a more important place than in Soloviev's speculations. Florensky did not see Sophia as a world-soul, in Bulgakov's sense, though he does speak of it as the world's 'ideal personality'; ² Sophia is a 'fourth hypostasis', ³ the concrete, sensitive wholeness of the world as grounded in God, and as expressed in the Church. It is the Church which realises the Sophianic destiny of the world and through which creation is, by grace, included in the Absolute. ⁴ And man is unable to unite himself with Sophia merely as an individual: his knowledge of, and participation of, the concrete universal is realised in the intimate union of persons in friendship. ⁵ We shall have occasion later on to discuss Florensky at more length; for the present, it will be sufficient to note that the impact of his greater concern with the Church and his uncompromising rejection of individualism (at least in some spheres) is clearly reflected in Bulgakov's next work, 'Svet nevechernii' (1917). In this monumentally learned and complex work, Sophia appears very clearly as a 'fourth hypostasis', an 'eternal

1. On Florensky, *infra*, ch. 8; on his influence on Bulgakov, v. Zenkovsky II, pp. 895 ff. Bulgakov expresses some of his criticisms on Soloviev in 'The Wisdom of God', (London 1937) pp. 23-5, where Soloviev is unfavourably compared with Florensky.

2. 'Stolp', p. 326.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 349 ff.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 345, 350.

5. The penultimate chapter of 'Stolp' is devoted to this subject.

femininity' in God, in which creation is grounded.¹ That is, Sophia is quite clearly separated from created being, and seen (as in Florensky's book) as objectively divine, not merely as an immanent principle tending towards divinity; yet not precisely 'God', since it does not share in the 'internal life' of the Trinity, 'and therefore does not transform trinity into quaternity'.² At the same time, 'Svet nevechernii' pays a good deal of attention to the foundation of religious forms of life and thought in communal, 'catholic' experience;³ and the general direction of the book is towards a view of the Church as leading man back to pristine Sophianic harmony (lost by the Fall) through participation in the 'Heavenly Man', the Second Adam, Who includes in Himself all created personalities, harmonising the division between 'I' and 'not I' in the ecclesial 'we'.⁴ It is worth noting that Bulgakov does not follow Florensky in emphasising the importance of 'friendship' in this connexion, but develops a rather less subjectivist and romantic account of the transcending of the enclosed ego in religious knowledge.

Florensky had considered that, since the 'concrete universal' which was the ultimate object of cognition was a total unity ('vseedinstvo', a word much used by Soloviev and his followers), it must be beyond the categories of logical thought, and able to contain contradictories in a coincidentia oppositorum. Thus, language about 'ultimate reality' must have an antinomical character.⁵ Bulgakov was obviously much influenced by this: 'antimony' is a word often used in 'Svet nevechernii', and there is, early on in the book,⁶ a substantial section on 'The basic antinomy

1. Op. cit., pp. 212-14.

2. Ib., p. 212.

3. Ib., pp. 54 ff.

4. E.g., Ib., pp. 348, 401 ff., etc.

5. *Infra*, ch. 8.

6. Pp. 96-103; v. N.O. Lossky, 'History', pp. 204-6.

of the religious consciousness', discussing the contradictio in adiecto of transcendence and immanence in language about God and the world. This stress on antinomy is, of course, useful in treating of Sophia, which is both divine and created; and the whole of Bulgakov's doctrine of creation, is, in fact, coloured by this 'antinomic' affirmation that the world is simultaneously divine and other than God, not identical with the divine Sophia, yet grounded in it and having it as an 'entelechy'.¹ Bulgakov's anthropology reflects especially clearly the duality of the world in his thought² - predictably, since he sees man as a microcosm, and the world as perfected and 'articulated' in man, through whom alone it can be brought to Sophianic fullness.³ 'Man is at once created and uncreated, absolute in relativity and relative in absoluteness a living antinomy an incarnate contradiction.'⁴ Less rhetorically expressed, Bulgakov's view seems to be that man is compounded of created and uncreated parts, or, better, aspects. He is compounded of nature and hypostasis or personality; and the latter, which is the image of God in man, is indefinable, 'absolute in its potential significance', though always relative and limited in its actuality'.⁵ This is modified a little in a later article:⁶ here man is considered as essentially spirit, because - like the Absolute Spirit - he is an indissoluble union of self-awareness and independence or self-subsistence, hypostasis (ὁπίστας, persona) and nature (φύσις, natura).⁷ Self-awareness

1. V., e.g. ib. pp. 222-3.

2. The only really useful critical account of Bulgakov's doctrine of man is A. Joos's essay, 'L'homme et son mystère: éléments d'anthropologie dans l'oeuvre du P. Serge Boulgakov', 'Irenikon', vol. XLVI, 3, 1972, pp. 332-61.

3. 'Filosofiya khozyaistva', p. 196-7; 'Svet nevechernii', pp. 269, 285-6, and Part III, passim; Joos, op. cit., pp. 340, 342, 345, etc.

4. 'Svet nevechernii', p. 278.

5. Ib., p. 281.

6. 'Ipostas i ipostasnost' (Scholia k "Svetu nevechernemu")', ('Hypostasis and Hypostaseity: Scholia to "The Unfading Light"'), in 'Sbornik statei posvyashchennykh Petru Berngardovichu Struve' ('A collection of essays dedicated to P.B. Struve'), Prague, 1925.

7. Ib., p. 354.

the mysterious 'I' which constitutes personal being, is the sine qua non of spirit, but it lives as spirit only when it 'hypostatizes' nature. 'In the mutuality of "I" and "nature", "I" realises itself as living spirit, as self-subsistence'.¹ Later still,² Bulgakov was to say more explicitly that man as spirit, that is, as nature and person together, constituted the image of God, rather than man as hypostasis only; though even in 'Svet nevechernii', the importance of 'spirit' ('dukh') as the mode of being of the whole man is emphasised.³

This analysis of spiritual being provides Bulgakov, in his work after 'Svet nevechernii', with a new way of describing Sophia. In 'Ipostas i ipostasnost', and 'Agnets Boshii', Sophia is identified with the divine οὐσία or φύσις regarded as that by which the divine hypostases live: it is the divine ἐνέργεια, in Palamite terms,⁴ Θεός or Θεότης, but not ὁ Θεός. It is not itself hypostatic: the confusions surrounding the idea of a 'fourth hypostasis' are finally cleared up in 'Ipostas i ipostasnost', where Bulgakov carefully distinguishes between 'hypostasis' and the capacity for hypostatisation ('ipostasnost', 'hypostaseity'). This capacity is - by definition - passive, or 'feminine', and does not itself act: it is receptive rather than active love, it is what God (as hypostatic spirit) loves, the depths of the divine selfhood in which is contained the potentiality of God's self-manifestation, His outgoing from His own οὐσία in creation.⁵ It is in this sense that Sophia is the pre-existent ideal basis of the world, a 'divine world' between God and His creation: as the content of the

1. Ibid.

2. 'Le Paraclet', pp. 69-70.

3. Pp. 279-81 (on the image of the Trinity in the human spirit); and c.f. pp. 234-44 on the union of spirit and matter.

4. 'Ipostas' ..., p. 358; 'Du Verbe incarné', pp. 21; c.f. 'Svet nevechernii' pp. 210 for a reference to the Palamite debate.

5. 'Ipostas ...', pp. 360-3; 'Du Verbe incarné', pp. 21-7.

divine life, Sophia is the existential ground of all things, 'vseedinstvo'.¹ And because man is an hypostatic being, a subject capable of relating to Sophianic nature, to the 'world', all of which is his 'nature', he is the summit of creation and the image of God.² 'Nature', is, here, the world experienced as objective by the self, and united to the self in the process of experiencing: it is (to borrow a philosophical term from elsewhere) the 'Gestalt' of the subject, the non-ego conditioning and contributing to the ego, not merely as a limit, in a negative sense, but as a total context of being, capable of transformation by man into a 'cosmos', a world of Sophianic order and beauty, conformed to the purposes of God.³

Since the original pure and positive relation between man and the Sophianic world is broken the Fall,⁴ the redemptive work of Christ is very largely concerned with the restoration of this relation. Fallen man has become bound to nature, enslaved by nature: instead of transcending and transfiguring it by his personal outgoing towards it, he has himself become a 'natural' being, object rather than subject, enclosed in his individuality and egotism.⁵ He is imperfectly hypostatic, incapable of fully realising his 'hypostaseity' in communion with the divine nature, in which the barriers of individuality are broken down:⁶ the plenitude of hypostatic existence is manifested in the life of the Trinity, and this is what man yearns for. Christ is a divine hypostasis in Whom are united two 'natures', that is to say, two 'hypostaseities',

1. 'Ipostas...' pp. 359-360, 364.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 364-5; 'Du Verbe incarné', pp. 8-9, 58-63.

3. 'Ipostas'...., p. 368; 'Du verbe incarné', pp. 8-9, 59-60, 67-8, etc., Zenkovsky, II, p. 909; Joos, *op. cit.*, p. 345.

4. 'Du Verbe incarné', pp. 69-70, 72-80; c.f. 'Svet nevechernii', pp. 312 ff.

5. 'Du Verbe incarné', pp. 76-7; Joos, *op. cit.*, p. 358. One wonders whether it is merely fanciful to see here some traces of Marx's analysis of 'alienation'.

6. 'Ipostas...' p. 369.

divine Sophia and creaturely Sophia.¹ In His single person, 'hypostatizing' human nature and divine nature, at once, the two aspects of Sophia are perfectly reconciled, because His person is equally and perfectly in relation to both. Thus human hypostaseity is fully actualised as the hypostasis of Christ; so that every imperfect, human hypostasis must lose itself in Christ in order to realise its Sophianic hypostaseity. In Christ, therefore, individuality is transcended by man's sharing in a hypostatic life not his own.² The Church, which perpetuates the union of the two natures, is founded upon the 'unconditioned hypostasis'³ of Christ, and in it man enters the life of the Trinity, the life of unity-in-plurality: in this sense, the Church is an 'image of the Trinity'.⁴ And the communion of believers in the Church is, of course, that 'sobornost'' of which Bulgakov makes so much in 'The Orthodox Church'. It is evident how closely Bulgakov's ecclesiology is connected to the doctrine of Sophia: because Christ's work is seen primarily as the reconciliation of divine and creaturely Sophia, the Church, as fruit and embodiment of this reconciliation, is the Sophianic cosmos, the eschatological realisation of 'vseedinstvo'. It is natural enough, in such a light, to speak of the Church as 'the eternal end and foundation of creation'.

Bulgakov's treatment of the question of Christ's hypostasis and its relation to His human nature requires some further comment. It will be recalled that Bulgakov generally uses 'hypostasis' as a synonym for self-aware subjectivity, the foundation of 'spiritual' existence: which suggests that Christ's self-consciousness was unequivocally divine. However, Bulgakov's immense elaboration of the kenotic theme in 'Du Verbe

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1. 'Ipostas...', p. 365; 'Du Verbe incarné', pp. 121-137, passim; c.f. 'Svet nevechernii', pp. 334-49.
 2. 'Ipostas...', *ibid.*; 'Du Verbe incarné', pp. 132-4; c.f. 'Svet nevechernii' pp. 348.
 3. 'Ipostas...' *ibid.*
 4. V., e.g., 'The Orthodox Church', pp. 13, 15.

incarné' ¹ modifies the plausibility of such a conclusion. Christ in the incarnation renounces all that makes His divine nature incommensurable or incompatible with humanity; that is, He renounces His glory, the full exercise of divine power and majesty which He eternally enjoys with the Father just as, in creation, there is a sort of kenosis in God's withdrawal of His glory to 'make room' for an 'other'. ² This is possible because of the eternal 'Godmanhood' ('Bogochelovechestvo') of the Word, ³ His eternal potentiality for becoming man, His eternal kinship with humanity. ⁴ Thus, of earth, His consciousness is 'theanthropique', ⁵ a perfect synthesis of God's awareness of Himself and relation to Himself, to His οὐσία, and human relation to 'nature', a synthesis possible because of the fundamental unity of divine and created substance qua Sophia. The difficulty here is (as Metropolitan Sergei observed) ⁶ that it seem as if the Church's insistence that Jesus possessed a human vous (an insistence clearly present in the Chalcedonia Definition) is being exchanged for a thinly-veiled Apollinarianism. Bulgakov's exegesis of Chalcedon ⁷ is, indeed, strained: by treating λογική not as an adjective qualifying ψυχή ⁸ but as a substantive, he arrives at the conclusion that Chalcedon allows of a trichotomist anthropology - reasonable soul, 'animal' soul, and body, presumably. The first term might be rendered

1. V. esp. pp. 139-74.
 2. V., e.g., 'Svet nevechernii', pp. 180-1: creation is 'the Golgotha of the Absolute', 'the world is created as a cross', and God 'abased Himself before the creation'; and 'Du Verbe incarné', p. 48.
 3. The trilogy beginning with 'Agnets Bozhii' has as a general title 'O Bogochelovechestva', 'On Godmanhood'.
 4. V., e.g., 'Svet nevechernii', pp. 353-6: 'Du Verbe incarné' pp.
 5. 'Du Verbe incarné', pp. 160-2, 191-218, 252-3, etc.,
 6. 'O Sofii, Premudrosti Bozhieie', pp. 11 f.
 7. 'Du Verbe incarné', p. 161.
 8. The relevant passage is.....τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν θεότητι, τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι, θεὸν ἀληθῶς καὶ ἀνθρώπον ἀληθῶς τὸν αὐτὸν ἐκ ψυχῆς λογικῆς καὶ σώματος (... 'the same perfect in divinity, the same perfect in humanity, truly God and truly man, the same consisting of a reasonable soul and a body').

'spirit', and so is equivalent, in effect, to 'hypostasis', the 'theanthropic' personal self-consciousness of the Logos. This, however, does not affect the Chalcedonian affirmation that Christ's humanity was τέλειος: the constitution of His humanity is perfect, but He is not completely man, in the sense that He has no human 'spirit' although He possesses all things appertaining to man's 'nature' in the world. This is, admittedly, a delicate and complex question: but, since Chalcedon quite plainly intended (following Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzen) ¹ to affirm that Christ possessed a human νοῦς, Bulgakov's interpretation of the Definition is completely untenable, theologically as well as linguistically. Yet Bulgakov's Christology cannot be satisfactorily dealt with in terms of the 4th and 5th century controversies. The point of cardinal importance is that, for Bulgakov, the ψυχὴ λογικὴ in all men is in some sense divine or uncreated, ² open to the full presence and agency of God, 'potentially absolute', and so on; so that Christ, in Whom this absoluteness is realised by the hypostatic presence of the Word, is no less human for lacking a human ψυχὴ λογικὴ. Bulgakov's is a tightly constructed system, and rarely indeed can he be accused of inconsistency: it should be apparent that not merely his ecclesiology but his anthropology and soteriology are, in all respects, integrally related to Sophiology, and it is, perhaps, a little easier to see why Metropolitan Sergei and his supporters were unable to regard the Sophian scheme as a 'theologoumenon' only, as a thesis affecting only a particular area of theological thought. Bulgakov's protest ³ that Sophiology was such a thesis was, in a way, unduly modest: we have seen how it affects the argument even of so determinedly uncontroversial a work as 'The Orthodox Church'. Whatever may be thought of their methods

1. For a summary, v. J.N.D. Kelly, 'Early Christian Doctrines', pp.296-301
2. In 'Du Verbe incarné', p. 60, he goes so far as to state simply that flesh is created and spirit uncreated.
3. In his reply to the Patriarchal ukaz.

and conclusions, the Synod which issued the ukaz possessed a sound instinct in this respect, at least.

It is no part of my purpose here to examine in detail the strictures of the ukaz or Bulgakov's defence: we shall turn immediately to Lossky's detailed critique. Naturally enough, Lossky begins by questioning what he sees as Bulgakov's basic presuppositions concerning the nature of ecclesiastical authority, since much of Bulgakov's defence rested upon the complaint that the Metropolitan and the Synod were acting ultra vires.¹ This shows, according to Lossky,² an insensitivity to the actual form of the ukaz: it is not intended to be an unanswerable, quasi-infallible pronouncement, and is certainly not an individual decree by Metropolitan Sergei.³ Of course it demands obedience, as a matter of canonical fact; but obedience patterned on the obedience of Christ laying down His life for the sake of the flock,⁴ not servile obedience to tyrannical force. To deny that the hierarchy have a right to give ruling decisions on dogmatic questions, to which obedience is due, is to restrict their activity to their sacramental functions, in the interests of a protestantising and democratising view of the Church, the vague 'sobornost'' ideology so common in Russian religio-philosophical literature: it shows a 'dilettante' attitude to the institutional Church.⁵ This is not to deny that every member of the Body of Christ is responsible for purity of doctrine; on the contrary, it is Bulgakov who, in his contempt for the empirical Church and its canonical order, forgets this.⁶ Bulgakov appeals to I Cor. II 16-19 in support of his claim that doctrinal pluralism is 'normal' in the Church. Lossky appeals in return to Mt. 18⁷, and points out, reasonably

V.V. supra, p. 31.

2. 'Spor o Sofii', pp. 6-7.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 9-10.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 8-9.

5. *Ib.*, pp. 9-10.

6. *Ib.*, p. 12.

enough, that the context of the Pauline passage hardly speaks for this kind of pluralism being a commendable feature of the Church's life.¹ Heresy arises because of human sinfulness: it is tragic and hurtful, but the Church develops its own strength by combatting it, so that it is not wholly negative in its results.² Thus the argument of this opening section of Lossky's pamphlet is essentially a defence of the 'givenness' of Church order and government: Bulgakov is wrong, irrespective of the merits of his theology, in rejecting the decision of his canonical superiors.

Yet, as Lossky proceeds to demonstrate, this 'practical' point is not irrelevant to Bulgakov's theology. Bulgakov has no sense that, as a priest and teacher, he should speak for and with the Church: he recurs again and again to speaking of his work and his system, in a way which does not befit a spokesman of the Church Catholic. He appeals to the fact that 'Svet nevecernii' was never condemned; but he was still, after all, an independent lay thinker at the time of that work's publication. Having (to his credit, says Lossky) proceeded to the priesthood, his responsibilities are greater.³ He complains that the Synod has not attempted to understand the whole of his system; but, Lossky replies, if, at any point, the tendency of the system is away from Orthodox tradition, that is sufficient ground for rejection.⁴ Here again is the characteristic insensitivity of the Russian intelligentsia to Tradition as a living and continuing context of thought and life. Instead of working within this tradition, Bulgakov subordinates his theology to an alien philosophical system; and attempts to defend this by pointing to the use made of classical

1. *Ib.*, p. 11.

2. *Ib.*, p. 12.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 13-14.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 15-16; Lossky illustrates this with a rather unfortunate reference to Cyril's condemnation of Nestorius, probably with the least edifying case of such condemnation on inadequate evidence in the records of the patristic age.

philosophy by the Greek Fathers. Lossky emphasizes that patristic theology is never controlled by philosophy: it is necessary for the student to be aware of this philosophical background, but he must never confuse it with the positive content of patristic theology. The truth or falsity of any set of philosophical assumptions is completely irrelevant to the truth of revelation, and it is this essential autonomy of theology which Bulgakov has not grasped.¹ In turn, this failure is not unconnected with what Metropolitan Sergei called the 'Gnostic' aspects of the Sophiological system. Bulgakov attempts to leave no corner of theology unexplained, and in this far-reaching rationalism he resembles the early gnostics: he, like them, is insufficiently apophatic. In 'Svet nevechernii', there is, indeed, a long section on 'negative theology' (pp. 103-146); but neither there nor elsewhere does Bulgakov regard it as anything more than a subdivision of theological method.² He does not realise that apophasis is 'the unique path for all theological thought',³ the condition for our reception of revelation.⁴ He implicitly denies (as did the Gnostics) that human thought requires an ascetical purification before it can touch God, and so runs the risk (in the words of Metropolitan Sergei) of 'deception and self-deception'.⁵

We come next to Lossky's discussion of the doctrine of Sophia itself. Bulgakov had denied that this affected the orthodoxy of his Trinitarian doctrine, but Lossky was unconvinced: if Sophia is regarded as anything other than a property of the divine ὁὐσία common to the three persons, then it does obscure what is normally meant by the Trinity. And Palamas's phrase about grace being 'thousand-personed',⁶ which Bulgakov appeals to,

1. *Ib.*, pp. 18-19.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 20-1.

3. *Ib.*, p. 21.

4. *Ib.*, p. 22.

5. *Ib.*, p. 22-3. Lossky refuses to take seriously Bulgakov's references to Palamas as an exemplary practitioner of the negative way, since Palamas devoted his whole career to struggling against philosophical ('Thomistic' is Lossky's word) incursions into theology.

6. PG 150,941.

refers, of course, to the multiplicity of human recipients of grace rather than any multiplicity of divine agencies.¹ The alternatives are (and here Lossky follows Metropolitan Sergei) Sophia as a divine hypostasis, stricto sensu, which is impossible, or Sophia as a generalised, non-hypostatic principle of divine love, which is equally impossible, or - the only orthodox and the only intelligible interpretation - Sophia as one among the divine 'Names' or 'energies' as the Palamites viewed it.² As such, it is neither an hypostasis, nor an impersonal 'principle' but a function exercised by the three hypostases of the Godhead, and, like all ἐνεργείαι, possessed by them in common, as Palamas repeatedly states.³ The diversity which exists in the Trinity is entirely personal, a distinction between three subjects, or even three 'consciousnesses' (as Sergei had put it), and any distinction on other grounds is highly unsatisfactory. Thus, Bulgakov's attempt in 'Agnets Bozhii' to 'appropriate' Wisdom especially to the Son, and 'Glory' to the Spirit, and to interpret these as 'male' and 'female' qualities runs contrary to orthodox Trinitarianism.⁴ So also Bulgakov's speculations on the 'spiritual analogy' between the Holy Spirit and the Mother of God, his quotations from Aphraates on the 'femininity' of the Holy Spirit, and all related notions, are inadmissible.⁵ It is probably that Lossky is here objecting not merely to Bulgakov, but to a whole tradition in Russian religious thought which emphasised the theme of 'divine motherhood' in one way or another. Dostoyevsky had touched on this in 'The Possessed', putting into the mouth of Maria Lebyatkin the identification of the Mother of God with Mother Earth, an identification implicit in much Russian popular

1. 'Spor', pp. 25-6.

2. *Ib.*, p. 27.

3. *Ib.*, p. 28.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 30-1; v. 'Du Verbe incarné', pp. 28-31. The Son and the Spirit, as 'revealing' the Father, form a dyad ('dvoitsa') expressive of the duality of divine Sophia as the principle of revelation; v.C. Graves, 'The Holy Spirit in the Theology of Sergius Bulgakov' (Geneva, 1972; privately), pp. 9-14.

5. 'Spor', pp. 32-3, 35.

piety, as Fedotov notes.¹ The femininity of the Holy Spirit was an idea proposed by that brilliant eccentric, Nikolai Fyodorov (though not directly in connexion with the notion of divine motherhood),² and extensively used by Merezhkovsky.³ Florenskys' Sophiology also has some traces of this;⁴ not surprisingly, considering his fascination with folklore and folk religion. The whole complex of ideas here demands a more detailed investigation than we can give in the present work; but it is clear that it is very closely associated with Slavophilism and populism on the one hand and Symbolist religiosity on the other. We should not expect Lossky to be anything but severely critical: his strictures are yet another sign of his radical break with Slavophilism and its derivatives, and he takes occasion to register a further protest⁵ against Bulgakov's gnostic mixture of intellectualism and mystagogy, quoting Philaret of Moscow on the primary need for contemplative humility in reflecting on the things of God.

Lossky moves on to a consideration of Bulgakov's anthropology, complaining that the concept of 'Godmanhood' in Bulgakov's sense argues an 'anthropocentrism' of a very misguided kind, and distorts completely the traditional Orthodox doctrine of man's 'deification' by grace.⁶ Bulgakov's exaggerated view of the dignity of man leads him to assert⁷ the inferiority of the angels to man, and to quote Palamas⁸ apropos of this. Palamas considers man to be God's image in a higher degree than are the angels, since man is possessed of a body 'energised' by spirit, and thus reflects God's creative life in relation to the world: like God,

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1. 'The Russian Religious Mind', vol. I (Harvard, 1946) pp. 13, 360-1.
 2. V. the extract from Fyodorov's work translated in A. Schmemmann, 'Ultimate Questions', N.Y. 1965 esp. pp. 199-201.
 3. N.O. Lossky, 'History', pp. 337-41. Merezhkovsky proposed that the Trinity should be regarded as 'Father, Son, and Mother-Spirit'.
 4. *Ib.*, pp. 182-3.
 5. 'Spor', p. 34.
 6. *Ib.*, pp. 37-8.
 7. V. 'Svet nevechernii', pp. 305-9.
 8. Cap. 36, PB 150, 1140.

man is living substance, 'essence' and 'energy'. Here is an embarrassment: Lossky's most favoured authority giving what appears to be unambiguous support to Bulgakov. Lossky, however, in a very spirited manner, disputes the conclusions which Bulgakov draws from Palamas's text: what if man is more fully in God's image than the angels? does this necessarily mean that human nature as such is superior to angelic? Not at all: 'St Gregory Palamas's thought is clear: created in God's image, human and angelic spirits are distinguished by this, that in man this image is composite, expressed not only in the existence of the spirit in itself, but also in its structuring ('promyshlenie') of the body, in the image of God's structuring of the world; whereas angels reveal in their greater purity of spirit only the image of God's perfection, unrelated to the structuring of external phenomena'.¹ This is ingenious, but not wholly convincing. The consensus of Eastern and Western tradition is with Lossky, but the plain meaning of Palamas's words tends to support Bulgakov. That Lossky was aware of an imperfectly resolved problem here is evident from some of his remarks on angelology in M.T.² and the lectures: we shall return to this in chapter 4. It seems as if Lossky's concern to combat Bulgakov's excessive enthusiasm for the exalted status of humanity in the creation has led him to attack Bulgakov at a point where they were not fundamentally at variance, or, at least, far less at variance than Lossky allowed.

The quotation from Palamas about man as a 'composite' image of God, body and soul together, leads Lossky into an exposition³ of Bulgakov's ambiguities on the subject of the createdness of the human soul or hypostasis, ambiguities which Lossky associates with Origenism. In later years⁴

1. 'Spor', p. 41.

2. V. esp. p. 108, and contrast p. 116.

3. 'Spor' pp. 41-4.

4. Especially in 'La théologie de l'image', pp. 123-137; v. infra, ch. 3.

he dealt more extensively with the Origenist doctrine of the 'kinship' (*συγγένεια*) of the *Word* with God, and the barren intellectualism which he thought it to imply. Here, however, his main concern seems to be to criticize Bulgakov for blurring the distinction between the adjectives 'created' and 'uncreated': Lossky, with characteristically Gallic lucidity, is unmoved by the strings of paradoxes to which Bulgakov was, as we have seen, much addicted in his treatment of this subject. He does not, however, take up the question of Bulgakov's identification of the soul with the hypostasis until a little later, in the course of the critique¹ of Bulgakov's doctrine of the Incarnation which forms the next major section of the pamphlet. Much of this critique hinges upon the hoary problem of 'occasionalism', upon the debate as to whether the incarnation is, in some sense, contingent upon the Fall, and so 'accidental' or 'occasional', or whether it is eternally part of God's design for creation. Metropolitan Sergei had criticized Bulgakov's emphasis upon the Incarnation as an aspect of God's eternal life, and Bulgakov had responded by accusing Sergei of occasionalism: Lossky, supporting Sergei, puts his finger on one of the more problematic corollaries of Bulgakov's view, and asks whether it does not imply the inevitability of the Fall. Surely, if the Fall is any sense attributable to human freedom, it must be 'accidental'; but we should be able to distinguish accidentality in the creature from accidentality in God.² Lossky, then allows that Bulgakov is right to avoid any language which might suggest a God who altered His plans at the dictates of chance; but he accepts what is, in effect, a Thomist distinction between what God contingently knows and what God knows as contingent³ (though he would not so phrase it).

1. 'Spor', pp. 46-66.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 47-8.

3. *V.*, eg., S.Th. I, 14, xiii, xv; for further elucidation, and the distinction between God's necessary knowledge and contingent will, *v. ib.*, I, 19, iii ad vi.

Bulgakov, so Lossky claims, contradicts the patristic consensus which very definitely connects the Incarnation with the Fall,¹ and stands closer to the absolute determinism of Calvin.² For Bulgakov, the Incarnation is the crown of created being, it is that for the sake of which the world was made; how then, asks Lossky, can the Incarnation be other than a necessity, how can it be grace?³ 'If the Incarnation is the purpose of the world and not the means of its salvation from sin, one of two things must follow: either the world is necessary to God, i.e. God is a being dependent on what is external to Him, or else the creation of the world manifests, if not a "divine catastrophe", then, in any case, an act bestowing existence on something imperfect, a world including in itself not merely the possibility but also the reality of evil'.⁴ If it is strictly in God's nature to become incarnate, His life is not independent of creation; and creation is not gratuitous, and so not independent of God. The Fall is 'natural' to creation, and, pushing this to its logical conclusion, we come very near to postulating evil in God.

Lossky's fundamental objection to all this is, as we have already indicated, that it is determinist. The freedom of God and the freedom of created being are equally obscured, and the notion of a free, personal encounter or dialogue between God and the independent 'other' whom He has created becomes almost meaningless. For all Bulgakov's efforts, it is the order of 'nature' which triumphs in his system, the order of fixed and predetermined patterns. Even Bulgakov's doctrine of kenosis fails to circumvent the pitfalls of impersonalism: Bulgakov speaks a great deal of the Cross in the Trinity, quoting the famous words of Metropolitan Philaret

1. 'Spor', pp. 51-2.

2. *Ib.*, pl 53.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 53-54.

4. *Ib.*, p. 55.

of Moscow. ¹ 'The love of the Father is crucifying, the love of the Son is crucified, the love of the Spirit is the victorious power of the Cross' and so tends to present kenosis as a 'metaphysical process.' Golgotha becomes only a temporal symbol of an eternal reality. Both the free act of God's condescension and the free response of men to Christ are excluded. ² The idea of 'the Cross in the Trinity', as presented by Bulgakov, suggests something like a conflict of wills in God, and seems to ignore the fact that the Atonement wrought by the Cross is the will of all three persons. Philaret's dictum is valid, but it does not mean that there is 'tragic' suffering in God, some sort of conflict rendered irresolvable by natural necessity: ³ as Lossky indicates later, in M.T., ⁴ the self-emptying of the Word, usque ad mortem, for the sake of MAN's salvation truly manifests to us what the love of God is, but it is tragic only 'economically' only in the order of God's relations with man. ⁵ Bulgakov's kenoticism is rooted in that systematic confusion between the personal and the natural which is 'the basic motif of (his) sophianic theology'. ⁶ The historical life of Christ, the theatre of personal freedom, loses much of its significance: Metropolitan Antony Khrapovitsky had elevated Gethsemane to the same level of soteriological importance as Calvary, regarding it as the summit of

1. 'Slova i rechi Sinodalnago chlena Filareta, mitropolita Moskovskago' ('Sermons and Addresses of Metr. Philaret of Moscow, Member of the Synod'), Moscow, 1848, vol. I, p. 30; v. also M.T., p. 85.
2. 'Spor', pp. 71-3.
3. Ib., pp. 76-7.
4. P. 85.
5. Lossky became increasingly interested, however, in the idea of the Incarnation as reflecting an eternal 'kenotic' obedience of the Son to the Father (v. infra, ch.4); this is closely connected with his developing understanding of the meaning of 'personhood', and he avoids any language implying a 'tragedy of the Absolute'.
6. 'Spor', p. 78 (c.f. p. 82).

Christ's identification with man imprisoned by sin,¹ and Sergei had noted that Bulgakov appeared to do the same.² Lossky takes up this point,³ insisting that the historical fact of Jesus's death on the cross is the one indispensable focus and climax of His atoning activity, as Scripture and Tradition make perfectly clear. Symbol cannot be substituted for history, and the tangible, physical passion on the cross is ultimately important in a way which the spiritual or moral agony of Gethsemane cannot quite be.

This is so especially because Bulgakov's scheme allows no creative role at all to the humanity of Jesus. 'Godmanhood' is essentially a Monophysite idea,⁴ so that the human will of Jesus is swallowed up in a generalised 'theandric' will (and Gethsemane is thus not the struggle of a human will at all).⁵ The same failing is reflected in Bulgakov's virtual Apollinarianism (he does, in fact, defend Apollinarius by name), identifying personality with 'spirit', and so (as we have observed) denying Jesus a human *vous*.⁶ The implication of this, that created 'spirit' and created freedom play no part in the economy of salvation at all, is reflected in the ^{weakness} weakness of Bulgakov's ecclesiology: having reduced personality to *vous*, Bulgakov has no doctrine of personal sanctification by the Holy Spirit. Metropolitan Sergei proposes a traditionalist Christology which leads naturally into a theology of the Spirit and the Church, but 'the Christology of Father Bulgakov diffuses itself in a cosmic "panchristism", swallowing up both the Holy Spirit and the Church,

1. V. *infra*, ch. 9.

2. N.O. Lossky ('History', pp. 218-19) points out at least one important difference, however.

3. 'Spor', pp. 74 ff.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 66, 70.

5. This is not quite fair to Bulgakov: c.f. N. Gorodetzky, 'The Humiliated Christ in Modern Russian Thought' (London, 1938), pp. 168-9, for a more sympathetic summary.

6. 'Spor', pp. 62-3.

and in the same way, annihilating the human personality in a "sophianically-natural" process of divinisation'.¹ It is an automatic and crudely physicalist soteriology, in which human persons are absorbed into the divine hypostasis of Christ. Any orthodox ecclesiology must, of course, give weight to the image of Christ as the Church's 'Head': but this means simply that Christ 'includes' in His glorified Body the whole of human nature (not the totality of human persons). Each person is called, uniquely and specially, by the Spirit (what else should ἐκκλησία mean?), and united to God by the action of His co-operating with personal ascetic struggle,³ the struggle to renounce the selfish, encapsulated ego and its 'samost',⁴ its proud self-sufficiency, in sharing the life of the Church as a concrete and historical community.⁵ The basic theological significance of Metropolitan Sergei's critique and of the ukaz lies in its rejection of Bulgakov's vague, confused, and 'Docetic' view of the Church: the battle against Sophiology is a battle for orthodox ecclesiology, a battle against determinism and impersonalism, against Bulgakov's fundamental and disastrous error of confusing the natural and the personal orders.⁶ Sophiology is no mere theologoumenon, and Bulgakov cannot claim immunity for it as such: it directly contravenes orthodox truth at the roots, and so cannot be regarded as a matter of indifference.⁷

'Spor o Sofii' is not an eirenic document: it is written with evident strength of feeling and, at times, overt and direct hostility to Bulgakov himself. On the whole, it is a well-reasoned and consistent critique, but,

1. Ib., p. 61.

2. Ib., pp. 79-80.

3. Lossky uses the word 'podvig' for this, perhaps recalling and tacitly amending Bulgakov's (and Florensky's?) use of it in his earlier writings. V. infra, ch. 9, on the important role which this term plays in Florovsky's thought.

4. C.f. M.T., p. 122; on this term.

5. 'Spor', pp. 80-81.

6. Ib., p. 81.

7. Ib., pp. 85-6.

as we have had occasion to note, there is at times a marked unwillingness to allow Bulgakov a fair hearing. The discussion of Bulgakov's Christology settles, with unerring accuracy, on the weakest point, but there is no attempt to do justice to the range and seriousness of his kenotic theory.¹ And it must be admitted that Bulgakov's citations from Palamas or Metropolitan Philaret are at least as patient of Bulgakov's interpretations as they are of Lossky's. The key to Lossky's vehement one-sidedness is perhaps in his use of the word 'dilettante' to describe Bulgakov and his school. It seems, prima facie, an odd word to apply to a man who was not only a devoted and conscientious scholar, but also had made considerable personal sacrifice in entering the Church and the priesthood (as Lossky was well aware). Yet, in the context of the pamphlet, and of the controversy as a whole, it becomes more intelligible. Lossky is objecting to the mentality which creates its own 'Orthodoxy', which exploits and distorts ecclesiastical tradition while claiming to speak in its name (this is why Bulgakov's priestly status is especially relevant to Lossky's critique). Bulgakov and the rest of the intelligentsia, Christianised or half-Christianised, do not feel themselves to be living in the tradition; it remains, finally, something outside them, it is not their natural spiritual and intellectual ethos. Now there is in this criticism a somewhat distasteful element, comparable perhaps to the 'cradle Catholic's' attitudes to the convert: Lossky's patronising remarks about Bulgakov's ignorance of Canon Law illustrate this rather painfully. However, there is more to Lossky's complaints than this.

1. There is a somewhat more careful and sympathetic discussion of Bulgakov's kenoticism in Lossky's last course of lectures (21/2/57, pp. 18-21), still critical, but less unfair. This treatment turns on the difficulties caused by Bulgakov's identification of personality with self-consciousness: Lossky is dissatisfied with the idea of the divine Word gradually becoming aware, 'through' His humanity, of His real personal status, realising His personal being, that is, in developing His self-awareness. As we shall see, Lossky conceives of personal realisation in other terms.

The approach of the intelligentsia of Bulgakov's generation to the Church has in it an equally 'aristocratic' condescension, in the individualistic assumption that the tradition is a repository of possibly useful and illuminating illustrations for an independently constructed metaphysical system.¹ What is lacking is the sense of a shared history, apprehended not objectively and externally, but as a part of, a dimension of, present Church life. In spite of his insistence on 'the Church as tradition',² Bulgakov undeniably sits loose to tradition as an historical datum: the continuity of tradition in his thought has little to do with the tangible matters of councils and creeds, but is, rather, an internal principle of consistency far above the level of dogmatic definition, grounded in the experience of the community.³ And Lossky's objections imply that, in practice, this will simply mean the subjective fancies of the individual theologian elevated to the level of the sensus fidelium, and unassailable because 'indefinable'.

'Spor o Sofii' is a plea for theological responsibility, for a sense of obligation to the historical Church, past and present: which is, finally, a responsibility to the historical Jesus, to the Incarnation as a particular configuration of historical events, not an eternal and abstract principle of mediation. 'The Church acknowledges the God-man, but 'God-manhood' as a specific new nature to alien to Her'.⁴ Lossky is attempting to break away from a religious ethos in thrall to a Germanic style of metaphysics which obliterates the free and creative interplay of independent personal agency by cosmic or 'world-historical' patterns; to end

1. This is the basis of Florovsky's savage criticism of Pavel Florensky; v. 'Tomlenie dukha' ('Put' ', 20, pp. 102-7, esp. p. 103), FRB, pp. 493-4, & infra. ch. 9.

2. *Supra*, p. 25.

3. Note the phrases already quoted (*supra*, p. 27) describing life in the Church as 'a spiritual certainty, a special experience, a new life'.

4. 'Spor', p. 66.

the Babylonish captivity of Russian theology,¹ and to challenge the dominance of determinist and impersonalist systems. The challenge had already begun to be made by Florovsky, whose radical indeterminism and voluntarism have their roots in his philosophical work even before the Revolution;² but Lossky is more concerned than Florovsky with the problem of combatting determinism by means of personalism. Both he and Florovsky aim to explain how it is that the particular person can genuinely live the life of the collective in his own free development. Lossky's approach is less overtly philosophical than Florovsky's (at least, in the latter's earlier work), and the human person as a kind of 'surd', a fundamental conceptual tool which cannot itself be adequately expressed in concepts, is a great deal more central to his thought; and this is where his originality becomes plain. I have called 'Spor o Sofii' a 'manifesto',³ since it is the first statement by Lossky of the basic and original personalist emphasis. Not that, even in this respect, Lossky does not stand within a tradition of sorts in the Russian intellectual world (we shall return later to an examination of his relations with his theological and philosophical forebears⁴); but, at that time, and in the context of the emigration, his protest was a lonely and courageous one, and the style of theologising which he proposed was novel.

We have already outlined the subsequent history of Lossky's personal relations with Bulgakov. However, despite the relative cordiality of these relations, Lossky obviously continued to feel the inadequacies of Bulgakov's system, and continued to develop his critique, especially in

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1. *Infra*, chs. 7 & 8, on the historical problem in Russian religious philosophy.
 2. *Infra.*, ch. 9.
 3. *Supra*, p.12.
 4. *Infra*. chs. 7-9. A. Schmemmann, 'Russian Theology, 1920-72' (*SVTQ*, 16, no.4), usefully outlines some of the tensions and differences in emphasis between theologians of Lossky's way of thinking and others.

the context of Trinitarian theology. Bulgakov is mentioned three times in M.T. ¹ : Lossky's basic accusation here seems to be that, by identifying Sophia with the divine οὐσία, Bulgakov has reduced the idea of 'nature' to a mere manifestation of the persons. ² That is to say, despite the general impersonalist trend of Bulgakov's thought, ³ he is, in his Trinitarian theology, excessively personalist, in that he allows to the divine persons some sort of ontological priority over the οὐσία. 'Father Bulgakov regarded God as a "person in three hypostases", who reveals himself in the οὐσία.' ⁴ We may see here how Bulgakov's confusion, not only of person and nature, but also of 'essence' and 'energy' impelled Lossky to expand and clarify his use of the Palamite terminology, and to insist on the strict distinction between the οὐσία and what is 'logically posterior' and external to it. ⁵ God is a tri-personal substance, manifested in His ἐνεργεία; any other statement of the case issues in confusion. In his classical exposition of Orthodox doctrine on the procession of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ Lossky refers ⁷ to the final volume of Bulgakov's trilogy ('Le Paraclet'), which contains one of his fullest treatments of Trinitarian theology, and points to the problems created by Bulgakov's substitution of the category of 'manifestation' for the traditional language of causality. Orthodox Trinitarian theology, Lossky insists, envisages the Father as the sole 'cause' (αἰτία) of the Son and the Spirit; on the 'economic' level of God's relation to the world, we may speak of the Son and the Spirit as manifesting the Father ('la révélation ou manifestation du Père par le Fils dans l'Esprit Saint'), but this has little to do with 'l'existence trinitaire en soi'. ⁸ To regard the Son and the Spirit as in themselves

1. Pp. 62, 80, and 112.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 62, 80.

3. Commented on implicitly, *ib.* p. 112 (on the confusion of Church and Cosmos)

4. *Ib.*, p. 62, n.1.

5. This is especially clear in M.T. pp. 80-1.

6. 'La procession du Saint-Esprit dans la doctrine trinitaire orthodoxe' ('A l'image', pp. 67 - 93).

7. *Ib.*, p. 87.

8. *Ibid.*

only manifestations of the Father is to reduce them to the level of the *ἐνεργεία*; this cannot be an authentically Trinitarian theology, therefore, since it does not allow that God is essentially tripersonal.

This criticism is developed further in the lectures.¹ Here Lossky gives more consideration to the philosophical foundation of Bulgakov's system in 19th century Idealism, with its characteristic stress on self-awareness as the essential feature of personality. Bulgakov's Trinitarian thought makes extensive use of the model (already used by Soloviev and Florensky) of the three stages of the subject's cognisance of itself: there is first the simple 'I', which, however, requires for its self-definition another 'I', a 'co-ego' to which the first 'I' can say 'Thou'; and for these two levels to be revealed, a third term is necessary, the objective manifestation of an 'it', manifesting the unity of the first two terms as 'we'.² 'Dans l'esprit sont données: le Moi, en tant que conscience personnelle; la nature, en tant que la source de sa révélation; la révélation même, en tant que la vie de l'esprit dans sa nature'.³ Spiritual being, as pre-eminently exemplified in God, involves a primary subject, that which this subject confronts and knows in itself, and the life of the subject is union with what it knows. Together, the three terms form one 'ego', and one alone, and this personal unity is the sole principle of the unity of the Trinity.⁴ The idea that the Father is in any way 'more personal' than the others is inadmissible, and the tradition which speaks of the Father's 'monarchy' and sole causality

1. 10/11/55, 17/11/55, 15/11/56; T.D.

2. V. Capita de Trinitate, 'Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift', 26, 1936, pp. 144-167, 210-230, passim, 'Le Paraclet', pp. 62-73, etc.; also Graves, 'The Holy Spirit in the Theology of Sergius Bulgakov', pp. 1-7.

3. 'Le Paraclet', pp. 69-70.

4. Bulgakov is critical of traditional Trinitarian theology for not insisting on this; v. 'Le Paraclet', pp. 16-17, 35 ff., 39 ff., 59 etc.

comes dangerously near this. ¹ The result of this, Lossky complains, is that 'la Trinité de Boulgakoff est un individu'. ² Bulgakov falls into the same error which he so pertinently criticises in scholastic theology, ³ that of reducing the persons and the Trinity to abstractions drawn from a theory of knowledge. For the scholastics, God becomes too closely assimilated to the image of man as an 'intellectual substance'; for Bulgakov, the image is the generalised notion of 'spirit' derived from German idealism, and ultimately from the individualism of Fichte, ⁴ from a 'post-Christian' philosophy, while the scholastics depend upon a pre-Christian philosophy. ⁵ Bulgakov implies that the characteristic act of personal being is 'auto-révélation': of course, self-revelation is characteristic of personal existence, but as a free outgoing, not a necessary interior dialectic. ⁶ The mystery of the inaccessible personal depths of God's life is reduced to the 'Absolute - Ich' of Fichte, swallowed in a process of cosmic self-realisation, in which the persons of the God-head and the operations of God ad extra are confused and subjected to metaphysical necessities. ⁷ The consequences of this for the doctrine of creation as a free act of God, the almost inevitable introduction of some kind of 'fall of Sophia' to account for creation at all, and the resultant near-panteism, practically excluding any idea of grace, are touched upon in a subsequent lecture; ⁸ Lossky repeats his earlier

1. Ib., pp. 53-4, 84-5.

2. 10/11/55, p. 10.

3. V., e.g., 'Le Paraclét', pp. 102-118, esp. pp. 116-17.

4. 10/11/55, pp. 10-11.

5. Ib., pp. 15-17.

6. Ib., p. 17 ff.; c.f. 17/11/55, pp. 4 ff., on the possibility of using Bulgakov's insights positively, assimilating them to the ante-Nicene theology which was so preoccupied with God's self-manifestation.

7. Ib., pp. 18, 20 - 21; 17/11/55. page 6.

8. 24/11/55, pp. 10-14.

regret ¹ that Bulgakov did not become really conversant with Palamism until too late, and so, despite any amount of good intentions, was unable to avoid these disastrous confusions by the simple expedient of correctly distinguishing 'essence' and 'energy'.

If Lossky's charges against Bulgakov had to be briefly summarised, they might be stated as: slavery to philosophy and to conceptualising in general; and, consequently, a wholly inadequate and 'naturalised' idea of personality; compounded with a general failure to allow that God and the world are independent of each other, or, better, free of each other. Thus, his own theology may be expected to suggest alternative solutions to the problems of theological conceptualisation, the character and status of the person, and the relations between God and the world; and it is, more or less, under these heads that I propose to examine his thought in the chapters which follow. We have noted already his criticism of Bulgakov's handling of apophatic theology; and, since this matter raises fundamental questions of theological method, it seems proper to open our examination by outlining Lossky's understanding of the significance of the via negativa.

1. 10/11/55, p. 25.

CH. III

THE VIA NEGATIVA

Lossky's earliest published article, on negative theology in the Corpus Areopagiticum,¹ was to set the tone for a very large part of his subsequent work and thought: it represents the first fruits of the lifelong academic absorption which finally issued in the posthumous publication of his monumental work on Eckhart. Few scholars of this century have provided so painstaking and nuanced an analysis of the historical expressions of the via negativa. Lossky recognised two highly significant and commonly neglected features of this history: firstly, that apophasis is not coterminous with 'mysticism' (however defined);² and, secondly, that the use of apophasis in the history of Christian thought is anything but homogeneous, that the scholar must 'in every work regard the writer's end', must attempt to discern what it is that apophasis is being used for. His concern for both these points is expressed

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1. 'Otritsatelnoe bogoslovie v uchenii Dionisiya Areopagita' ('Negative Theology in the Teaching of Dionysius the Areopagite'), 'Seminarium Kondakovianum,' III, Prague, 1929, pp. 135-144; French translation in RSPT XXVIII, Paris, 1936, pp. 204 ff.
 2. V., e.g., M.T., pp. 38-9; 'Théologie négative dans la pensée de saint Augustin', p. 575, 'Ténèbre et "lumière" dans la connaissance de Dieu', 'A l'image', pp. 32-3 (and C.f. Palamas, 'Triads', 1, 3, 19).

in his insistence that apophasis is not in itself revelation: it is a means and not an end, a 'receptacle', the necessary condition for the apprehension of revelation.¹ Furthermore, if apophasis has this character as, in its own right, 'proopaedeutic' to revelation, the conventional Western view² of the apophatic method as essentially a corrective to cataphatic theology, a qualification which acts as a necessary dialectical stage between the via affirmativa and the via eminentiae, is a misunderstanding of its real nature.³ Apophasis is never, for Lossky, above in a conceptual game: it is the *μετάνοια* of the intellect, and indeed, not only of the intellect, bound up as it is with the *μετάνοια* of the whole human person.⁴ In this sense, as Lossky made clear in 'Spor o Sofii', apophasis is 'not a branch of theology', but an attitude which should undergird all theological discourse, and lead it towards the silence of contemplation and communion.⁵

In what way, then, is apophasis not the same as the mystical ascent? The answer is not simply 'it depends what you mean by "apophasis".' It lies, rather, in the simple recognition that apophasis in itself can never be more than the verbal symbol of encounter with God. We do not, after all, encounter God primarily through language or through the contemplation of

1. E.g., T.D., A, pp. 88-89.
2. And, to a greater extent than Lossky might have cared to admit, the conventional Eastern view: v., e.g., Ware, op. cit., p. 217; G. Habra, 'La signification de la Transfiguration dans la théologie Byzantine', *Collectanea Cisterciens*, 25, 1963, p. 119; CH, pp. 468-9; and, for an insistence that apophatic theology be seen as 'corrective' rather than 'programmatic', v. T. Stylianopoulos, 'New theology and the Orthodox Tradition', *SVTQ*, 14, no. 3, 1970, pp. 136-54, esp. p. 139.
3. M.T. pp. 26-7; 'La notion des "analogies" chez Denys le pseudo-Areopagite', pp. 281-2; 'L'Apophase et la théologie trinitaire', 'A l'image', p. 20; 'Eckhart', pp. 37-39.
4. M.T., pp. 37-9, 42, 238-9; 'L'apophase et la théologie trinitaire', 'A l'image' p. 7; T.D. A. pp. 85-88; 18/10/56, pp. 8-10.
5. M.T. pp. 42, 231-2; 'Foi et théologie', passim.

words allegedly referring to Him, and it makes little difference to the experience of encounter whether such words are prefaced with - as it were - a plus or a minus sign. In any Christian theology which is serious about the transcendence of God, there is bound to be present a sense of 'check', of limitation, if it is not to remain 'dans les limites d'une théologie naturelle, en faisant de la voie d'éminence et du principe d'analogie un moyen de signaler, dans les concepts mêmes dont elle se sert, la transcendance d'un Dieu qui échappe à la connaissance conceptuelle'.¹

Thus understood, apophasis is seen to be not merely the exclusive preserve of a more or less Christianised Neoplatonism, of the tradition which exalts God above 'being' (and therefore above conceptual predication);² it is 'impliquée dans le paradoxe de la révélation chrétienne: le Dieu transcendant devient immanent au monde, mais dans l'immanence même de son économie il se révèle comme transcendant'.³ At this fairly basic level, even Aquinas can be described as, in some respects, an 'apophatic' theologian, having applied to the Dionysian terminology a 'correction prudente'⁴ which does not involve the location of God above and beyond esse.⁵ And only at this level, Lossky maintains, is Augustine a practitioner of apophasis: since God is, to Augustine, 'Being Itself',⁶ it is possible to have some kind of intellectual knowledge of Him - the

1. 'Théologie négative' dans la pensée de s. Augustin', p. 575; c.f. 'L'apophasis et la théologie trinitaire', 'A l'image', pp. 7-8.
2. 'Théologie négative' dans la pensée de s. Augustin' (henceforth 'Augustin') pp. 575-6; 'L'apophasis et la théologie trinitaire' (henceforth 'Apophasis'), 'A l'image', p. 8; 'La notion des "analogies" ..' (henceforth 'Analogies'), pp. 280-1; M.T. p. 25.
3. 'Apophase', p. 8; c.f. 'Foi et théologie', pp. 174-5.
4. 'Eckhart', p. 23.
5. Ibid.; also 'Augustin', p. 575.
6. On this, v., the admirable essay of J. Anderson, 'St Augustine and Being' (The Hague, 1965), esp. pp. 5-8, and 35 ff.

'reverse side' of our positive intellectual knowledge of created being.¹ God is not apprehended in a mystical ignorantia which is beyond the activity of the intellect, but in a 'touching' of the divine Being by the intellect: sufficit ut attingat.² Such is the experience so unforgettably described in the 'Confessions' (IX, 10), the so-called 'vision' at Ostia; beyond such experiences, our discourse about God can be characterised only by docta ignorantia, as we press forward to transcend the inadequacy of all our language about Him.³ For Augustine, it seems that ignorance finally issues in knowledge; whereas for Dionysius it is knowledge that issues in ignorance,⁴ in an absence of concepts which is an authentic but non-intellectual, non-ratiocinative, knowledge of God. Augustine's intellect may be transfigured, but it is not transcended: it is enabled to 'hear (God) speaking, not by any tongue of the flesh or by an angel's voice.... but in his own voice, the voice of the one whom we love in all these created things', and to know itself to have reached out in thought and touched the eternal Wisdom.⁵

The Dionysian ἔκστασις, on the other hand, is a state beyond any kind of intellection, 'negative' 'no less than 'affirmative'; and it is described in terms of 'darkness' and 'unknowing', because it can only be spoken of in language of dogmatic speculation⁶ or, better, dogmatic metaphor.⁷ This is what we find in Gregory of Nyssa: for him, the fundamental datum is encounter with God, and the goal perfect, but non-conceptual knowledge of Him. Union is higher than (conceptual) knowledge, the latter being finally rendered impossibly by the 'inadéquation radicale'

1. 'Augustin', pp. 567-7.

2. *Ib.*, p. 580.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 580-1; on the expression docta ignorantia, v.p. 578, esp. the reference to Ep. 130 (PL 33,505).

4. *M.T.*, p. 25.

5. 'Confessions', IX, 10; tr. R. Pine-Coffin (Penguin edn.p. 198); the underlining is my own.

6. 'Augustin', p. 575.

7. "Ténèbre" et "lumière" dans la connaissance de Dieu' (henceforth 'Ténèbre'), 'A l'image', pp. 32, 37.

between Creator and creature. ¹ In this union, the heart 'sees' the divine light; but the quality of the vision, its inexhaustible, incircumscribable character, never totally possessed or assimilated by man, can be expressed only in terms of darkness and ignorance. ² Dionysius must be interpreted along these lines, as postulating a union beyond the level of the vous, by means of a dialectical interplay between images of 'light' and 'darkness', 'knowledge' and 'ignorance', 'affirmation' and 'negation'. It is not that darkness, ignorance, and negation represent a 'higher stage' in the knowledge of God, superseding that of light, knowing, and affirmation; but rather, that true encounter with God is a reality beyond both sets of terms. ³ In this sense, and this sense only, apophasis may be said to have a 'corrective' function: ⁴ it exposes the inadequacy of the language of 'light' and 'knowledge', but at the same time confesses its own. And no conceptual via eminentiae intrudes with a facile synthesis, to reassure us that only a mode of predication is really in question. ⁵ Apophasis is 'the perfect way, the only way which is fitting in regard to God', not because it is itself communion with God, but because, in its refusal to limit God with concepts, it stands closer to and points more clearly towards the summit of theology, ⁶ 'the level of "mysterious revelation" in the strict sense, that is "mystical theology" or the self-revelation of God in silence', ⁷ that knowledge

1. *Ib.*, p. 32.
 2. *Ibid.*
 3. 'Beyond affirmation and negation', as Dionysius says at the end of *Myst. Theol.* (PG 3, 1048 AB).
 4. 'Ténèbre', p. 33.
 5. 'Apophasis', p. 20, 'Augustin', p. 575; 'Analogies', pp. 281-2; 'La théologie de la lumière chez saint Grégoire Palamas' (henceforth, 'Lumière'), 'A l'image', p. 47.
 6. *M.T.*, p. 25; c.f. Palamas, 'Triads' I, 3, 19; II, 3, 26.
 7. Edith Stein, in an essay on 'The Knowledge of God' ('Writings of Edith Stein', ed. and tr. Hilda Graef, London, 1956, p. 95), an exceptionally illuminating introduction to Dionysius; c.f. 'Foi et théologie', p. 163.

which knows nothing at all of concepts. The true relation between apophasis and 'mystical theology', encounter and union with God, is well expressed by Lossky in his discussion of whether Eckhart, in his treatment of a certain theological problem, writes as a 'mystic' or a 'dialectician': 'Loin de s'exclure mutuellement, l'intuition mystique et la pensée dialectique non seulement peuvent coexister, mais doivent être indissolublement liées dans un esprit tendu vers une réalité métalogique'.¹

As we have seen, negative theology of a sort may exist in the absence of a mature doctrine of the human person's encounter with God; but it is most truly theology when it is related to such a doctrine, as it is in Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius. To recognise the distinction between formal apophaticism of any kind, and 'the self-revelation of God in silence' is indispensable to an understanding of the proper use of apophasis, and of the radically non-conceptual nature of that true knowledge of God to which apophasis should point.

Historically, however, what Lossky considers to be the most authentically Christian style of apophasis developed only gradually, in the face of strong competition from the perennially seductive intellectualism of Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism on the one side, and an excessively 'economic' or immanentist idea of God's Trinitarian being on the other. The former led to the union of the vous with a God with Whom it is 'connatural', in a perfect intellectual apprehension, the latter, to a communion, bestowed by grace, indeed, but with the 'abyss of the Father' only, transcending the 'economies' of the Father's manifestations in Son and Spirit - an approach exemplified in many ante-Nicene Fathers, notably Clement of Alexandria. Lossky argues at length in 'L'apophase et la théologie trinitaire', and in less detail elsewhere,² that apophatic

1. 'Eckhart', p. 38; c.f. 'Otritsatelnoe bogoslovie', p. 139.

2. 'Ténébre', pp. 34-5; 'Analogies', p. 283; M.T., p. 43, ch. 3 passim, esp. pp. 49-51, etc.

theology, if it is truly Christian, must point beyond the intellect to the personal mystery of the Trinity Which encounters the human person in the act of revelation. The opposition is between an extreme intellectualism and an extreme agnosticism: in his earliest article, Lossky examines this opposition, taking Clement as the archetypal agnostic and Origen as the archetypal intellectualist, and suggesting that the Cappadocians, and Dionysius in their wake, offer a mediating position. Clement argues that the divine names have no real reference, and are used only to avoid 'less proper' ones: the achievement of the Cappadocians and Dionysius is the securing of a real informative content for these names.¹ This necessary mediating position is, in Lossky's view, the basis of the 'essence-energies' distinction, without which Dionysius is sure to be misunderstood as a 'pantheist' or 'emanationist'.² The importance of Lossky's treatment of the question in this early essay is very great: already he is looking to the Cappadocians and Dionysius as providing a normative theological via media; he dissociates the authentic vision of God from the activity of the vous; and the idea of orthodoxy as a mediant between extreme intellectualism and extreme agnosticism is a theme which he developed in the last years of his life in his 'Two Monotheisms' theory. Already the 'Palamite Synthesis' holds pride of place as the interpretative key to the patristic debates; and it is precisely this which enables Lossky to see the Cappadocian and Dionysian schemes as a via media, the high road of orthodoxy leading onwards into the Byzantine period.

Here we have in outline that approach to the history of Christian spirituality which is finally and most systematically developed in the

1. 'Otritsatelnoe bogoslovie', pp. 133-4 (v. Clement, Strom. 1, V, xi).
 2. *Ib.*, p. 137, esp n. 34; c.f. 'Analogies', pp. 281-2.

lectures which grew into 'La vision de Dieu', and which may be traced in the first three essays included in 'A l'Image'; ¹ an approach dependent upon the acknowledgement that the transcendent incomprehensibility of God is not reducible to a consequence of the limitations of finite intellect, but is, in some way, a characteristic of God in Himself. ² Hence the importance for Lossky of Dionysius's break with Plotinian intellectualism: the Areopagite does not regard τὸ ἕν as an adequate description of God, ³ nor does he identify ecstasy with ἀπλῶς, the purging of 'multiplicity' from the intellect. ⁴ Even if we arrive at an 'intellectual monad' by some via remotionis, the God of revelation is still beyond. This looks back to Clement, for whom knowledge of God is ultimately an ἕξις γνωστικὴ bestowed by God's grace. ⁵ Yet, even for Clement, Plato does not finally yield to Moses: ⁶ language about God-given 'faculties' in the soul, effected by θεῖα μοῖρα, is wholly Platonic. At the crucial moment, Clement reverts to intellectualism; 'Knowledge is beatitude'. ⁷ Further, even such a statement must be qualified when we recognise that, for Clement, knowledge of God and eternal salvation are at least conceptually separable. ⁸ It is not really a matter of personal fellowship with a personal God: the terminus of our relation with God, in Clement's system, the βῆθος τοῦ Πατρὸς is really, Lossky suggests, exactly what would later be designated as the divine οὐσία. ⁹ We shall see later how the practice of such an 'essentialist'

1. 'Apophase' (c. 1953?), 'Ténèbre' (1952), and 'Lumière' (1945).
2. 'Otritsatelnoe bogoslovie', pp. 133-4; 'Ténèbre', pp. 26 ff; M.T., pp. 30-3, 37-8; T.D, A, pp. 88-89; 25/10/56 passim; etc.
3. V. Myst. Theol. V, PG 3, 1048A - God is οὐδὲ ἓν, οὐδὲ ἐνόητος; c.f.M.T., p. 31.
4. M.T. pp. 30-1.
5. 'Apophase', pp. 11-15; VG, pp. 39-46.
6. 'Apophase', p. 15; VG, p. 43.
7. VG, p. 44.
8. 'Apophase', p. 16; VG, p. 45.
9. VG. p. 46.

mysticism is one of the most weighty charges laid against Western Christendom by Lossky. Again, since the $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma\tau\iota\ \gamma\upsilon\omega\sigma\tau\iota\kappa\acute{\eta}$ is mediated to man by the Son and the Spirit in order to lead to the Father, the 'gnostic' finally transcends Son and Spirit in his knowledge of the Father. Thus the system is not trinitarian but triadic, 'dans la mesure où elle implique la notion des trois Personnes qui ne sont pas supprimées par la via remotionis,' and ultimately 'elle n'est déterminée que par l'hypostase du Père, la seule vraiment transcendante'.¹

Clement, then, must by adjudged to be outside the authentic mainstream of Christian spirituality, because, on the one hand, he offers an attenuated and impoverished view of man as a being whose last end is related, not to his whole existence, but exclusively to his intellectual faculties; and because, on the other hand, he refines away the idea of God's personal being first to the Father's hypostasis alone and then to the content, the $\beta\acute{\alpha}\theta\omicron\varsigma$, of that hypostasis, an impersonal or sub-personal object of intellection. Clement's orthodox rejection of 'natural' intellectualism, the natural ability of the $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ to encounter God, is vitiated by his capitulation to what might be called a 'revealed' intellectualism. In contrast, Origen insists on the $\sigma\upsilon\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\iota\alpha$ of the $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ with God from the first,² and it is for this reason, not for any alleged subordinationism,³ that he fails as a Christian theologian. Especially in the Commentaries and homilies, there are moments when 'the Greek intellectual sometimes disappears in the face of the disciple of Jesus';⁴ but in the greater part of Origen's work there is a pervasive 'spiritualism' which refuses to treat man as anything other than a $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, temporarily

1. 'Apophasis', p. 16.

2. VG, p. 49; c.f. 'La théologie de l'image', 'A l'image', pp. 123-37, esp. pp. 135-7, and T.D. B, pp. 225-6.

3. Lossky is inclined to minimise this feature of Origen's thought; v. V.G., pp. 53-4.

4. Ib., p. 56.

and regrettably bound to matter, and finding its destiny in contemplating the simple monad of the divine nature.¹ In this context, apophasis is seen primarily as a stripping-away from theology of language relating to matter and to multiplicity, in order to reach an object of which 'the One' is a satisfactory conceptual account, in a full-blown Plotinian manner.² Origen transforms theology into a 'religious philosophy',³ a manipulation of conceptual counters on an exclusively intellectual board, blocking the way to any real union between man and God. For although the doctrine of *συγγένεια* postulates an intimate natural bond between the soul and God, in giving such priority to the *νοῦς* it preserves for all eternity the cognitive distance between man and his Creator, absolutising the subject - object relation between them in a positively academic kind of beatitude.⁴ Evagrius, the great populariser of Origen in monastic circles, gives a similar account: 'le dualisme platonicien s'introduit ici dans la spiritualité pré-byzantine'.⁵ Evagrius does not consider God to be unequivocally transcendent to the intelligible, as to the sensible world. The subject of contemplation is the *νοῦς γυμνός*, the intellect purified to absolute simplicity; there is no *ἐκστασις* from or of the *νοῦς*, no 'knowledge through ignorance'.⁶ Lossky connects Evagrius's shortcomings in this respect with the influence upon him of Gregory Nazianzen, whose doctrine of contemplation is in many ways imprecise and unsatisfactory, especially in its failure to give positive

1. *Ib.*, pp. 54-5.

2. 'Otritsatelnoe bogoslovie', pp. 133-4; *M.T.*, p. 32.

3. *M.T.*, p. 42.

4. *VG*, p. 56, referring to Origen's description of the earthly paradise as *locus eruditionis* and *auditorium vel scola animerum* (PG 11, 246 A); Lossky agrees with Puech and Lieske against Vélker on the question of the eternity of distinct personal consciousness in Origen's system on the grounds that his intellectualist view of beatitude demands an eternally distinct subject (*VG*, pp. 52-3).

5. 'Le problème de la "vision face à face" et la tradition patristique de Byzance' (*Studia Patr.* II) p. 526.

6. *VG*, pp. 88-9.

content to *γνόφος*, darkness, in man's meeting with God.¹ Thus Evagrius combines Gregory's attitude to *γνόφος* & *ἀγνοσία* with Origen's estimate of the dignity of the *νοῦς*, and produces almost an unqualified intellectual maximalism.

In such a picture, Lossky maintains, contemplation can have no degrees; it is 'undifferentiated!'² Progress and growth in the knowledge of God are excluded: once the *νοῦς* has realised its *συγγένεια* with God and confronted the divine essence in immediate and perfect vision, nothing can change. There can be no sense of an inexhaustibility in God, a depth which can never be sounded by the finite subject. The perspective of genuine transcendence is lost, the cleavage between sensible and intelligible replaces the more radical gulf between created and uncreated.³ The superiority of Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius is evident in this, that 'darkness' and 'ignorance' are, for them, expressions of precisely that dynamic, 'progressive' aspect of the knowledge of God which is denied by all forms of Origenism. 'Par delà Origène, qui n'avait pas insisté sur cet aspect, Grégoire retrouve en Philon la tradition de la mystique nocturne qu'il va à son tour transmettre à Denys'.⁴ The researches of H:Ch. Puech,⁵ confirmed and extended by Daniélou (whose edition of *de vita Moysis* is several times referred to in M.T.), provided a firm scholarly foundation for Lossky's emphasis on the relative novelty of Gregory's (and Dionysius's) approach, its peculiarly Christian, non-Hellenic, non-Platonic character.⁶ The reaction of all the Cappadocians, in their different ways, to the

1. *Ib.*, p. 89; 'Ténèbre', p. 30. c.f. VG, pp. 68-70. Polycarp Sherwood, discussing VG in 'Glorianter Vultum Tuum, Christe Deus', SVTQ, 10, no. 4, pp. 195-203, actually considers that Lossky underrates the ambiguities of Evagrius's scheme, but excuses him on the grounds that VG was written before Guillaumont's publication of the complete version of Evagrius's 'Centuries' op. cit. p. 196).
2. VG, p. 90; 'Ténèbre', p. 30.
3. 'Le problème de la "Vision face à face" ...', p. 526.
4. Jean Daniélou, in his introduction to his edition and translation of *de vita Moysis* ('La vie de Moïse', 'Sources Chrétiennes', I bis, p. XV).
5. V. 'La ténèbre mystique chez le pseudo - Denys l'Areopagite et dans la tradition patristique', 'Etudes Carmélitaines', Oct. 1938, pp. 33-53.
6. V. eg. Daniélou, op. cit. p. xix, and c.f. Daniélou, 'Platonisme et théologie mystique', pp. 291-307.

Eunomian reductio ad absurdum of Origenist intellectualism marks a turning-point in the history of Christian devotion, as Lossky sees it, something of a rediscovery of the Biblical conception of the knowledge of God, preserved by Irenaeus, and subsequently obscured.¹ It is a conception in which intellectual knowledge finally yields to *ἀγάπη*, or, rather, in which knowledge becomes *ἀγάπη*, as it does for Gregory.² 'An object is known; this is an imperfect knowledge in which there is no reciprocity; where there is reciprocity of knowledge, knowledge signifies a relationship between persons, it is determined by *ἀγάπη*.'³ Gregory, in turning his back on a static intellectualism, has re-opened the way to an understanding of man's knowledge of God as personal encounter, to which conceptual affirmation and negation are alike alien; and so we are returned to the notion of the true character of apophysis as the expression of encounter with the inexhaustible personal being of God.

The significant 4th-century development which precludes the Cappadocians from regarding God as an intellectual monad is the maturation of Trinitarian theology, the final agreement that between the homocousion and pure Arianism there was no middle way. Clement's solution thus ceases to be an option; and Origen's attempts to modify this by speaking of a vision of the Father 'in' and 'with' the Logos, while continuing to treat 'the Father' as coterminous with 'the divine simplicity',⁴ is equally inadmissible. Once it is firmly established that the three persons of the Godhead are in all respects equal, there can be no doubt that 'to see God is to contemplate the Trinity'.⁵ So when Dionysius speaks of God's *ὑπερούσια*⁶, he obviously means the Trinity of persons; and the *τῶν*

1. VG, ch. 2, passim.

2. 'Ténèbre', p. 31; VG, p. 74.

3. VG, p. 26, referring especially to I Corinthians, 8²⁻³.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 53-4.

5. *Ib.*, p. 68.

6. As in *Myst. theol.* I, 1, PG 3, 997; v. 'Trinitaire', pp. 20-1.

ὀνομάτων ἑπτάτοτον ¹ is the name 'Trinity'. The God of the Areopagite, exalted above τὸ ἕν, is clearly and unmistakably the Triune God of revelation; ² Dionysian apophysis never leads to a level of divine existence superior to the three persons. It may lead us to deny that notions of 'paternity' and 'sonship' are properly applicable to God, since Dionysius's principle of the 'non-opposition des contraires' in theological dialectic ³ will not permit us to think of the Trinity in terms of such relations of logical opposition: the identity-in-distinction of the divine persons is utterly beyond logic, since it is absolute, and so irreducibly personal, ⁴ although no merely human language about persons can be adequate to the divine reality. ⁵ 'La théologie négative ne va jamais jusqu'à la négation des personnes'; ⁶ how could it, indeed, if apophysis is truly a vehicle for the expression of personal encounter? The 'personalism' of Dionysius is, Lossky argues, further developed in his adoption of the conviction of the Antiochene school that, in the Beatific Vision, our transfigured senses perceive the Incarnate Word as He was seen by the apostles at His own transfiguration; there is a 'visible theophany' (ὁρατὴ θεοφανεία), ⁷ as well as an illumination of the intellect, although the union of the whole person with God is deeper and other than either of these. ⁸ Again, we have a theme grounded in Scripture, maintained by Irenaeus, and obscured by Alexandrian 'spiritualism' coming to the surface in the Corpus Areopagiticum, purged of Antiochene naturalism - the theme of the significance of the body in the

1. de Div. nom. XIII, 3, PG 3, 981A.

2. M.T. p. 31; VG, p. 101.

3. 'Apophase', p. 23.

4. Ib., p. 20.

5. Ib., p. 22.

6. MT. p. 44.

7. 24/11/55, p. 15.

8. De div. nom. I, 4, PG 3, 592 C.

9. VG, pp. 103-4; 'Le problème de la "Vision face à face"' p. 533.

economy of grace.¹ 'With Dionysius we enter the world of truly Byzantine theology':² the way is open for the Christocentric syntheses of Maximus and Damascene, and for the final systematisation of the tradition by Palamas, in a theology which is apophatic (and therefore personalist), Scriptural, Trinitarian, and incarnational; the whole man, body and soul, confronting the revelation of the divine *ἐνεργεῖαι*, 'the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ', the revelation of the inexhaustible transcendence of God's three-personed being.³

Such in brief is Lossky's account of the development of early Christian and Byzantine spirituality. It is a view developed partly (as he explains at the beginning of VG and of 'Le problème de la "Vision face à face" ') by way of response to the 16th century scholastic critique of the Eastern spiritual tradition. Lossky does not undertake a point-by-point refutation of, say, Vasquez's complaint that the Greek Fathers exaggerated the incomprehensibility of God;⁴ his aim is, rather, to demonstrate that the Eastern tradition has an inner consistency and continuity deriving from a firm Scriptural foundation, and is therefore not patient of interpretation or criticism in terms of the alien categories of scholasticism. The defence of this position involves a rebuttal of the assertions of scholars such as Père Martin Jugie that Palamism represents an 'heretical innovation.'⁵ And it is this concern in particular which tends to make Lossky's treatment of the early centuries a little too schematic: for Palamas and Dionysius to be seen as offering an orthodox middle way, an equilibrium position, it is necessary sometimes to exaggerate the

1. VG ch. 5 passim; on the Antiochenes, esp. pp. 76-80.

2. *Ib.*, p. 104.

3. *Ib.*, ch. 9, passim.

4. *Ib.*, p. 20; on Vasquez in particular, pp. 12-14; and c.f. 'Le problème de la "Vision face à face"...' pp. 513-16.

5. VG, p. 125; c.f. 'Lumière', pp. 39-40. V. the articles by Jugie on Palamas & the Palamite controversy in DTC. vol. XI.)

'wrongness' of, for instance, Origen. In VG,¹ Lossky admits the importance of ἀγάπη in Origen's thought, the inseparability of ἀγάπη from γνῶσις, and Origen's use of nuptial imagery to evoke the soul's union with Christ; yet Origen must be characterised as an 'intellectualist', tout court, and these aspects of his system must be relegated to insignificance. Gregory of Nyssa, on the other hand, belongs to the mainstream that flows into Palamism, since he rejects Origen's brand of intellectualism; yet, while Lossky rightly identifies Origen's attitude to matter, indeed, to created being in general, as the most ambiguous area of his theology, he ignores or glosses over the degree to which the same ambiguity is characteristic of Gregory. We may agree with Daniélou that Gregory's conviction that beatitude is progress without limit, the eternal ἐπέκτασις of the soul towards God,² is an authentically Christian and non-Hellenic viewpoint; but Daniélou himself questions whether Gregory's doctrine of the 'spiritual senses' goes any further than Origen's virtually identical teaching in allowing a truly positive role to man's biological existence.³ When Lossky does discuss Gregory's anthropology, especially his view of the relation of body to soul, he shows some understandable embarrassment,⁴ and is clearly reluctant to admit⁵ that Gregory was seriously in error in this matter. The desire to present a clear and straightforward evolution in the history of Eastern spirituality towards Palamite apophaticism and incarnationalism coexists a little uneasily with the demands of strict scholarly justice.

1. Pp. 48, 50-1, 52.

2. V. e.g., *de vita Moysis*, PG 44, 300 D. (in Daniélou's edition for 'Sources Chrétiennes', p. 3):
 Ἐνὶ δὲ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἕνα παρὰ τοῦ Ἀποστόλου τελειότητος ὄρον ἐπέθεμεν, τὸ μὴ ἔχειν αὐτὴν ὄρον. Ὁν ἐπέκτασις, as a theological concept original to Gregory, v. Daniélou, to 'Platonisme et théologie mystique', pp. 291-307; n.b. the connexion suggested with Paul's use of ἐπεκτείνω in Phil. 3.¹³

3. *Ib.*, pp. 225, 229.

4. *Infra*, ch. 4.

5. As he does in 'La notion théologique de la personne humaine' ('A 1' image' pp. 117-18.)

Similarly in the case of Dionysius: in several places,¹ Lossky lays a good deal of emphasis on Dionysius's one solitary reference to the Transfiguration,² arguing that it implies a developed doctrine of the 'spiritual senses' and the transfiguration of bodily vision in the vision of God. This is by no means clear, and it is just as probable that the passage is no more than a rhetorical flourish. And more dubious still is Lossky's claim, already mentioned, that τὸ τῶν ὀνομάτων σπουδαιότερον of de div. nom. XIII refers to the Trinity, a claim for which the context provides only the slenderest support. It is undeniable that de div. nom. in several places³ implies that there is no difference in kind between the Trinitarian hypostases and the natural πρόσδοσι of the Godhead. Again, what are we to make of Dionysius's assertion⁴ that God is, ultimately, οὐδεμία δὲ μόνος ἢ τριάς? Lossky argues, in 'L'apophase et la théologie trinitaire', that, although Dionysius denies Paternity and Sonship as such in the supersubstantial Godhead, he is still faithful to the idea of a Trinity, though it cannot be said at all what its 'threeness' means: God is τριάς, but οὐδὲ τριάς ἢ πρὸς ἑμῶν.⁵ But this avoids the issue: a few pages earlier in the same article,⁶ Lossky says quite clearly that God is not knowable outside of His revelatory economy, although this economy leads beyond itself to the confession of the unknowability of the transcendent God-in-Himself. If this is so, it makes no sense to follow Dionysius in postulating what seems like a total discontinuity between the 'immanent' and the 'economic' Trinity, a discontinuity

1. 'Otritsatelnoe bogoslovie', p. 144, 'Ténèbre', pp. 35-6, 'La "Vision face à face"', p. 533, VG, p. 103.
2. De div. nom., I, 4, PG 3, 592 C.
3. V. esp II, 3, PG3, 646 B-C; and c.f. Lossky, 'Analogies', pp. 282-3.
4. Op. cit. XIII, 3, PG3, 981A.
5. Ib., 980 D.
6. 'Apophase', p. 9.

which Lossky elsewhere is anxious to avoid.¹ If we have to abandon completely the hypostatic *ὑποστάσεις* of the three persons, characteristics which themselves, as Gregory of Nyssa makes clear,² have only a negative role in trinitarian theology, we are left with a thoroughly abstract (and potentially impersonalist) apprehension of the Trinity in itself. In attempting to secure Dionysius's orthodoxy, his position as 'father of Byzantine theology', Lossky is unavoidably led into confusion and contradiction, and something dangerously near to misrepresentation.

The problem of the distinction between God in seipso and God ad extra is, of course, the central issue for Palamism, with its separation of the absolute, unknowable, imparticipable *οὐσία* of God from the relational, knowable and participable divine *ἐνεργείαι*. As we have noted, Lossky insists³ that Dionysius, and, presumable, the tradition behind Dionysius, can only be rightly understood in the light of this separation. The Dionysian *πρόοδοι* are that-of-God in which creatures partake, and are, as such, the ground of all knowledge of God; and, in union with God, we are united to these *πρόοδοι*, and never to the *οὐσία* or *ὑπόστασις* of God.⁴ *Πρόοδοι* (or *δυνάμεις*, or *ἐνεργείαι*) are God, but they are not the *οὐσία* of God; as the outgoing of God in and to creation, they make possible cataphatic theology, the 'naming' of God,⁵ but, 'in themselves', they are unified and simple, and are apprehended as such in apophatic theology.⁶ But here is a further and almost insupportable complication. The comparatively simple idea that the distinction of *πρόοδοι* from *ὑπόστασις* in God corresponds to the distinction of cataphatic from apophatic theology seems to have vanished: our ultimate encounter is not with the *οὐσία* through

1. C.f., e.g., V.G., p. 66.

2. *Quid non sint tres dei*, PG 45, 133B - 136.

3. 'Otritsatelnoe bogoslovie', p. 137, n. 34.

4. Ib., p. 142; 'Analogies', passim.

5. 'Otritsatelnoe bogoslovie', pp. 135-6.

6. Ib., pp. 136, 142; 'Analogies', p. 286.

the *πρόδοι*,¹ but with the *πρόδοι* or *ἐνεργείαι* 'in themselves', whatever that may mean. The question is not only how far Palamas and Dionysius are consistent, but how far Palamism, *stricto sensu*, is consistent with itself; but this is a very involved problem, which will demand a chapter to itself at a later stage, and I defer a full discussion until then. Enough for the present to note this as a further instance of a point of dubious coherence in Lossky's thesis.

The main features of the synthesis towards which Lossky is working are these: an unequivocal Trinitarianism, not confined to any 'economic' level; a positive evaluation of the role of the body in the plan of salvation, with special reference to the Transfiguration; an insistence on both the transcendence and the immanence of God, expressed by the *οὐσία-ἐνέργεια* distinction, in some form or other, and, finally, the identification of our final encounter with God as a supra-intellectual *ἕκστασις*, a personal meeting with the inconceptualisable personal being of God. I have suggested that the first three of these characteristics are no so uniformly and unambiguously affirmed in the tradition as Lossky would have us believe; but the fourth is, I believe, more genuinely and consistently significant, and more capable of use as some sort of criterion for differentiating between fundamentally Hellenic, Platonic, or intellectualist doctrines of the knowledge of God, and a more radically Christian view. A problem immediately arises, however: Plotinus has a highly developed doctrine of *ἕκστασις*; how are we to rule this out from the Christian ambience? Lossky's answer is an exposition of Plotinus's conception designed to show that it simply obliterates subjectivity altogether. In the Plotinian *ἕκστασις*, the soul undergoes a process of *ἑκστασις*, in which *νοῦς* is transcended,² and the barrier between the created subject and the infinite subject vanishes, the soul is absorbed into the One. If this is so, Lossky alleges,

1. As VG, pp. 104 and 108 suggest.

2. V. Plotinus, 'Enneads', VI, 9.10 & 11.

it is in no sense knowledge: the soul in ecstasy - by definition, one might say - knows nothing, and only outside ecstasy can the experience be identified. ¹ For the Christian, on the other hand, knowledge of God is ἀγάνη, a conscious relation: the subject is not annihilated, does not cease to be a subject, but is purified in order to be more truly a subject, a person, fulfilled in its relation to divine subjectivity. In fact, once again, Lossky has exaggerated a genuine difference into an absolute polarity: especially in his last years, when he was developing a general theory of monotheistic religion, he assimilated Plotinus's views to an 'absorption - mysticism' of the classical Hindu variety. ² This not uncommon approach to Plotinus has been questioned by one of the foremost British experts of Neoplatonism, A.H. Armstrong; ³ and, more recently, J.M. Rist ⁴ has strenuously denied any close parallels between the 'Enneads' and the 'Upanishads'. Yet even Armstrong grants ⁵ that Plotinus's conception of ecstasy does appear to rule out any awareness of the separateness of subject and object in the experience: there is little room for the idea of encounter. And it is essential to Lossky ⁶ that the subject should not only know, but know that he knows in the ful-

1. V. M.T., pp. 29-31; T.D., A. p. 86.

2. 25/10/56, pp. 7-12; T.D., A. p. 85; 25/10/56, pp. 4-16, and TD A expound Lossky's theory of the 'two monotheisms,' Platonic-Oriental and Hebraic, the former preoccupied entirely with the divine nature, and so impersonalist, the latter overemphasising the divine personality and the unpredictable character of man's existential meeting with God, at the expense of any idea of the real deification of man's nature in union with God's. This scheme is also (v. infra, ch. 5) important in Lossky's analysis of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.

3. CH, pp. 258-63; also his introduction to the Loeb edition of Plotinus, vol. I, pp. xxvii - xxviii.

4. 'Plotinus: the Road to Reality' (Cambridge, 1967), ch. 16, esp. pp. 225-9.

5. Introduction to the Loeb Plotinus, p. xxviii.

6. V., e.g., M.T., pp. 215-16, 229-30. Here as elsewhere, Lossky's paradigm case of ecstasy is the transfiguration of St Serafim of Sarov during a conversation with Motovilov, his disciple.

ness of communion with God. Insofar as ecstasy, in the usual sense of an interference with 'normal' personal consciousness, is a part of the ascent to God, it characterises only the earliest stages¹; and even then, the sense of separateness never disappears.² Ecstasy is the issue of a personal act, 'dans laquelle l'être créé cherche à se dépasser, en s'ouvrant infiniment aux participations déifiantes',³ the immediate response to the revealed 'darkness' of God's infinity. It is a state of self-forgetfulness which is the precondition for the subject to be filled with the grace and love of God, the 'kenosis' which precedes exaltation.

The source and end of apophatic theology for Lossky is, therefore, a fully conscious (though non-intellectual) relationship of personal confrontation between man and God in love; and the importance of *ἐκστασις* in the attainment of this relationship is very great. 'La personne', says Lossky,⁴ 'est une sortie de soi-même'. The distinctiveness of man's existence as personal is in this freedom from the determinateness, the mere givenness, of 'nature', in his capacity for - to use an overworked and not very satisfactory term - 'self-transcendence';⁵ in his capacity, we might equally well say, for 'ecstasy'. The person is a reality beyond the bondage of a closed conceptual system; and thus its proper activity is apophasis. Apophasis is not the same thing as ecstasy,¹ but they are intimately connected as two manifestations of that which makes personal reality what it is. When Dionysius speaks of God as 'beyond being', and insists that man, to meet God, must equally go 'beyond being', this pre-

1. *Ib.*, pp. 208-9, 229-30, 231.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 68-9.

3. 'Ténèbre', pp. 31-2, referring to the thought of Gregory of Nyssa; c.f. 8/3/56, *passim*. But n.b. M.T. p. 208, on the characteristic passivity of 'ecstatic' states.

4. 8/3/56, p. 4.

5. V. e.g., M.T., p. 122.

supposes the freedom of the human subject from 'being', understood as the given, determined order of nature.¹ The renunciation of conceptual activity is the renunciation of a world of determined 'essences': Lossky quotes with approval² the Cappadocian view that, ultimately, not even finite essences can be exhaustively described by the conceptual analysis of their properties. 'There will always remain an "irrational residue" which escapes analysis and which cannot be expressed in concepts, it is the unknowable depth of things, that which constitutes their true, indefinable essence'. Creation is more than the 'being' which can be expressed in our intellectual constructs, and our awareness of creation is not restricted to these constructs. A fortiori then, the human subject and God are 'beyond' the level of manipulable notions. The human person is always subject and never object of rational enquiry, not identifiable with any 'thing' in the world, not reducible to an individual of a certain type.³ The root of sin is the confusion of personality with individuality, regarding personal being as only a bundle of repeatable, natural characteristics to be controlled and used by the ego over against other egos.⁴ Strictly and inevitably, this cuts man off from communion with his God, because it denies his freedom to go beyond 'being' or 'nature', it denies what we might call his 'apophatic dimension', and so denies his capacity for encounter with God. To say that God is known only in the ignorance attained on the far side of ecstasy is emphatically not, for Lossky, a speculation about the higher levels of the mystical ascent, peripheral to the central areas of theological discourse: it is the foundation of a whole dogmatic system. If man's last end is $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$, the

1. V., e.g., 25/10/56, p. 18.

2. M.T. p. 33.

3. V., e.g., M.T. pp. 53-4, 121; 'A 1' image', pp. 115-16, 185-6; T.D., A. pp. 96-7.

4. M.T., pp. 121-2; 2/2/56, pp. 21-2.

perfection of communion with God, and if this is realised only through the 'ecstatic' self-transcendence of human person, then the capacity for *ἐκστασις* must be written in to the formulations of Christian anthropology as fundamentally and normatively important. The unity between ascetical and dogmatic theology which Lossky is so eager to recover ¹ could hardly be more firmly and rigorously grounded.

Hence theology itself must - as we have noted ² - be ascesis, *μετάνοια* even crucifixion. This appears most clearly in some passages in M.T. on the Trinitarian dogma, 'a cross for human ways of thought', ³ a doctrine which is the most radically inaccessible of all to the speculations of the discursive reason, the most totally given of dogmas. 'The revelation of the Trinity shines out in the Church as a purely religious gift, as the catholic truth above all other'. ⁴ The Trinitarian dogma demands not ratiocination but contemplation, such as is made possible only by the redemptive death and resurrection of Christ, ⁵ and by the gift of the Holy Spirit, 'the Mystagogue of the apophatic way'. ⁶ Apophatic theology is an aspect of life in grace: only in the communion of the Spirit does *ἐκστασις*, openness to fellowship with God, become a reality, because only in the Spirit is man's personal character fully realised. ⁷ In this sense, apophasis is anything but a decorative importation from the world of Hellenistic religiosity: it is the fruit of the graceful indwelling of the Holy Ghost, the fulfilment of the evangelical commendation of losing one's life in order to save it, a taking-up of the cross to follow

1. V.M.T. ch. 1, passim.

2. Supra, p. 65.

3. M.T. p. 66, and ch. 3, passim.

4. Ib., p. 66; c.f. 'A l'image', pp. 75-6, 83, 84-5; 3/11/55 and 10/11/55, passim; 17/11/55, p. 7 ('la Trinité est une donnée première de notre révélation'); 25/10/56, pp. 1-2; etc.,

5. M.T. ibid.

6. Ib., p. 239.

7. Ib. chs. 8&9, passim; and c.f. 'Redemption et déification', and 'La Tradition et les traditions', in 'A l'image'.

Christ.

It is essential for Lossky to stress the role of the cross in this context, since it is in the cross that we see the revelation of what it is that characterises God's personal being, and so also of what is possible for man: the cross reveals personality as 'kenotic'. This is a theme which was to play an increasingly large part in Lossky's later work, and I shall return to it in subsequent chapters; for the present, However, I wish to consider it mainly as it finds expression in M.T. The chapter in M.T. on 'Image and Likeness' ¹ establishes personality in man (in the sense already outlined, of free self-transcendence) as constituting the imago Dei: the renunciation of existing-for-oneself is man's most authentically personal act and so also man's most Godlike act. The following chapter, 'The Economy of the Son', ² then sets out to explain how such an act can be recognised as 'Godlike', in the light of the Incarnation. Christ's incarnate life is apprehended by the believer as the life of God in the flesh; but it is a life of rejection and agony, lived in the total self-renunciation of absolute obedience to the Father. ³ This obedience leads us to see salvation as the common will and act of the whole Trinity; and the Second Person is perfectly manifested to us in a life utterly devoid of selfish, individual will 'This renunciation of His own will is not a choice, or an act, but is so to speak the very being of the Persons of the Trinity who have only one will proper to their common nature'. ⁴ And this revelation of humility and self-renunciation in the heart of the Godhead is further confirmed by the 'kenosis' of the Spirit. His work is to sitness to the Son while His own Person remains hidden: He draws each unique human person in a unique and personal way to the contemplation of and participation in the Godhead imparted to humanity in the

1. Pp. 114 - 134.

2. Ib., pp. 135-55.

3. Ib., pp. 144-5.

4. Ib., p. 144.

Incarnation, but conceals His own Person in order to manifest and communicate only what is common to the whole Trinity.¹ Thus the Trinitarian dogma proposes a model of personal being which radically challenges the assumptions of the fallen human mind: thought itself must be turned upside-down by grace if we are to grasp the mystery in any way. The dogma is 'a cross for human ways of thought' because it demands a belief that the abnegation of self and the absence of self-assertive, self-interested 'individualism' are the fundamental notes of personal existence at its source, in God. In its fallen and encapsulated condition, the individual human subject cannot accept this: only in the life of the Spirit, Who transforms the whole of human being, is faith in the Trinitarian dogma possible. This faith is not a matter of indifference, of taste or distaste, for the Christian: it is a mark of the transformation accomplished by the Spirit, it is inseparable from soteriology, indeed from anthropology as a whole.² The 'apophatic attitude' is the primary expression of Trinitarian faith, of the profound disturbance in thinking which is created by the manifestation of God as personally suffering death and 'the abyss of hell'.³

All this has important repercussions for other areas of theology, most notably the doctrine of creation. M.T. contains, as I have indicated, quite a developed 'kenotic' interpretation of the Trinity and the Incarnation, but its corollaries are not fully explored in the chapter on 'Created Being'.⁴ Lossky has a good deal to say about the freedom of God's creative act, and creation as the positing of a new and totally 'other' subject outside of God;⁵ and later chapters

1. *Ib.*, ch. 8 ('The Economy of the Holy Spirit'), *passim*, esp. pp. 168-70.

2. *M.T.*, p. 238; *infra*, ch. 4, *passim*.

3. *M.T.* p. 66.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 91-113.

5. *Ib.*, pp. 92-3.

(especially 'Image and Likeness'), and 'The Economy of the Son')¹ emphasise God's condescension to the liberty, the 'otherness', of man. But this is not linked with the idea of self-renouncing humility in the Trinity. However, when Lossky returns to this question in his last years, the connexion is made a little clearer. 'Dieu est sorti, pour ainsi dire, de lui-même, pour créer. Il y a un moment ... d'une certaine humiliation, d'une kénose; qui est plus grande que cette théologie qui veut toujours être fixée sur la majesté de Dieu'.² In creating free personal beings, God voluntarily limits His own omnipotence:³ there is a sort of risk involved, God making Himself impotent before man's freedom.⁴ The summit of God's exercise of His omnipotence is precisely His abnegation of power over His free creatures. We should note that, here, the language of 'sortie de soi-même' is applied to God; creation is seen as God's 'self-transcendence', a 'transcendence of transcendence'.⁵ However, Lossky never follows Dionysius to the extent of speaking directly of God's ἑκστασις;⁶ presumably because he connects ἑκστασις with the salvation of man from his selfish individuality, so that the application of such language to God would sound rather misleading. He does adopt Dionysius's view of creation as 'a hierarchy of real analogies', with the extension of this by Maximus into a theory of the 'divine ideas' as the creative λόγος of the divine Λόγος;⁷ and in his lectures he further enlarges on this by emphasising the 'dynamic' character of the λόγοι, and pointing

1. Pp. 114-34.

2. 12/1/56, p. 15.

3. *Ib.*, p. 16.

4. T.D., B, p. 229.

5. V., e.g., 17/11/55, pp. 8 ff., 15; 24/11/55, p. 17; 25/10/56, pp. 16 ff., 23; etc., Note also that von Balthasar draws attention ('Liturgie Cosmique', pp. 191-2) to Maximus's understanding of the revelation of omnipotence in kenosis.

6. V. de. div. nom. IV, 13, P63, 712 AB; c.f. Völker 'Kontemplation und Ekstase bei pseudo-Dionys der Areopagit' (Wiesbaden, 1958) p. 202: 'Diese "Ekstase" Gottes mutet schliesslich wie ein Spezialfall eines Grundgesetzes an wobei Ekstase wiederum das Aus-sich-Heraustreten bedeutet'.

7. M.T., pp. 94-100.

out that the notion of λόγος itself implies a kind of 'sortie de soi-même' of the subject.¹ Thus the divine ideas, so frequently associated with a static, 'essentialist' cosmology, a world of eternally determined substances, come to be seen as a further expression of the creative, personal outgoing of God. I shall suggest in a later chapter² the way in which this theme may be related in Lossky's thought to a more mature and nuanced interpretation of Palamism.

This examination of Lossky's conception of the nature and function of apophatic theology suggests several considerations about the method, presuppositions and concerns of his theology as a whole. In the first place, it is clear that Lossky's theological thought evolved out of a 'dialogue' with the Fathers in the context of a conscientious and scholarly investigation of the history of Christian spirituality. It is not a by-product of his scholarly activity, however; several of his articles are fairly clearly written to provide an historical grounding for various theological theses. His aim is, it seems, to discover the criteria within the tradition, even within a particular writer's work, by which deviations and distortions can be recognised as such. Thus, for example, he does not criticise Origen so much for having failed to Christianise his Hellenism as for initiating such a process and failing to carry it through consistently. Origen introduces the Biblical *λόγος* into his Platonic world, and comments with depth and perception on the work and words of the Incarnate God, yet fails to see that this subverts and renders ultimately untenable his spiritualist and intellectualist ideas of salvation. It is when we see the more complete baptism of Hellenism in the Cappadocians, Dionysius, and the Byzantines that we discover wherein Origen-

1. 12/1/56, p. 16.

2. *Infra*, ch. 6.

Clement, or Evagrius - fails. The criticism is in terms of the tradition itself as a living and developing reality.¹ Lossky is attempting to identify a via media in the tradition, which is sensitive to the concern expresses in and exaggerated by distorted statements, and applies the same basic principles as do such distortions with greater clarity and fidelity, so that an authentically and peculiarly Christian synthesis develops. The synthesis comprising Irenaeus, the Cappadocians, Dionysius, Maximus, Symeon and the New Theologian, and Palamas does not reject the whole of the theology of Clement, Origen, the Antiochenes, and Evagrius, but sets their true insights in a more precise and more comprehensive and balanced scheme. This search for a via media is not, therefore, an attempt to force a system out of recalcitrant and not very homogeneous material, but is, far more, an historian's essay in identifying what it is that gives a group of very diverse thinkers at various periods such homogeneity as they have, and in assessing how successfully various of them balance fidelity with 'creative reinterpretation', and assimilate material from outside the tradition. Thus the Eastern spiritual and theological tradition cannot be legitimately criticised on points of detail by the Western: as Lossky makes perfectly plain in the introduction to M.T.,² the two must confront each other as systematic and consistent units, alternative Christian world-views.

However, Lossky obviously does not imagine that the historical position of equilibrium which he identifies can simply be adopted, more or less unaltered, for use at the present time. It is an indispensable foundation for dogmatics, the clarification of a language and the definitive

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1. There is something of a contrast here with Florovsky's critique of Origenism (v., e.g., 'Protivorechiya Origenizma' ('The Contradictions of Origenism') 'Put' ', no. 18, Sept 1929 pp. 107-15) which is cast in more general and schematic theological-philosophical language.
 2. Pp. 7-22; v.esp. pp. 11-14, 21-2.

exclusion of certain options: theology cannot go behind the Fathers, cannot attempt to reconstruct ab ovo this groundwork, but it must go beyond them. Hence Lossky is able to develop his emphasis on personal encounter in the knowledge of God in a way which at times seems consciously and deliberately to echo philosophers like Sartre. My purpose in this chapter has been to trace the connexions between Lossky's interpretation of apophatic theology as an historical phenomenon and his use of it in the construction of his own system: the connexions are real, but they are, indisputably, subtle and complicated, and it is clear that there is some sort of a move from the purely historical to the dogmatic at many unexpected points. It is hard to draw a line between the two levels: what seems like arbitrary or over-schematic exegesis on an historical plane may, arguably, be a legitimate move in a dogmatic theology, so that the criteria by which Origen is excluded from and Gregory of Nyssa included in an 'orthodox mainstream' are far from straightforward. The whole idea of a coherent orthodox tradition is one that is neither purely historical nor purely theological: hence our problems with Lossky's judgments. Similar problems arise (as the next chapter will demonstrate) with several theological themes in Lossky's work: the question constantly recurs of how it can be confidently asserted that a certain point of view is faithful to 'what the Fathers really meant'. Sometimes, indeed, it is possible to see how Lossky has grasped the inner logic of his patristic data in an unusual and valuable way (much of the material discussed in this chapter shows, I believe, an insight of this kind). Yet the question obstinately remains of how far the foreshortening of historical perspective can go before it becomes sheer distortion, ignoring real ambiguities, differentiations, and developments in the tradition. These are issues which any consciously traditionalist theology must face, and Lossky does not emulate Florovsky¹ in develop-

1. V. infra., ch. 9.

ing a philosophically systematic defence of his position: so that the student of Lossky is obliged to be alert to unresolved puzzles in Lossky's attitudes to some points in patristic thought, as also in his attitudes to Western Christendom.

The final point which emerges from this survey is the remarkable degree to which Lossky's system is unified; no one area can be revised without the whole structure being called in question. A certain approach to the knowledge of God is demanded by a certain approach to anthropology and soteriology, which is in turn grounded in a particular understanding of the Incarnation; which itself implies a certain kind of Trinitarian doctrine. The unifying theme is what might be called 'personalism'; a rather vague term,¹ which I use to indicate that the central and controlling idea of the system is that of the personal subject in the context of its relations with other subjects. In theology, it expresses a view which locates all dogmatic construction and reflection in the context of living personal experience, encounter with the personal God, in the Christian community. My contention in this chapter has been that an understanding of Lossky's 'personalism' requires an appreciation of the fundamental importance for him of apophasis, regarded as the expression of the foundation of all theology in 'the self-revelation of God in silence', the meeting of human and divine persons in a direct confrontation that does not require the mediation of any image or concept.² At the heart of his theology lies the denial that the essence of Christian belief can be stated in terms of precise logical categories - not that he favours irrationalism or incoherence, as is evident from the rigour and consistency of his work; but he sees the ultimate consistency of

1. For a useful summary of its philosophical usages, v. 'Sacramentum Mundi', vol. 4, s.v. 'Personalism'.
 2. V. Clément's study ('Messager', 30 -31), pp. 138-152, esp. pp. 139, 143, 145-6; & c.f. 'Foi et théologie', p. 176.

belief in the 'personal consistency' of man's response to God and fidelity to God. Theology rests upon God's self-giving in revelation: man is called to 'mirror' this in his ἐκπαλιξις, his exercise of the faculty of 'self-transcendence' which constitutes him as personal. And so one of the primary tasks of theology is to expound how it is that man is capable of thus reflecting God's act. We have touched already on this subject in the present chapter, in speaking of the 'Godlike' quality of self-renunciation. It is a theme requiring a more extended treatment, and to this we turn next, to examine in more detail the sense in which personal being can be seen as the image of God, the image of the Trinity, in man, and how this provides the basis for Lossky's theology of the Church as image of the Trinity.

CH. IV.

IMAGO TRINITATIS.

Man is in God's image in virtue of his character as a personal being; or, more precisely, in the character of humanity as a 'nature' expressed in a multiplicity of personal existents, an 'enhypostatized' nature.¹ Thus the image of God is not to be located in any one area or faculty of human being, but in the whole man; and not simply the 'individual' man, as the ensemble of all his natural, repeatable properties, but the unique subject, named with a proper name, grasped in intuition and interpersonal relation, not by conceptual ('natural') analysis.² The person 'includes' or 'contains' the nature, not vice versa:³ when everything that can be said attributively and descriptively of someone has been said, there remains a residue, a unique reality within which attribution and description are made possible, but which cannot itself be described. 'The image of God in man, in so far as it is

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1. M.T., pp. 122-3. The term *ἐνυπόστατος* is borrowed from Leontius of Byzantium; Lossky rather oversimplifies the very complicated sense which Leontius gives to this word. V. Florovsky, 'Vizantiiskie Ottsy', pp. 123-5; CH, pp. 490-1; John Meyendorff, 'Christ in Eastern Christian Thought' (Cleveland, 1969), pp. 43-9.
 2. M.T. pp. 53-4, 121.
 3. *Ib.*, pp. 122-3; 'Rédemption et déification', 'A l'image', p. 104; 'La notion théologique de la personne humaine' (*Ib.*), *passim*, esp. pp. 115-18; 1/12/55, pp. 13 ff., 8/11/56, *passim*, 27/12/56, p. 8; T.D., A, pp. 96-7.

perfect, is necessarily unknowable, according to St Gregory of Nyssa; for as it reflects the fullness of its archetype, it must also possess the unknowable character of the divine being'.¹ Any notion that the *voûy*, the soul, is primarily or exclusively God's image is to be firmly rejected. Insofar as the body expresses the personal uniqueness of the subject, it too is in the image of God; it is animated by the 'life-giving energy' of its spirit, and so reflects the relation between God's animating energy and the material creation, as the angels cannot (being incorporeal spirits).² The location of the image in the *voûy* is a legacy from the Hellenistic doctrine of the connaturality of the *voûy* with God,³ a doctrine which, as we have seen, Lossky considers pernicious. The capacity for fully personal existence is a condition of the whole man, given in creation. Following a tradition going back probably to Irenaeus, certainly to Clement and Origen, Lossky distinguishes 'image' and 'likeness' as potentiality and actuality, respectively, the capacity for communion with God, and the realisation of it. Thus, if the 'image' is personal being as such, the likeness is attained in the full 'personalisation' of natural properties, the establishment of a real integration of nature into the person, so that man becomes a harmonious whole.⁴ The imperfections of the nature imprison the person and so prevent the full realisation of the image. This is especially manifest in the case of the will: strictly, the will is a property of nature, 'natural tendency' or 'disposition', which, in unfallen man, is directed towards God,

1. M.T. p. 118; the reference is to *de hominis opificio*, PG 44, 155.

2. M.T., p. 116, based on Palamas, Cap. 38-39, PG 150, 1145-8, C.f., on the body and the image of God, 15/12/55, pp. 13 ff, and 27/12/56, pp. 4-11.

3. V. 'La théologie de l'image', 'A l'image', pp. 136-7.

4. M.T. pp., 124-34, passim; 1/12/55, pp. 10-12; T.D., B. pp. 226-229.

its last end and greatest good; but, after the Fall, it becomes atrophied and subject to misdirection. ¹ 'The person called to union with God... is bound to a mutilated nature, defaced by sin and torn apart by conflicting desires'. ² Nature is initially deformed by Adam's perverted use of his personal liberty, and now, with tragic appropriateness, this personal liberty becomes enslaved by nature, and the vicious circle of fallenness is completed. 'A perfect nature has no need of choice, for it knows naturally what is good;' ³ but fallen man can be good only by the development of an 'elective' will, distinct from his distorted 'natural' will. And this is attainable only by the grace of God in the work of Christ. ⁴

The work of Christ is the restoration of human nature, the giving back to man of the capacity for integrated personal, supra-'individual' existence. Lossky's Christology and soteriology follow very closely the 'neo-Chalcedonian' tradition most fully set out by Maximus the Confessor, which emphasised the importance of this objective, quasi-physical aspect of the Atonement (as, indeed do the majority of the Eastern Fathers). The distinction of the two sorts of will is Maximus's: ⁵ it was made initially to clarify a Christological question in the Monothelite controversy. If we are to postulate one person and two natures in Christ, we must also postulate two wills, divine and human, and thus associate will firmly with nature; but Christ's human nature is perfect, so his human will must be perfectly 'stable'; therefore, we must distinguish the *θέλημα γνωμικόν*, or elective will, whereby men make moral

1.M.T., pp. 122, 125-6; 1/3/56, pp. 13-17, 28/2/57, pp. 9 ff.; T.D., D, pp. 91-3.

2.M.T., p. 125.

3.Ibid.

4.Ib., pp. 146 ff.; 1/3/56, pp. 13-17, 28/2/57, passim, esp. pp. 10-6; T.D., D, pp. 92-4.

5.V. the excellent study by L. Thunberg, 'Microcosm and Mediator: the Theological Anthropology of St Maximus the Confessor, (Lund, 1965), esp. pp. 220-231. also Meyendorff, op. cit., ch. 7.

decisions, from the *θέλημα φυσικόν* which, in a perfect nature, makes moral decision, in the usual sense, superfluous and meaningless, and deny that Christ possessed a *θέλημα γναμικόν*.¹ Only thus can we do justice to Christ's perfecting of human nature, his manifestation of the potentialities of human nature perfectly realised in the image and likeness of God. Christ has no human hypostasis, he is not a human person,² and so, because God does not need to make moral choices, neither does the Son of God; yet He is not less but more truly personal because of this, being totally free from bondage to the 'conflicting desires' of nature. Christ reveals the truth of personal being, divine and human, the person in perfect harmony with and control over nature. All this is implicit in the Definitio Fidei of Chalcedon,³ the first unambiguous statement of 'nature' and 'person' as distinct modes or levels of existence, And the 'double homoousion' of Chalcedon (*ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ ὁμοούσιος ἡμῶν*) established that the person of Christ is the norm for our theologising about God and man alike.⁴

It is, for Lossky, the consideration of anthropology in a Christological perspective which definitively rules out the idea that personality can be equated with individuality.⁵ What would be the consequences of regarding Christ's hypostasis as merely individual? In a sense, of course, He is substantia individua, a man 'dénombrable avec les autres';⁶ but if there is no more to be said, we are led towards Nestorianism, to thinking of the 'principle' of Jesus's existence as something separate from God.⁷

1. V.M.T. p. 147, and references there given to Maximus and Damascene.
2. V., e.g., 7/2/57, passim, T.D., D, p. 86.
3. V. 'La notion théologique', 'A l'image', pp. 115 ff.
4. V., e.g., 8/3/56, p.1, 17/5/56, p. 30, 7/2/57, pp. 1 ff., T.D., D., pp. 83-86. and in 'A l'image', especially 'La notion théologique' and 'Rédemption et déification', passim.
5. V. 'La notion théologique', p. 115: 'Voyons avant tout ... si la notion de la personne humaine réduite a celle d'une φύσις ou nature individuelle, peut être maintenue dans le contexte du *dogme* chrétien [sc. of Chalcedon]'
6. Ib., p. 116.
7. Ib., pp. 115-16.

And if we suppose the divine hypostasis to be substantia individua, we are left in the absurd position of regarding the Trinity as three separate 'things', three distinct members of a class of things.¹ Thus we cannot legitimately subordinate person to nature in this way: the person must be seen as the irreducibility of the subject to a collection of natural attributes, free from nature, since we cannot rightly conceive of Christ in any other manner. Further, if Christ is, in this way, more than individual, if in the Trinity His person co-exists with the Father's in perfect communion without any mutual exclusion or opposition, personality is revealed as a relational or (to borrow a term from the phenomenologists) 'intentional' category of being, directed away from enclosure in its own nature, its 'self'. We return again to the theme of the person as truly itself in the act of self-forgetting, self-renunciation, kenosis. Ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν : the person is not only abstractly 'sortie de soi-même', but a 'sortie' concretely directed 'vers l'autre'.²

Humanity is transformed by Christ's realisation of the vocation which Adam failed to fulfil, the vocation to life in self-forgetting communion with God and man.³ The image of the Trinitarian life is once more manifested; God the Word, the eternal image of the Father's nature, descends into our condition of unlikeness to God and likeness to Adam, our subjection to death and corruption, and, being Himself the Father's perfect divine image, attains in human form to perfect human likeness to God.⁴ He is not 'like' Adam, His humanity participates perfectly in the Godhead: and so He restores the image of God to human nature. But 'likeness' remains

1. 'Redemption et déification', 'A l'image', p. 104.

2. Ibid.; c.f. T.D., A, pp. 23-4.

3. V., e.g., M.T., pp. 133-4.

4. 29/12/55 *passim*.

a vocation for every man to realise in his own unique and unrepeatable fashion - a personal vocation, in fact, - and, in the economy of divine grace, this is peculiarly the work of the Holy Spirit, Who develops the authentic, unique identity-in-Christ of every man.¹ This twofold structure in the economy of grace is one of Lossky's most regularly reiterated themes, and it has occasioned some criticism as being over-schematic;² but Lossky himself is careful to stress that this distinction between the roles of Son and Spirit in redemption is purely 'economic'. The work of the Trinity is one; the two aspects, 'natural' and 'personal', which we appropriate to Son and Spirit respectively, 'ne sont finalement qu'une seule économie de la Sainte Trinité, accomplie par deux Personnes envoyées par le Père dans le monde'.³ The distinction, which lays equal emphasis on both aspects, is necessary in order to avoid the distortions arising from an exclusive emphasis on either one: we shall see in the next chapter how Lossky sees Western Christendom as affected by such distortions. As already indicated, Lossky insists on absolutely equal weight being given to both, and regards this as the keynote of orthodoxy, especially with respect to ecclesiology. The Spirit actualises the possibility restored to humanity by the Incarnate Word, bestowing *κοινωνία*, communion, or, in Lossky's favourite term, 'catholicity', on human beings. The Spirit's work of conforming men to the divine life involves 'opening' all men to communion with one another: and this *κοινωνία* is realised in the Church, which is an image Trinitatis in that it comprises a multiplicity of persons sharing an undivided nature, the divinised human nature of Christ. Not the divine nature, which would mean that every contingent feature of the historical Church would be absolutised; nor merely human nature, which

1.V., e.g., M.T. chs. 8&9, esp. pp. 166, 182-3, 190 ff.; 'Rédemption et déification', 'A l'image', pp. 104-7, 'La Tradition et les traditions', ib, pp. 149-50, 'Du troisième attribut de l'Eglise', ib. pp. 175-9; 'La conscience catholique', ib., pp. 183, 186-7, 190-2; 2/2/56, and 11/4/57, passim.

2.V., e.g., G.V. Florovsky, 'Christ & His Church: Suggestions & Comments' ('L'Eglise et les églises', Chevetogne, 1954, vol. II, pp. 159-170) esp. pp. 168-170.

3.'Rédemption et déification', p. 107.

would reduce the Church to a human society, or, rather, an aggregate of human societies: but the union without confusion of the two natures. Ecclesiological heresy follows the same pattern as Christological heresy - Nestorian emphasis on humanity and Monophysite on divinity; so that ecclesiological orthodoxy must reflect Christological orthodoxy.¹ The Church 'is a theandric organism, or, more exactly, a created nature inseparably united to God in the hypostasis of the Son, a being which has - as He has - two natures, two wills and two operations which are at once inseparable and yet distinct'.² This view, with its implicit concern with the free co-operation of humanity with the Divine will, has, of course, important consequences for the doctrine of grace, which Lossky discusses at length in the lecture,³ but this is not our immediate concern here.

'Dans l'Eglise, les êtres humains suivent la loi de la vie trinitaire'.⁴ Although in the life of creatures there remains always a 'résidu non-unifiable',⁵ which renders their collective life always slightly imperfect, the Spirit in the Church works constantly to draw men closer to the perfection of communion which is the life of the Trinity. This is not an absorption of men into a super-personal, - or sub-personal - organic collectivity. Lossky is highly critical of Khomyakov's handling of the idea of 'sobornost';⁶ a treatment which had been treated as authoritative and axiomatic by most Russian theologians. To Lossky Khomyakov's ecclesiology is based on an idealist romanticism which obliterates personality in a vague 'super-consciousness', an essentially impersonal collective instinct, grounded in the Holy Spirit's personality, but unrelated to human personali-

1. M.T. pp. 186-9; c.f., e.g., 5/4/56, pp. 24-7.

2. M.T. p. 187.

3. Esp. 1/3/56, passim, 3/1/57 passim, and 28/3/57, pp. 11 - end.

4. 2/2/56, p. 22.

5. *Ib.*, p. 23.

6. V. infra, ch. 7, on Khomyakov.

ties.¹ Khomyakov's 'n'a pas développé le moment anthropologique dans sa théologie de l'Eglise'.² As for the allegedly untranslatable nature of the adjective 'soborny' in the Slavonic Creed (on which Khomyakov lays some stress), Lossky is scathingly sceptical, and insists that 'catholic' is a perfectly satisfactory rendering.³ Catholicity is not an obscure quasi-organic togetherness, but, quite simply, the communion of the Holy Spirit, which is the life of the Trinity.⁴ The part is never absorbed in the whole: 'The fullness of the whole is not the sum total of the parts, for each part possesses the same fullness as the whole'.⁵ Not only every local Christian community, but every Christian believer is 'catholic' in the sense that it or he fully expresses - at least potentially - the wholeness of the Church, the wholeness of Christ. Lossky is, therefore, critical of the attempt to identify catholicity with universality, 'ecumenicity': the Church of the apostolic age, he points out, was severely limited in its geographical extension, but it was no less catholic for that. Further, in the crises of Christian history, it is the right-believing minority, however small, which is 'catholic': Maximus the Confessor in the Monothelite controversy, 'opposait sa catholicité à une ecuménicité présumée hérétique'.⁶ Nor can catholicity be identified with the inclusiveness of the Church: Congar⁷ would have it that the Church's catholicity reflects the 'inclusiveness' of Christ, but this, Lossky argues, simply reduces catholicity to a function of the Church's unity, 'la capacité universelle de ses principes d'unité'.⁸ Rightly understood, then, catholicity as unity in Christ and diversity in the Spirit offers a resolution of

1. 'La conscience catholique', 'A l'image', pp. 188-9; 12/4/56, pp. 8-14, 11/4/57, pp. 25-7. Lossky admits in the lectures that Khomyakov improves on Möhler and the Tübingen school, for whom the 'consciousness' of the Church is that of Christ alone. On the relation between Khomyakov and Möhler, v. (though with caution) the rather uncritical study by S. Bolshakoff, 'The... Unity of the Church in... Khomyakov and Möhler' (London, S.P.C.K., 1946).

2. 12/4/56, p. 11.

3. V., e.g., 'Du troisième attribut de l'Eglise', 'A l'image', pp. 167-8.

4. Ib., pp. 176-7; c.f. M.T., pp. 176-7, 'La conscience catholique', pp. 190-1; 12/4/56, p. 5, 11/4/57, pp. 11-12.

5. 'Du troisième attribut', p. 173.

75. V. M.T. Divided Christendom ch.3 esp. pp. 93ff. 8. 'Du troisième attribut, p. 174.

the perennial tension in the Church between the 'institutional' and the 'charismatic', authority and freedom.¹ If the Church is a perfect 'symphonic' unity, no part of it is dispensable for the good of the whole: the good of each and every unique part is the good of the whole. 'Il n'y a pas de saintete collective',² the holiness of the Church is a quality, a personal quality, of Head and members together. The holiness of the Christian is not constituted by the holiness of the Church, the holiness of Christ, nor is it the aggregate of individual holy people that constitutes the Church's holiness. Sanctity for the Christian is self-renunciation within the fellowship of the catholic whole, a renunciation to which men are called and drawn by the holiness of Christ the High Priest, Whose Spirit they live by.

Once again, our study of the development of a particular theological theme in Lossky's work illustrates most clearly the unusual unity and tight construction of his system. The fundamental distinction of nature and person, deduced from the Christological data to be a satisfactory anthropological model, binds together trinitarian theology, soteriology and ecclesiology. Yet this very tightness of construction creates its own problems: Lossky's argument depends on seeing the Church both as an image of the Trinity and as an image of Christ, a plurality of persons in one nature, and a quasi-hypostasis sharing the two natures of Christ. This language is a little strained, and, if treated rigorously, breaks down; but the important qualification which makes it possible is Lossky's understanding of the way in which men participate in the divine nature. According to Palamas, men share the divine nature only through its 'energies'

1. V., e.g., 'Redemption et déification', pp. 102-3; 2/2/56, pp. 2. ff., 11/4/57, passim.

2. 11/4/57. p. 11.

really divine, but really distinct from the 'essence' of God; ¹ so that, quite clearly, the Church does not and cannot share Christ's divine nature precisely as He shares it with His Father. No created being - by definition - can so share it: the gulf between the created and the uncreated is, at the level of nature, immutably fixed. ² Thus when Lossky speaks of the Church as 'une autre hypostase de cette nature une [sc. of Christ],'³ the nature in question is, as we have noted, human nature penetrated by the 'energies' of divinity: ⁴ strictly speaking, the Church has one nature only, human nature. But it is human nature transfigured by Christ, and it is a natural enough extension to speak of a duality of nature in the Church loosely comparable to that in the person of Christ. However, Lossky does not make this line of reasoning as clear as he might, and his language about the Church as an hypostasis is confusing and inconsistent with much of what he says elsewhere. The ever-present temptation to over-schematise seems to have triumphed. As to the further difficulties raised by the whole notion of participation ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ, this will be discussed at length later in the thesis, ⁵ as will some of the anthropological issues arising out of the Maximian Christology (especially regarding the doctrine of grace). ⁶

A more immediate problem is the sense which Lossky gives to the 'double ὁμοούσιος' of Chalcedon. His argument depends on treating ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρὶ and ὁμοούσιος ἡμῶν as strictly parallel; so that οὐσίᾳ has the same sense in both phrases, the sense more often represented in the Christological debates by φύσις. ⁷ Now it is

1. M.T. ch. 4, passim, etc.,

2. Ib., pp. 69-70; 16/2/56, p.8.

3. 'La conscience catholique', p. 187.

4. On this 'penetration' of humanity by divinity in Christ, which again derives from the Christology of Maximus and Damascene, v. M.T., pp. 145-6, 28/2/57, passim, T.D., D, p. 86.

5. Infra, ch. 6.

6. Infra, ch. 5.

7. Of the two terms, Lossky says, 'Ces deux notions coïncident, sans s'identifier complètement' ('La notion théologique', p. 113; c.f. 27/12/56 p.1).

precisely this assimilation of the two words in post-Chalcedonian theology which is roundly condemned by G.L. Prestige as giving to *οὐσία* a weak sense, approximating to Aristotle's *σευτερεα οὐσία* : This is all very well as regards human nature; but, in divinis, it suggests something perilously close to tritheism. ¹ *Οὐσία* becomes a logical universal, not a concrete and subsistent reality in itself; and Prestige sees in this the triumph of 'formalism' in theology, characteristic of the eternal logic-chopping of Leontius of Byzantium. It is, indeed, hard to deny that the passage from Leontius's Contra Nestorium et Eutychium² to which Lossky refers in M.T.³ presents a somewhat abstract notion of *οὐσία*. But Prestige seriously overstates his case, and seems to overlook the importance of the generic sense of *οὐσία* to the Cappadocians⁴ and the fact that Leontius is, in large measure, building on their foundations. And in the circumstances of the struggle against Monophysism (which Prestige hardly takes into account) the *οὐσία* - *φύσις* identification was a practical necessity. In one respect, however, Prestige has an important point: in the Cappadocians, a very Platonic view of universals and a marked emphasis on the non-numerable character of the divine hypostases act as a corrective to the pluralist tendency implied in regarding the *οὐσία* as generic. Leontius, however, more consistently Aristotelean, lacks such a corrective, and, logically, 'his theory fails to exclude tritheism'.⁵ Whether or not this danger was consciously realised at the time, Prestige is probably right to claim that the introduction of the concept of *συνχωρησις* into Trinitarian theology by Pseudo-Cyril in de sacrosancta Trinitate solved the pluralist problem.⁶ 'Owing at first to the accidents

1. 'God in Patristic Thought', ch. 13, esp. pp. 269-275.

2. PG 86, 1277 CD.

3. P. 123; for Prestige's comments, op. cit., pp. 270-2.

4. V., e.g., Basil, Ep. 214, (PG 32, 789A-C & c.f. Ep. 236, ib., 883A-C) for a classic statement. There is a useful collection of texts illustrating this and other senses of *οὐσία* in 'Theology and Intelligibility' by M. Durrant (London, 1973), ch. 2. Appendix C. pp. 87-111; Durrant's interpretations are often, it must be said, misleading, and insensitive to the complex nuances of his material.

5. Prestige, op. cit., p. 275.

6. Ib., pp. 280-1, 294-9.

of controversy, and later to the abstract tendencies of the sixth century, the aspect in which God came to be more commonly regarded was that of three objects in a single ousia. The uppermost term is now hypōstasis, and it becomes an eminent practical necessity to formulate a definition which, beginning from the uppermost term, will equally well express the truth of the monotheistic being of God'. ¹ Περὶ ὁρίσεως does precisely this, explicating an already vaguely outlined idea of mutual 'indwelling' in the Trinity, and securing the divine unity on the basis of the character of the hypostases themselves.

Lossky, in M.T., ² quotes Damascene's account of Περὶ ὁρίσεως with obvious approval, as confirming his assertion that 'hypostasis' in the Eastern patristic tradition means (in divinis, at least) a reality characterised by openness and capacity for relation. However, by the time of his lecture-course of 1955-6, he has come to question radically the usefulness of the term Περὶ ὁρίσεως in this context. The use of the word in trinitarian theology has, he maintains, been most prominent in the West, ³ where it was associated with the filioque debates; which, of course, effectively vitiates the usage. 'Cette expression, Περὶ ὁρίσεως, a perdu tout son sens.... dans la théologie latine, et elle est oubliée dans la théologie orthodoxe de nos jours'. ⁴ Given a correct account of the unity of the three persons in God, 'Dire qu'il y a dans l'existence trinitaire cette copénétration des trois, c'est exactement ne rien dire'. ⁵ However, he goes on to say, the term is useful and appropriate on the level of the 'economic' life of the Trinity, the manifestation ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ as in pre-Nicene theology, there is a sense in which we may speak of a communicatio idiomatum between the divine persons as they appear to us,

1. Prestige, op. cit., p. 297.

2. Pp. 53-4.

3. The Latin equivalent of Περὶ ὁρίσεως is normally circumincessio.

4. 12/1/56, p. 32.

5. Ib., p. 33.

even of a double procession of the Spirit. A fuller discussion of this must be postponed; what is interesting here is that Lossky says, in effect, that to predicate coinherence of the divine persons is tautologous, since by definition they share perfectly in the $\alpha\upsilon\sigma\iota\acute{\alpha}$, and so must perfectly interpenetrate each other. Mutual indwelling is the mark of hypostatic existence. What is not very clear here is whether Lossky is claiming that such an interpretation of 'hypostasis' is really that of the Fathers themselves, rather than a deduction from the patristic data. There are places where he certainly appears to be claiming this: in M.T. ¹ he goes so far as to say that 'the theological notion of hypostasis in the thought of the eastern Fathers means not so much individual as person in the modern sense of the word'. Here and elsewhere, ² he asserts that the very notion of personality is a Christian creation, unknown to pagan antiquity: the Fathers have refined away the dross from the vague and non-technical $\acute{\upsilon}\nu\omicron\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ of classical Greek, and thereby created a wholly new level of discourse. In other places, ³ however, Lossky is more cautious, allowing that some of the Fathers were no more successful in distinguishing 'person' from individual than Boethius, Aquinas, or even Richard of St Victor, and that the radically new understanding of personality is only limited in the patristic data.

This is a crucial point in any examination of Lossky's methodology. Historically, the idea that $\acute{\upsilon}\nu\omicron\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ was ever supposed to mean anything other than $\kappa\alpha\theta' \epsilon\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\acute{\omicron}\nu\omicron\sigma \acute{\upsilon}\nu\omicron\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$, ⁴ that is, 'individual subsistent', is indefensible. As Lossky eventually admits, ⁵ 'L'"hypostase" créé désigne,

1. P. 53.

2. E.g., 'La notion théologique', pp. 119-20; 25/10/56, pp. 22 ff., 1/11/56, pp. 11-12, 8/11/56, p. 1; T.D., A, pp. 95-96.

3. 'La notion théologique', p. 114; and c.f. 'Eckhart', p. 190, n. 65. It seems that Lossky at this later stage in his career was inclined to be more cautious in his published work; but the lectures show little or no modification of his earlier position.

4. The phrase is Leontius's; v. PG 86, 1933 A, quoted by Meyendorff, op. cit., p. 47.

5. 'Eckhart', p. 190.

avant tout, l'individu d'une nature', it means precisely an individual substance as opposed to other individual substances. Even in M.T.,¹ Lossky refers to Damascene's distinction between human hypostases which 'do not exist the one within the other', and the divine hypostases which do 'coinhere'. Damascene certainly does not appear to have made any attempt to revise his definition of created hypostases in the light of his trinitarian thought. As for the passage from Gregory of Nyssa² adduced in M.T.³ to support the view that the image of God in man is his freedom as a person from 'nature', the true interpretation of φύσις here is almost certainly not human nature. Man is 'freed from necessity, and not subject to the domination of nature', says Gregory: which suggests that φύσις here refers to the whole cosmic system of 'elemental powers' which determine the world (the στοιχεῖα of St Paul). This is not at all directly related to Lossky's scheme (though it is certainly not irrelevant to it): the unambiguous statement that the image of God in man is his personal character, and that this is constituted by self-transcending openness is simply not to be found in the Fathers. Damascene can say: ⁴ Χρηθὲ γινώσκων, ὡς οἱ ἅγιοι Πατέρες ὑπόστασιν, καὶ πρόσωπον, καὶ ἄτομον τὸ αὐτὸ ἐκάλεσαν; 'hypostasis', person, and 'individual' are simply three different ways of expressing numerical distinction. And obviously, with such a concept of 'hypostasis', only the doctrine of περιχώρησις can make the use of the term tolerable in trinitarian theology. The Cappadocians, with their less precise and Aristotelean idea of it, can use the term without embarrassment, and insist (as we have observed) that the divine persons cannot really be 'counted', like distinct objects in the world, 'by addition'.⁵ But

1. P. 53.

2. De hominis officio, XVI, PG 44, 184 B.

3. P. 119.

4. PG 94, 613 C.

5. V. M.T., pp. 47-8, and c.f. Prestige, op. cit., p. 230.

once define unambiguously as 'individual', and there are severe problems: there is danger of a complete break between the usage of the term in its 'finite' and its 'infinite' references, and the whole question of religious language looms up menacingly. Lossky in M.T. ¹ implies that human hypostases are 'isolated' because they are fallen; but this does not meet the main objection, that a word can hardly be used theologically if the whole of its normal content is emptied out in its theological usage. In 'Eckhart', and in 'La notion théologique', as we have noted, Lossky makes important qualifications of his earlier claims, but still maintains that while 'l'anthropologie chrétienne n'a pas donné un sens nouveau au terme hypostase ou personne humaine', ² it may still be possible to identify 'la présence d'une notion différente, qui ne peut plus être identique à celle de l'individu et reste pourtant non fixée par un terme, comme un fond sous-entendu mais, le plus souvent, non exprimé'. Very well; but the question abides of whether a 'notion' can be thus abstracted from the words which purport to express it. 'Sous-entendu' is a helpfully, but, in the long run, disastrously vague expression.

If there is an answer to this, it lies in Lossky's whole conception of the theocentric, and, more importantly, Christocentric nature of theological language: when the divine superstructure has been as carefully defined as possible, it can act as a norm for the reconstruction of the human and finite substructure. It is an attempt - in the words which Lossky uses ³ of Gregory of Nyssa - 'to define the true nature of man, by starting from the idea of God in whose image man has been created'. It

1. Pp. 53, 123.

2. 'La notion théologique', p. 114.

3. M.T., p. 115.

is for this reason that the crucial move in Lossky's analysis of ὑπόστασις is, as we have seen, the investigation of what it must mean in a Christological context, and the conclusion that this meaning is not straightforwardly identical with the sense it is alleged to possess elsewhere - is, indeed, barely compatible with this sense. If Jesus has one hypostasis, it is a divine hypostasis, as Chalcedon affirmed; and, if it is a divine hypostasis, it is not merely substantia individua, ἄτομον but it has the same role in Jesus's existence as would a human hypostasis, and so we can properly use that name for it; but in the process the notion of what is necessarily involved in 'being an hypostasis' is considerably revised. It is not the definition that matters, but the use: Lossky is almost Wittgensteinian in this. If the sense of a word as defined in abstracto conflicts with the sense demanded by a concrete context, it is the latter sense which is more interesting and significant in the search for the word's meaning. So if the 'finite' sense of 'hypostasis', as ἄτομος or καθ' ἑαυτὸ ὑφ' ἑσῆς is irrelevant to the work done by the word in a particular theological context, we are justified - bearing in mind the unity of the theological enterprise - in discarding the former sense. Christ is like us, ὁμοούσιος ἡμῖν, enhypostatised nature; what is true of Him can be true of us. The hypostatic union in Christ is the foundation of analogy, the final criterion for theological discourse. This bears some relation to the view of analogy developed by certain Reformed theologians, notably Peter Martyr.¹ Professor McIntyre, in his valuable essay on this subject, criticises Peter for offering no criteria for describing resemblances and differences between

1. V. J. McIntyre, 'Analogy', SJT 12, 1959, pp. 1-20, esp. pp. 10-14; c.f. T.F. Torrance, 'Theology in Reconstruction' (London, S.C.M., 1965) pp. 114 ff., 130 - 2, 185.

primary and secondary analogates: A : B :: C : D is insufficient unless the relations of A to C and B to D can be indicated. However, if Lossky's scheme can be stated in this way, the problem diminishes. Thus:

(i) The (divine) hypostasis of Christ: the divine *οὐσία* :: the hypostasis of Christ: His human *οὐσία* ;

but (ii) the hypostasis of Christ : His human *οὐσία* :: any human hypostasis; its human *οὐσία* ;

therefore (iii) a divine hypostasis : the divine *οὐσία* :: a human hypostasis : its human *οὐσία* .

This seems to be the logical structure of Lossky's argument (much as he would have disliked the syllogistic form). And since the relations between all the terms can be stated fairly clearly, it seems a valid enough kind of analogical argument for the revised use of 'hypostasis'. Historically, Lossky's case is confused and somewhat disingenuous: logically, it is at least defensible,

'Person' includes 'nature'; and so, as we have already remarked, it must include bodily existence, the body must be 'in the image of God', because it is an aspect of the person as much as is the soul. In several places, ¹ Lossky implies or directly asserts that this interest in the body as sharing in 'the character of the image' ² is a fairly consistent feature of the Eastern Christian tradition from Irenaeus onwards. This is obviously related to what was touched upon in the preceding chapter, the role of the transfigured body in the vision of God; Palamas again acts as the normative voice of the tradition, and his suggestion ³ that

1. M.T., pp. 114-16; 8/12/55, passim, 15/12/55, pp. 13-17, T.D., B. pp. 226-229.

2. M.T., p. 116.

3. Hom. 19, PG 151, 260A; this idea seems to derive ultimately from Plotinus (v. Enn. IV, 3.9. 36-42), though it serves a rather different purpose there.

the soul should be seen as 'containing' the body, rather than being in the body, $\psi\acute{\iota}\varsigma \epsilon\tilde{\iota}\nu \tau\omicron\tilde{\iota}\nu\tau\acute{\iota}$, would obviously be congenial to Lossky. Here, however, the same question - how far is Lossky's historical perspective distorted by an interest in dogmatic synthesis? - is posed very acutely. Most scholars writing on the 'image' doctrine or doctrines of the Greek Fathers (H. Crouzel on Origen, ¹ R. Bernard on Athanasius, ² R. Leys on Gregory of Nyssa, ³ W.J. Burghardt on Cyril of Alexandria, ⁴ to name some of the standard monographs) have concluded that, even without an explicit doctrine of the $\sigma\upsilon\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\iota\alpha$ of the $\psi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ with God, the image of God, as far as these Fathers are concerned, resides in the $\psi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, and, at best, is no more than reflected in the body. 'Le corps', says Leys, ⁵ n'est pas compris dans l'image.... il est miroir de miroir, image d'image', echoing Gregory himself ⁶ asserting that the body is $\acute{\omicron}\iota\acute{\omicron}\nu \tau\iota \kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\omicron\tilde{\iota}\tau\omicron\tilde{\iota}\rho\omicron\upsilon \kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\omicron\tilde{\iota}\rho\omicron\upsilon$. The body enjoys a reflection of the soul's dignity 'dans la dignité de l'attitude', ⁷ but, unlike the $\psi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, is incapable of sharing the divine life. Of course, there is great variety in the definitions of the image proposed by the Fathers, or even by any one Father; but this hardly justifies Lossky's conclusion, ⁸ that 'The number of these definitions and their variety show us that the Fathers refrain from confining the image of God to any one part of man'. The variety is, in fact, more apparent than

1. Lossky's, 'La théologie de l'image' ('A l'image, pp. 123-137) discusses this work ('La théologie de l'image de Dieu chez Origène', Paris, Aubier, 1956) at length.
2. 'L'image de Dieu d'après S. Athanase' (Paris, Aubier, 1952).
3. 'L'image de Dieu chez S. Grégoire de Nysse' (Paris, Desclée, 1951).
4. 'The Image of God in Man according to Cyril of Alexandria' (Woodstock 1957).
5. Op. cit., p. 50.
6. De hom. op. XII, PG 44, 161D-164A.
7. Leys, op. cit., p. 65.
8. M.T., p. 116.

real, since the various definitions all refer to distinct faculties of the *voûs* - freewill, love, lordship over creation, and so on - and decidedly exclude any reference to bodily life as such.¹ It is surprising that, in M.T.,² Lossky calmly cites Gregory of Nyssa as a witness to the 'tradition' that the body is in God's image. Gregory's view that man's fleshly condition (especially his sexuality) is added to his essential, spiritual being as image of God in prevision of the Fall³ is hardly consonant with this: a theory which regards the 'tunics of skins' of Gen. 3²¹ as the emblem of man's biological condition is hardly designed to emphasise the dignity of the body. And when Lossky comes to discuss this point,⁴ he shows a certain amount of understandable embarrassment: this exegesis has the authority not only of the 'Father of the Fathers', but of his own favourite, Maximus, yet it accords very ill with Lossky's most basic concerns. He admits a 'confusion' in his sources, and it is certainly reflected in his own tortuous and unclear exposition in his lecture on the subject. It is an unhappy instance of excessive *pietas* towards a theologically indefensible thesis which Lossky has not the heart to condemn outright. Again, Lossky quotes Gregory's statement⁵ that *ὁὐ γὰρ ἐν μέρει τῆς φύσεως ἢ εἰκῆν* as evidence that the bishop of Nyssa saw the whole man as image of God; but it is plain from the context that this means that all humanity is equally in God's image, not merely some men, since all men possess the faculty of intelligence.⁶ We are brought firmly

1. Leys, *op. cit.*, pp. 58 ff; c.f. Burghardt, *op. cit.*, chs. 3-8, *passim* (on the body and its exclusion from the 'image', ch. 2, pp. 12-24).

2. P. 116.

3. V., e.g., Daniélou, 'Platonisme et théologie mystique', pp. 52-65.

4. M.T., pp. 108-9, 8/12/55, pp. 15-20, T.D., B, pp. 229-233.

5. *De hom. op.* XVI, PG 44, 185C; quoted, M.T., p. 120.

6. *Ibid.*

back to the *voûs* as image.

Similarly, Athanasius, while prepared to allow a more positive status to the flesh of the believer as a result of a growing interest in the flesh of Christ, ¹ regards *λόγος* in man as the essential image: 'οὗρ λόγος is the image of the *Λόγος* who is the Son of God'. ² Didymus ³ combines *λόγος* with *voûs* and *νεῡμα* to construct a trinitarian image of a kind which was to become widespread both in East and West from this time onward; ⁴ but there is no mention of the body. Whether this triad and its variations are designed simply to designate a vague 'threefoldness' in man, or whether they are supposed to reflect the different characteristics of the persons of the Trinity, they have this in common, that they unanimously locate the image of God in Man's non-corporal aspects. Between Irenaeus and Gregory Palamas, the only exception to this general attitude is Ephrem Syrus, who speaks ⁵ of a triad of spirit, soul and body. Irenaeus is unambiguously committed to the inclusion of the body in the image, ⁶ but his position is simply ignored by the Greek tradition at large. It is, then, the more surprising to find Palamas in the 14th century so emphatically maintaining that the body and soul together constitute the image of God. On occasion, indeed, he can speak of the *voûs* as image, ⁷ but in contexts which suggest that he is merely reiterating a homiletic commonplace rather than developing his own thought. On the whole, his anthropology is deeply incarnational; man's fleshly condition has been dignified

1. V., e.g., Con. Arian. III, 33, PG 26, 393A; Bernard, op. cit., pp. 132-3.
2. De decr. 11, PG 25, 436 ; Con. Arian. II, 78, PG 26, 312 ; Bernard, op. cit., pp. 127-30.
3. De Trin. II, vii, PG 39, 565D.
4. For references, v. J.E. Sullivan, 'The Image of God' (Dubuque, 1963) pp. 180-195, passim, for this triad & variants of it.
5. Rhythm 57, 2-5; quoted by Sullivan, op. cit., p. 200.
6. V. Adv. haer., V.6, ed. Harvey, Cambridge, 1857, vol. II, pp. 333-336.
7. Rom. 26, PG151, 333; c.f. Cap. 37, PG 150, 114.

by the appearing in flesh of the eternal Word. The angels, being purely spiritual possess the image of God less perfectly than man. ¹ Archimandrite Kiprian Kern, in his study of Palamas's anthropology, ² has constructed a useful table to illustrate the distinction in Palamas's thought between angels, men, and animals, which I take the liberty of reproducing here:

'ANGELS -	MAN -	ANIMALS -
1. Rational, spiritual;	1. Possessed of a rational and spiritual soul;	1. Non-rational, non-spiritual;
2. Have life in substance, but not in act;	2. Has life in substance and in act;	2. Have life only in act, not in substance;
3. Immortal, incorporeal.	3. An immortal and incorporeal soul.	3. A mortal and corporeal soul'.

The important item is the second: man, like God, is *οὐσία* and *ἐνεργεια* active and creative substance, ³ 'life-giving energy' animating a material form. ⁴ In this way, Palamas links his anthropology to his central theological thesis about the divine being; though it is not wholly clear whether the body is to be regarded as the 'internal' substance expressed in act or as an 'external' substance controlled by the act of the spirit. We may compare a curious and tantalisingly brief passage ⁵ in which Palamas suggests that the triadic structure of human knowledge - through intellect, reason, and sense - is a better image of the Trinity than the twofold structure of angelic knowledge - intellect and reason only; and, further, our ability, not shared by the angels, to 'incarnate' our mental *λόγος* in the concrete communication of speech or writing reflects, as the angels cannot, the Incarnation of God's Word in the world. This

1. V., e.g., Cap. 30, PG150,1140; Cap. 63,ib.,1166; Hom.22 PG 151, 288 CD.
 2. 'Antropologiya sv. Grigori Palamy' (Paris, Y.M.C.A. 1950) p. 362; v. Pt.II, ch. 4, *passim*, for a discussion of the relative positions of men and angels.
 3. V. J. Meyendorff, 'A Study of Gregory Palamas' (London 1964), p. 111; Palamas, Cap. 136, PG 150, 1216D-1217A.
 4. Cap. 38, 39, PG 150, 1145-8; M.T., p. 116.
 5. Cap. 63, PG 150, 1166 D.

illustrates very aptly Palamas's general principle that humanity is adorned at creation with so many faculties in anticipation of the Incarnation, ¹ so that the Incarnation itself is the definitive confirmation of man's supreme glory and dignity in creation. ²

As we have noted, ³ Lossky takes up the theme of man's being more in God's image than the angels, while refusing to conclude, with Bulgakov's that man is actually superior to the angels. The angels are, after all, more 'simple' and 'stable' than we: they are not involved in the complex tragedy of Fall and Redemption. The fall of the evil angels is the result of an instantaneous, irrevocable decision by each one at the first moment of its created existence; and so with the fidelity of the good angels, who are able to be our guardians in virtue of their inability to deviate from God's service. ⁴ The angels are clearly not involved in a disaster like Adam's which affects a whole class of beings and corrupts their nature at root. This suggests an interesting speculation to Lossky; that, although the angels are personal (capable, that is, of communion with a personal God), they are not so as God and man are personal. Each angelic person is a separate and distinct 'nature', the only one of its kind, a world to itself: 'La monadologie de Leibnitz pourrait être justifiée dans le monde angelique'. ⁵ Here, then, is another, novel way of explaining how men are more in God's image than angels. It is not entirely a peripheral 'jeu d'esprit': Lossky is very concerned to locate the origin of evil in personal choice, not natural necessity, and also to do justice to the cosmic and suprahuman dimension of evil, so that the fall of Lucifer is a necessary part of his system. ⁶ And having allowed for the

1. V., e.g., Hom. 26, PG 151, 332-3.

2. Hom. 18, PG 151, 204A; 35, ib., 440B; v. Kern, op.cit. Pt.II, ch.2 passim.

3. Supra, ch. 2.

4. 8/13/55, pp. 5-10 and 'intercours'; 10/1/57, p.5; T.D., C, pp. 25-26.

5. 8/12/55, p. 8.

6. V. esp., 10/1/57, pp. 1-11; T.D., C, pp. 24-27.

fall of Lucifer, it is necessary to explain how it differs from the fall of Adam; which requires a careful exposition of angelology. Lossky moves away from Palamas's position to the extent of allowing that the angels - since they occasionally manifest themselves to mortal eyes - must possess a kind of corporeality, at least potentially;¹ so that, notwithstanding the strictly Palamite statement of M.T., the criterion of corporeality in assessing man's position vis-a-vis the angels becomes unimportant.

This interest in angelic corporeality may be related (as the relevant section of T.D. suggests) to a desire to offer a clear alternative to the Thomist position.² Both angelic incorporeality and the presence in the angels of the image of God to a higher degree than in man are firmly asserted by Aquinas. Cum intellectualis natura, in qua divinae imaginis ratio primo et per se consideratur, in angelo sit perfectior, ipse simpliciter magis est ad imaginem Dei quam homo:³ Lossky opposes both assertions: the image of God is not to be confined to intellectualis natura, and, in any case, the angels are not purely spiritual or intellectual. For this, at least, he does not attempt to construct much of a patristic ancestry; and this is not surprising, as there is exceptionally little material. Theodoret⁴ concludes that the angels were not made in God's image, and Pseudo-Macarius⁵ reminds us (with echoes of Heb. I 5ff.) that Οὐ γὰρ περὶ Μιχαὴλ καὶ Γαβριὴλ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων εἶπεν [sc. ὁ Θεός] ὅτι Ποιήσαμεν κατ' εἰκόνα καὶ ὁμοίωσιν ἡμετέρων. But this is unmistakably a minority report: the question of whether or not the angels were in the image of God was not one that concerned most of the Greek Fathers; and, considering their generally very exalted idea of the angels, it seems likely that, had

1. 8/12/55, p. 6, T.D., C, p. 25.

2. Though, as Lossky admits (T.D., C, ib.), opinion in the West, as in the East, is divided on the question.

3. S.T. I, 93, 111.

4. Qu. in Gen. xx, PG 80, 103-48.

5. Hom XV, PG 34, 590 D - 592 A.

they considered it, their answer would have been more like Aquinas's than Theodoret's.

Palamas is, in many ways, startlingly untypical of the patristic and Byzantine theological ethos. The general trend is undeniably towards an 'intellectualist' view of the image of God, and there are moments when Lossky is simply compelled to acknowledge this, making a very clumsy attempt to gloss over the awkward corollaries. 'The most personal part [sic!] of man the spirit (*vous*) in human nature corresponds most nearly to the person, it might be said that it is the seat of the person This is why the Greek Fathers are often ready to identify the *vous* with the image of God in man'.¹ Only in later writings is he confident enough to say straightforwardly that the idea of the *vous* as image, especially as found in the thought of Gregory of Nyssa, is mistaken, and inconsistent with the deepest theological concerns of the Cappadocians, and that to treat the *vous* as 'l'élément hypostatique qui confère à l'homme son être personnel' (which is precisely what is implied by the earlier passage I have quoted) in sheer Apollinarianism.² More puzzling again is his astonishing claim³ about the idea of the Church as image of the Trinity, that 'the Fathers repeat this continually'. The two references given (to Gregory of Nyssa⁴ and the 34th Apostolic Canon) imply nothing remotely connected with Lossky's ecclesiology: one would be very hard put to it to find any supporting text at all. Nor is this surprising, considering the very underdeveloped state of ecclesiology in the early centuries, especially in the East. Lossky's statement is one of the most

1. M.T., p. 201; compare the later and more guarded statement in 'Domination et règne' ('A l'image', p. 211) that the Fathers saw in *εικόν* 'le caractère primordial d'un être créé à l'image de Dieu'.
2. 'La notion théologique', pp. 117-18.
3. M.T., p. 176.
4. 'Christianity is an imitation of the divine nature'; de prof. christiana, PG 46, 244 C.

unfortunate instances in his work of straightforward misrepresentation, of apparent inability to see the Fathers except through the spectacles of modern theorists. In fact, as we shall see later,¹ the notion of the Church as imago Trinitatis had already been explored by two influential Russian theologians (Khrapovitsky and Florovsky), both of whom claim, on extremely slight evidence, a patristic parentage for the idea: Lossky, it appears has taken their statements on trust.

Assessing our conclusions thus far, we are bound to say that, on the whole, Lossky's interpretation of the image of the Trinity in man and the Church goes a good way beyond the patristic consensus, and sometimes even goes against it. He relies heavily on Palamas at precisely the point where Palamas is least in accord with his tradition; and finally, in his account of the relations between angels and man, goes beyond even Palamas. The consistent development of his 'personalism' leads Lossky further and further away from the intellectualism of so much of the Greek patristic tradition. He at least admits² that Gregory of Nyssa retains 'l'idée de εὐγγέλεια [sc., of the ϋὐϋ̄ with God], non surmontée, héritée d'Origène', though he still appeals³ to Leys to salvage something from Gregory, 'une conception dynamique de la nature humaine'. Lossky adheres firmly to a conviction that he is genuinely explicating something which is there in the Fathers, even if one can only speak vaguely of 'conceptions' or 'notions': there is a sense, for Lossky, in which his view of personality in 'what the Fathers thought', and what they would have expressed, had they pursued their own principles consistently. But to discern this requires a perspective of historical distance; and the content of that distance cannot be ignored. Christian consciousness has undergone some radical mutations since the Cappadocians:

1. *Infra*, ch. 9.

2. 'La théologie de l'image', p. 137; c.f. 15/3/56, p. 8.

3. *Ibid.*, thinking presumably of such passages in Leys (*op. cit.*) as pp. 19, 43-4 (where Gregory is compared to Blondel), 69-77, 97-8, 106 ff, etc.

how far does a 'neo-patristic synthesis' inevitably presuppose these mutations? This question is particularly interesting if we ask it with reference to the revolution in the Christian mind effected by Augustine of Hippo, and investigate Lossky's attitude to the Doctor Caritatis,

Like many Orthodox theologians, Lossky viewed Augustine with a mixture of admiration and suspicion. Augustine is at least partially responsible for many trends in western theology unpalatable to the East - the filioque, the sharp distinction of grace from nature, the preoccupation with the inherited guilt of original sin - but very few Orthodox theologians would deny his stature as saint and doctor. Lossky is too cautious and too scrupulous simply to lay all the failings of the West at Augustine's door: he defends him, for instance, ¹ against the charge of originating 'filioquisme', blaming rather the Augustinians of the 12th and 13th centuries who over-literalised the analogies of their master, predicating of the Trinity ad intra, the divine essence, what Augustine (very properly) intended to refer only to the divine manifestations. Even if (as we noted in the previous chapter) Augustine's theology seems to Lossky to be insufficiently apophatic, we can allow him the benefit of the doubt in this context and absolve him from the arrogance of his mediaeval followers. Similarly, in M.T., ² Lossky grants that 'the "trinitarian psychologism" of St Augustine' is tolerable if 'viewed rather as an analogical image than as a positive theology expressing the relationship between the persons'. The psychological analogy as a means of understanding the image Trinitatis is dangerous if pressed too far, as it implies a definitely 'monistic' model of the Trinity, a

1. 29/11/56, pp. 3-4.

2. P. 81; c.f. pp. 114-15.

single subject differentiated by its internal relations: a model which Lossky's resolute 'pluralism' will not tolerate.¹ As an 'image', however, it is harmless. Yet Augustine never seems to give any countenance to a pluralism of the Cappadocian type. Even if, as Lossky implies, it is wrong to label him a 'monist' purely on the grounds of the psychological analogy, it is equally wrong to try to assimilate his trinitarian theology to a pluralist pattern. M. Nédoncelle, in a brief but very significant study,² concludes that the idea of 'dialogue symphonique' between the three persons was never of any importance to most of the Latin Fathers, including Augustine: the few passages in the Augustinian corpus which suggests this idea should not be unduly stressed. 'Intersubjective' relations on the human level cannot reflect the life of the Trinity, because they can never reach the level of consubstantiality:³ all human love, ultimately, 'nous laisse seul',⁴ it may be a 'vestige', but never strictly an image of the Trinity. Granted that the two fundamental models for talking of the Trinity (aptly designated by Nédoncelle⁵ 'intersubjectivity' and 'intrasubjectivity'), present almost equal problems, the theologian is bound to make some choice between them: and Augustine was more reluctant to impair the divine unity than to obscure the diversity of the persons. When he does speak of *caritas* as an aspect of the image, we should assume that it refers primarily to God's nature as caritas, rather than to the amor which binds the persons together.⁶ Now Lossky is equally sensitive to the fact that no human intersubjectivity issues in consubstantiality, and that the relation of man to God does not make

1. V., e.g., 3/11/55 and 10/11/55., passim.

2. 'L'intersubjectivité humaine est-elle pour saint Augustin une image de la Trinité?' (Augustinus Magister, pp. 595-602).

3. *Ib.*, pp. 596, 599-600.

4. *Ib.*, p. 600.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ib.*, p. 599.

us ἑμοῦς: τοῦ Πατρὸς : 'Il reste un certain résidu non-unifiable, du moment individuel'.¹ The difference between Augustine and Lossky is precisely what Lossky indicates in M.T.:² Augustine 'attempts to work out an idea of God, by trying to discover in Him that which we find in the soul created in this 'image', whereas a typical Eastern writer, like Gregory of Nyssa, begins from revelation and sets out 'to discover what it is in man which corresponds to the divine image'. For Augustine (if Nédoncelle) is correct) human intersubjectivity is so imperfect a model for the Trinity, so near does it come to tritheism, that it cannot serve as a true analogy, and we have to resort to an intrasubjective model. For Lossky, the idea of intersubjectivity is itself revised by the trinitarian revelation. The Trinity as revealed acts as a kind of check in Augustine, whereas for Lossky it is a positive datum. We should be wrong to abandon a pluralist model because it threatens the divine unity; our model is not merely empirical but, in the strict sense, theological, deriving from the trinitarian.

What Lossky fails to do justice to in Augustine's thought is the complex distinction between the vestigia Trinitatis and the imago Trinitatis, as developed in the tenth book of the de Trinitate,³ between the imprint of the Trinity's general casual activity as various aspects of creation and the true image of God. The familiar triad of memoria, intelligentia and voluntas sui is, in itself, a vestigium only: the image itself is the triad of memoria and intelligentia Dei, with voluntas transfigured into amor.⁴ The natural, vestigial image is imperfect because

1. 2/2/56, p.

2. Pp. 114-15.

3. De Trin. X, 20, 39, PL.

4. V.J.E. Sullivan, 'The Image of God' pp. 136-47. This distinction is developed by Aquinas also, the imago analogiae being distinguished from the more perfect imago conformitatis. 'Any likeness to God discoverable by introspection into the soul's presence to itself..is less perfect than that which takes place when God is present as object known and loved' (Ian Hislop, 'Man, the Image of the Trinity, according to St Thomas'; Dominican Studies, III, 1950, p.9); v.De Veritate 10,7, Sullivan, op. cit., pp. 224-5, 253 ff.

it is not turned away from itself towards its exemplar: it is perfected when turned towards God and participating in His own Trinitarian life. The imago Dei is, essentially, the life of the mens turned towards God. 'It is only in knowing and loving God that the trinity in man becomes more and more like God'.¹ Mens, it must be remembered, means far more than merely the discursive intellect, but corresponds rather to the fullest sense of νοῦς, the 'spiritual subject',² almost the 'inner man' of S. Paul.³ The image is perfected in knowledge - not scientia but sapientia, a 'dynamic' knowledge, tending always towards the infinite exemplar of the mens, the primary, divine 'spiritual subject', in participation and love.⁴ The image of God is ultimately a 'God-directed intentionality' not very different from Gregory of Nyssa's ἐνέκρωσις, though Gregory does not identify this with the image of God. The point is that Lossky's appeal to the Greek Fathers for the sources of his personalist understanding of the image of God is doomed: personalism, in anything like the form it takes in Lossky, is a post-Augustinian development in Christian thought, dependent upon Augustine's uncovering of the unique quality of every human soul's relation to God, the uncovering chronicled in the 'Confessions'. As Peter Brown has made clear,⁵ the 'Confessions' are unprecedented in the ancient world: they speak not of a νοῦς which is the generalised soul of everyman, but of the evolution of unique personalities directed by a very particular providence, separate personal histories each moulded in its different way by the hand of God.⁶ And this, of course, is precisely Lossky's conception, of unfathomable personal

1. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 147.

2. On Augustine's mens and the Greek νοῦς, V. G. Bonner, 'The Glorification of the Image', 'Sobornost', Series 4, no. 7 (pp. 358-73), esp. p. 362.

3. Sullivan, op. cit. pp. 45-6.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 50 f., 104, 136 f.

5. 'Augustine of Hippo' (London, 1967), ch. 16, esp pp. 165-6, 168-9; and 'The World of Late Antiquity' (London, 1971) p. 75.

6. 'Augustine of Hippo', p. 174.

particularity perfected in the economy of the Holy Spirit." Lossky can hardly be called an Augustinian; but he is unmistakably, a 'post-Augustinian'. His remark ¹ that Augustine can be regarded as 'Père de l'Eglise du même ordre que St Basile le Grand, St Grégoire le Theologien, que St Grégoire de Nysse et d'autres' to acknowledge the width of the gulf separating the Cappadocians, and, indeed, the whole of the first three and a half Christian centuries, from Augustine and his spiritual children. The post-Augustinian theologian has, unavoidably, a new perspective.

This position is stated in perhaps its most extreme form by G.B. Ladner, who contends ² that the concept of the image of God prevailing amongst the Greek Fathers was based entirely on the notion of similarity to God, the sharing of certain formal properties (*λόγος, αὐτεξουσία, βασιλεία*, etc.) of God; and that only in Augustine do we find the image treated in terms of relation to God. When Athanasius, for instance, speaks ³ of the obscuring and the restoration of the image of God in man, it is the metaphor of the painted likeness of something in a picture which he employs, suggesting, as Ladner points out, ⁴ a model of 'formal' correspondence between God and man. The image appears in an epistemological role: we recognise certain qualities in us as divine and so begin to know their archetypes in God Himself. ⁵ Hence also the general Greek interest in what Sullivan calls ⁶ the 'common image': 'There is a strong inclination (in the Greek Fathers) to return to the unity of the Trinity, to the Godhead possessed in common, rather than to find any distinctive

1. 29/11/56, p.1.

2. 'St Augustine's Conception of the Reformation of Man to the Image of God' (*Augustinus Magister*, pp. 575 ff), and 'The Idea of Reform' (Cambridge, Mass., 1959) pt II, ch. 3, esp. pp. 83-107.

3. *De Incarnatione*, XIV, PG 25, 120C.

4. 'The Idea of Reform', pp. 91-3.

5. For this theme in Gregory of Nyssa, v. *de beat. or.* VI, PG. 44, 1272B, Leys, op. cit., p. 19.

6. Op. cit., pp. 193-4; c.f. Leys, op. cit., pp. 57 ff., 93-7.

representation of the different persons'. The image of God is a reflection of the common attributes of the divine nature; so that Gregory of Nyssa's description of Christian life as 'an imitation of the divine nature' is most unlikely to be (as Lossky would have it) a reference to the imago Trinitatis. If Ladner is right, any attempt to claim a Greek patristic parentage for a relational or intentional view of the image of God would be misconceived.

However, this conclusion is unwarranted, at least in its extreme form. Ladner's error is to assume that, because the Greek Fathers do, indeed, tend to describe the image in terms of 'qualities', they are unconcerned with the 'finality' of these qualities. The 'formal' image is primarily the condition and foundation for relationship with God, as Lossky indicates in M.T. ¹ - ἀναστροφή is 'the necessary condition for the attainment of perfect assimilation to God'. Elsewhere, ² Lossky discussing the doctrine in Gregory of Nyssa, stresses that the function of 'manifestation', essential to the εἰκών in Gregory, is itself a 'relational' category, founded upon the manifestation of the Father within the Trinity through the self-renouncing obedience of the Son. Manifestation is no mere formal correspondence, but the fruit of kenotic obedience and love. Here Lossky is unquestionably building on firm patristic foundations: as Leys points out, ³ the manifestation of God in the soul is that which draws man towards God and away from himself. Both in the Greeks and in Augustine, *ομοίωσις* and adoption into sonship are closely linked: ⁴ the 'finality' of the image is this, the perfect reflection of the Father's Glory through our adoption into the Sonship of Christ in the Holy Spirit. Indeed, Ladner's interpretation would imply that the

1. Pp. 119-20.

2. 'La theologie de l'image', pp. 132-4.

3. *Cp. cit.*, p.19.

4. V. V. Capánaga, 'La deificación en la soteriología agustiniana', Augustinus Magister, pp. 746-754, esp. pp. 746-7; Augustine, enarr., in Ps. 136, 1, PL, 37, 1761, etc.

Greek Fathers held a rigid distinction between a natural order of resemblance or correspondence, and a supernatural order of relation and love - surely the last thing of which the Eastern tradition can reasonably be accused. Burghardt, in his admirable study of Cyril of Alexandria's doctrine of the image of God, concludes ¹ that the idea of a merely natural, 'neutral' image ('ontological' as opposed to 'dynamic', in Burghardt's terminology) is generally alien, not only to Cyril, but to a large part of the Greek tradition. There is, however, a certain ambiguity in the tradition over the distinction of 'image' from 'likeness'. ² Sometimes (as in the early Alexandrians) the εἰκὼν ³ does appear as a datum in man's nature, more or less unaffected by the Fall, and it looks a little as if some kind of separation between nature and supernature is envisaged. Yet even here the aspect of 'supernatural finality' remains important, ³ and the εἰκὼν is clearly the ground of the possibility of perfect relation to God. 'For the early Christian Alexandrians, we may conclude, image and likeness are related as potency to act'; ⁴ and to consider 'Godlike' qualities in terms of potential paths towards relation with God is very far from the formal, extrinsic model proposed by Ladner. Lossky perhaps assumes too readily that the distinction of image from likeness is clearly established in the Eastern tradition; but a view of the image as that which, in a general sense, makes man capax Dei is by no means foreign to the Greek Fathers. ⁵ However, what is absent from Greek patristic thought

¹Ch. 10, esp. pp. 141-159, and c.f. the very full discussion in ch. 2 of Athanasius's position.

²Ib., ch. 1, passim.

³Ib., p. 31.

⁴Ib., p. 3.

⁵The question of the 'supernatural finality' of human existence naturally raises the issue of pura natura, and related problems concerning grace; these will be considered in the next chapter, with reference to Lossky's critique of the scholastic view of grace.

is any real attempt to see this in a trinitarian perspective, whether in Augustine's sense or in Lossky's. Sullivan ¹ makes it clear enough that the whole notion of imago Trinitatis is rare among the Greeks, although Didymus, as noted above, ² has some foreshadowings of the 'psychological trinity'. The unexpected appearance in Palamas's Capita ³ of a variation, or, rather, variations, of the psychological trinity is nowhere discussed by Lossky: it poses some interesting questions as to whether Palamas is, directly or indirectly, indebted to Augustine, ⁴ but is not relevant to our present inquiry.

In conclusion: we may grant that, in treating the imago Dei as man's capacity for full personal relation with God, Lossky is genuinely pursuing an insight present in Greek patristic theology; but the integration of this into a maturely pluralist and personalist Trinitarian theology, and its application to the doctrine of the Church ⁵ is very much Lossky's own. Ladner's thesis may be grossly overstated but, insofar as Lossky's interest is in the particularity, the uniqueness of each human person, he goes far beyond the Greek Fathers. Doubtless Bulgakov's negative assessment ⁶ of the Greek patristic view of the imago Dei had something to do with Lossky's defence of it; but, finally, Lossky, as much as Bulgakov, takes for granted a Christian history which did not stop with the Cappadocians, the Seventh Council, or even Palamas. And to regard this as intellectual dishonesty on Lossky's part would be foolish. We should recall other scholars whose

1. Op. cit., pp. 172, 93-5, 202, n.150 c.f. Leys, op. cit., pp. 93-7, Burghardt, op. cit., pp. 120-4.

2. N. 94.

3. 35-37, PG 150, 1144B-1146C

4. Jugie (Theologia Dogmatica Christianorum Orientalium, Vol. II, Paris, 1933, p. 271) assumes a fairly direct influence; M. Hussey ('The Palamite Trinitarian Models; SVTQ, vol. 16, no. 2, 1972, pp. 83-9) is more hesitant.

5. For Gregory of Nyssa, there is a sense in which the Church is an 'image of God', in virtue of its incorporation in Christ, the primary image of the Father (v. Leys, op. cit., pp. 119 ff.); but this has, at most, an indirect trinitarian reference.

6. V., e.g., 'Le Paraclète', pp. 49-50; and c.f. p. 35 on the Cappadocians' failure to consider 'hypostasis' 'au sens personaliste'.

intense personal involvement in the interpretation of their material has had a similar effect: if we should be the poorer without the Anselm or the Paul of Barth, the Heraclitus of Heidegger, or the Shakespeare of Jan Kott, should we not also be the poorer without - say - Lossky's Gregory of Nyssa?

Even so, there remains a considerable problem. Granted that we cannot avoid taking some account of the givenness of all Christian history, how are we to judge between two divergent, perhaps mutually exclusive historical developments of a single concept or dogma? How, for instance, can Lossky establish the legitimacy of his explication of ὑπόστασις and the illegitimacy of its interpretation by Boethius and his successors as substantia individua rationalis naturae? Lossky attacks this latter very fiercely in 'La notion théologique' and the lectures; yet Aquinas, defining ὑπόστασις in the tradition of Boethius, is able to quote Damascene in support, and reproduce his definition (referred to above) almost verbatim. "Hypostasis" apud Graecos ex propria significatione nominis habet quod significet quodcumque individuum substantiae; sed ex loquendi habet quod sumatur pro individuo rationalis naturae ¹.... Et ideo hypostasis et persona addunt supra rationem essentiae principia individualia. ² By what criteria is this a deviation from Damascene and the tradition he sums up? In fact, we already have an inkling of the answer. We have seen that Lossky's insistence on the need for the integration and wholeness of a theological system leads him eventually to criticise certain aspects of, for example, the Cappadocian position in the name of a higher consistency. What Western scholasticism has failed to do is to see the place of terms like ὑπόστασις in the whole system, so that the natural, inbuilt correctives of the older tradition in its wholeness are not allowed to operate.

1. S.T. I, 29,11; I fail to see why Prestige (op. cit., p. 240) should regard St Thomas as having misunderstood the Greek sense of ὑπόστασις in the light of such passages as this.

2. Ib., ad 1^{um}.

Thus the new theological structures become incoherent; and, because theology and spirituality are inextricably linked, the development of the spiritual life becomes atrophied or misdirected. The 'evidence' for the wrongness of any particular Western development can, therefore, emerge only from an examination of the Western ethos as a whole: if the whole is demonstrably deficient, we may expect to find particular areas to be diseased. Once again, it is clear that polemic played a very positive role in Lossky's articulation of his theology: the lectures of 1955-7 are explicitly devoted to 'Théologie dogmatique et comparée', and he deliberately refuses¹ to draw rigid lines between the two categories. The next chapter will be devoted, therefore, to a discussion of this anti-Western (especially anti-scholastic) polemic, in the conviction that an understanding of Lossky as controversialist is indispensable to the understanding of Lossky as creative dogmatician.

1. V. esp. 20/10/55, p. 1.

CH. V

THE DEBATE WITH THE WEST (I)

It is, of course, Lossky's attack on the filioque¹ which is the most immediately striking feature of his polemic against Western theology; but this attack must be seen in the context of a condemnation of the whole drift of Western theology, not only Trinitarian thought, but anthropology and soteriology too. The filioque was never, for Lossky, a peripheral matter or a point of mere detail; nor did he see it, as Khomyakov did,² as primarily a breach of charity on the part of the West. It was a real theological error, a heresy, and, like all such errors, poisoned a whole theological system. The keynote of Lossky's critique is expressed in a quotation from Père de Regnon³ which appears more than once in his discussions of the subject:⁴ 'La philosophie latine envisage d'abord la nature en elle-même et poursuit jusqu' au suppôt; la philosophie grecque envisage d'abord le suppôt et y pénètre ensuite pour trouver la nature. Le Latin considère la personne comme un mode de la nature, le Grec considère la nature comme le contenu de

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1. V., e.g. M.T., pp. 55-63, and 'La procession du Saint-Esprit dans la doctrine trinitaire orthodoxe', ('A l'image', pp. 67-93.
 2. V. infra, ch.7.
 3. 'Etudes de theologie positive sur la Sainte-Trinité'(3 vols, Paris, 1892-98) I,p. 433.
 4. E.g., M.T. pp. 57-8, 'La procession', pp. 73-4, n.10.

la personne'. Up to a point, both methods are equally acceptable,¹ precisely so long as logical or epistemological priority is not confused with ontological superiority - so long, that is, as the Latin does not exalt the nature over the persons, or the Greek, the persons over the nature. But it is the Latin method which runs the greater risk,² the risk that, in the scheme of dogmatics 'Le moment de la Trinité passe au deuxième plan'.³ This is supported by a further quotation from de Regnon,⁴ to the effect that, in Western dogmatic theology, interest in the divine Unity had as it were, absorbed the dogma of the Trinity of which one only speaks as a memory. Thus, in the typical scholastic manual, the treatise de Deo Trino follows that de Deo uno.⁵ In practice, Western theology since the schism has succumbed more and more to this temptation to give priority to unity over trinity; and it is no longer a question of legitimately diverse emphases, but of orthodoxy and heterodoxy.

It might be objected, of course, that the Christian is a monotheist before he is a trinitarian, and that (as Bulgakov insists in 'Le Paraclet')⁶ the God of Scripture is revealed as one. Lossky's answer to the first point is, as we shall see later in this chapter, that Christianity is not a variety of monotheism; and to the second (implicitly) that the fulness of Scriptural revelation makes it impossible to conceive of God as a single person, an individual subject, as Bulgakov, in effect, does. And, in any case, these objections do not touch the essence of Lossky's critique; which is not so much that 'unity' is being emphasised in the West, as that this unity is conceived of in philosophical terms, as the

1. M.T., p. 56, and c.f. p. 52.

2. Ibid: 'Human thought does not run the risk of going astray if it passes from the consideration of the three persons to that of the common nature'.

3. 22/11/56, p. 26.

4. Op. cit., p. 365, quoted M.T., p. 64, n.1, and paraphrased 22/11/56, p.26.

5. 22/11/56, p. 18; c.f. 25/10/56, p.2; 'Foi et théologie', pp. 171-2.

6. E.g., pp. 37-39.

unity of a pre-eminently simple substance. This wholly rationalistic notion of the divine nature then rigidly dictates the theologian's analysis of the relations of the persons, and any residue of real pluralism disappears. The scholastic refusal to allow the distinction of οὐσία from ἐνέχειν equally follows from this, since a strict philosophical notion of the divine unity and simplicity will not permit any such division or multiplicity in God.² The filioque crystallises this philosophical monism because it locates the unity of the Trinity not in the person of the Father, but in the nature of the Godhead: the 'natural' unity of the Father and Son, that which they have in common, is seen as the source of the Spirit's existence, whereas orthodox theology, from the Cappadocians onwards, insists on the μοναρχία of the Father, who is sole ἄριστος and ἀγαθός Θεός; in the Trinity.³ In contrast to Bulgakov,⁴ Lossky has no qualms about using the language of causality in speaking of the equal dependence of the Word and the Spirit upon the Father: 'causality' suggests a relation of absolute dependence and absolute distinctness, and the language of 'manifestation' preferred by Bulgakov only confuses the issue.⁵ The principle of unity in God is the primordial fact that the Father 'n'a pas Son essence pour Lui seul'⁶: as a person, the Father is 'more than' the divine οὐσία, He is a subject characterised by self-transcending, self-giving love; and so He causes the other divine subjects to be, in response to His love. We shall return to this in the next chapter; what it is important to note here is that Lossky regards the filioque as a negation of 'personalism', and so as a fundamental betrayal of the theological vocation. If the theologian seeks God only because He has first

1. V., e.g., M.T., pp. 62, 78; 'La procession', pp. 75-6, 84-5; 10/11/55, p. 3, 22/11/56, p. 12; etc.
2. 21/3/57, pp. 23-4; c.f. M.T., pp. 77-8. *Infra*, ch. 6.
3. M.T., pp. 57-62; 'La procession', *passim*.
4. V. 'Le Paraclet', pp. 39, 66, 82-5, etc.
5. 'La procession', pp. 87-8; c.f. 10/11/55, p. 21.
6. *Ib.*, p. 79.

been found by Him in the revelation of personal encounter,¹ a theology which finally points to a supra-personal principle in God, like Eckhart's 'Gottheit', an ultimate impersonal 'ground', ceases to be theology.²

'Par le dogme du Filioque, le Dieu des philosophes et des savants s'introduit dans le sein du Dieu Vivant, prend la place du Deus absconditus'.³ Lossky's protest is, in essence, the protest of a Pascal, a Kierkegaard, or a Barth against the rebelliousness of the human intellect which flees from the $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\iota\omicron\delta\omicron$ and $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$ demanded by the revelation of the living God. 'Filioquisme' negates the apophatic attitude, and capitulates to the seductions of philosophy. Philosophical monotheism is utterly alien to Christianity, leading as it does to the abstractions of Descartes and Leibniz, and finally to naked deism;⁴ the exigencies of any philosophical system should be irrelevant to theology.⁵ Only by a kind of sleight of hand can a 'pont fragile' be built between the scholastic 'Dieu des philosophes' and the God of revelation, by means of Aquinas's explication of the persons of the Trinity as relations internal to the divine substance.⁶ Scholasticism, in denying the living God who exists always in outgoing relation, issues in 'the exile of God in heaven', as Clément has put it.⁷ The work of the lifegiving Spirit is obscured by His supposed subordination to the Son, and the omnipresence of God's glory in His world is obscured by the rejection of the divine energies. We are left with a philosopher's idol, a single, simple, impersonal substance: the Beatific Vision in scholastic theology is, inevitably, no more than an intellectual apprehension of this substance,

1. T.D., A, pp. 85, 88, etc.; c.f. C. Clément ('Messenger' 30-31), pp. 138-9, 141-3.

2. V., e.g., M.T., p. 65; c.f. 'Foi et théologie', pp. 169-70.

3. 'La procession', p. 84.

4. *Ib.*, p. 85.

5. 25/10/56, pp. 1-2; 'Foi et théologie', pp. 169-173.

6. 'La procession', p. 85; c.f. M.T. p. 57.

7. 'Purification by Atheism', in 'Orthodoxy and the Death of God', ed. A.M. Allchin (Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, 1971), p. 34.

'béatitude de philosophe, au fond'.¹ We are back in the impasse of ante-Nicene Alexandrian theology, with the omniscience of the *vous* and a static conceptualism.² Once again, the Luciferian intellect struggles to escape its necessary crucifixion.

The Trinity is axiomatic for Christian theology, 'une donnée première de notre révélation',³ not because the dogma is historically primitive (Lossky is aware of the problem of doctrinal development, both generally⁴ and in this particular case)⁵ but because concrete Christian experience is always experience of Christ, of the God and Father of Jesus Christ, and of the Spirit Whom the Father sends, experience of these three as inseparable. This is the Scriptural basis of trinitarianism, and it is this language which the Church uses in her worship; so it is right and proper to begin from this in theology.⁶ Lossky's approach might well be summed up in the words of K.E. Kirk⁷ 'Three "Persons" and no more are given to us by our personal experience of God, which initiates us into three several relationships..... This, we may hazard, is at bottom why the New Testament is never more than Trinitarian; it is certainly the reason why Christian thought - even at the risk of rejecting the strict demands of logic - never proceeded to add other "persons" to the Godhead'. The regularly voiced demand⁸ for an exposition of the 'internal necessity' in God which makes God three persons and no more is foreign to Lossky's tradition. We may speak of the appropriateness of the number three to God (with reminiscences of Pythagorean mathematics),

1. 8/3/56, p. 16; c.f. 'The Vision of God', ch. 1, passim.

2. 1/11/56, p. 3.

3. 17/11/55, p. 7; c.f. M.T., pp. 47, 63-5.

4. E.G. 'La Tradition et les traditions' ('A l'image', pp. 139-166) passim; 17/5/56, passim.

5. On the evolution of Trinitarian terminology, v., e.g. T.D., A, pp. 94-99; 1/11/56, pp. 3-12, 8/11/56, pp. 1 ff; etc.

6. M.T., p. 56.

7. In 'Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation', ed. A.E.J. Rawlinson (London 1928), p. 236.

8. V., e.g., F.W. Green, in Rawlinson, op. cit., pp. 289-90; Bulgakov, 'Le Paraclét', p. 64, more recently, R.P.C. Hanson, 'The Attractiveness of God', (London S.P.C.K., 1973) p. 134.

as does Gregory Nazianzen, since 'three transcends all separation';¹ but this is not a rational vindication, nor can it be, since strictly speaking, the divine persons are not to be counted at all 'by addition'.² The question 'Why three?' is only answerable in terms of the historical threefoldness of Christian experience: we know only that 'God has revealed Himself in the way in which He has revealed Himself in the events of Christian history' (in Leonard Hodgson's words).³ No rational analogy, Augustinian or otherwise, can take us to the heart of God, to an understanding of why and how God is as He is. Analogy of the Augustinian kind is, as we noted in the last chapter, valid insofar as it applies to God in relation to us, and we must avoid the error of Augustine's disciples who applied his analogies to the immanent Trinity.⁴ To ask for an explanation of the 'necessity' of the Trinity is to try to sidestep the fact that God is personal, that His life cannot be deduced from the analysis of a God-concept.⁵

A theology based upon revelation in Scriptural history and the living experience of the Church is bound to be, in some measure, pluralist in its Trinitarian thinking. This is the implication of Lossky's polemic, and it illustrates clearly his concern with the historical rather than the merely speculative, the concrete rather than the abstract. And this is not a veiled tritheism: the 'givenness' of Trinitarian faith means that the one nature and the three persons are equally and simultaneously given.⁶ Pluralism, in Lossky's personalist sense, is not the opposite extreme to monism, but the middle way between Hebraic monotheism and Hellenic

1. M.T., p. 47.

2. *ib.*, pp. 47-8 (the reference to Basil's de Spiritu Sancto is inaccurate; the text quoted is from cap. 25, not cap. 45).

3. 'The Doctrine of the Trinity' (London, 1944), p. 110.

4. *Supra*, p. 192; and v. also 22/11/56, pp. 5 & 8, and 29/11/56, pp. 2 ff on Augustine's reticence about the immanent Trinity.

5. V. e.g., 22/11/56, p. 19.

6. 17/11/55, p. 7.

polytheism.¹ The monism of the West is a philosophical Deism, 'a Sabellian unitarianism (the God-essence of the philosophers)';² so that the debate between East and West becomes a debate between revelation and reason, between the 'Dieu d'Abraham, d'Isaac et de Jacob' and the 'Dieu des philosophes et des savants'. It remains for us to investigate this alleged polarity, with all its ramifications, in greater detail.

The scholastic Trinitarian scheme necessitates a view of the persons as somehow 'internal' to the nature, as ways in which the divine substance relates to itself: 'The relationships, instead of being characteristics of the hypostases, are identified with them'.³ Bad enough that persons should be thus reduced to relations; worse still that these should be relationes oppositiois, relations of logical opposition and mutual exclusiveness between two terms. What is left of the pattern of purely personal relations between all three persons, dependent upon the 'self-transcending' love of the Father in His 'monarchy'?⁴ How indeed, can the word 'person' be used at all, if personal being is, as Lossky holds, 'intentional'?⁵ 'C'est une individualité divine plutôt qu'une Trinité de personnes, individualité qui prend conscience de son contenu essentiel dans la pensée (génération du Verbe per modum intellectus) et s'aime en se connaissant (procession de l'Esprit Saint ab utroque, per modum voluntatis ou amoris)'.⁶ As in Bulgakov's idealist trinitarianism (though Lossky emphasises the differences between the two systems), there is one res only, in three logically exclusive modes of self-expression. And since any substance is logically prior to its relations, even relations to itself, this means that the divine substance is prior to the persons.

1. M.T., p. 47; Lossky again follows Gregory Nazianzen, quoting from Cr. XLV, 4 PT 36, 628C.

2. M.T., p. 57.

3. Ibid.; c.f. 'La procession', p. 72 n. 7, on relationes oppositae in Aquinas.

4. 'La procession' pp. 79-80, 83.

5. V. esp. 'Rédemption et déification', p. 104.

6. Ib., p. 83.

What is absolute is the substance, the persons are relative, non-ultimate: God is not absolutely personal. ¹ We are left only with an ambiguous analogy with self-conscious individuality, an example of 'anthropomorphisme philosophique'. ²

At the same time, this is a profoundly reactionary, regressive approach. It fails to advance beyond the $\mu\upsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ of Nicaea, remaining on the level of discourse about substantial unity. ³ The Father communicates His $\theta\upsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$ to the Son, and this shared $\theta\upsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$ is communicated by both to the Spirit: in the background here is the ante-Nicene conception of the identity of the Father with the divine $\theta\upsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$. ⁴ The unity of Father and Son, that which constitutes them unum principium of the Spirit, is, as Aquinas has it, a 'representation' of their unity of essence: ⁵ the principium of the Spirit is an abstract and impersonal unity, the spirator standing in logical opposition to the spiratum. ⁶ In this artificial unity, the personal distinctness of Father and Son ceases to signify, and attention is wholly directed towards the sole res absoluta, ~~THE DIVINE~~ $\theta\upsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$. ⁷ 'Si les personnes étaient des relations comme le veut la théologie catholique romaine, elles devraient alors être dites relations dans un sens absolu, des relations absolues, ce qui est contradictoire'. ⁸ The Trinity becomes two pairs of relationes oppositae: 'father and son' (or 'speaker and word') and 'spirator and spiratum' - a 'dyadic' structure which negates authentic trinitarianism. ⁹ The $\tau\acute{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$ the 'hierarchy', of the persons in the Trinity is reduced to the ante-Nicene subordinationist position in which the Father is the divine essentia; which is a perspective which has its place on the economic level, but

1. W. e.g. 3/11/55, pp. 10-15, 22/11/56, pp. 11-16.

2. 'La procession', p. 83.

3. 3/11/55, pp. 4-5, 7.

4. 3/11/55, p. 6; c.f. ch. 3, supra.

5. 3/11/55, pp. 8-9, 22/11/56, p. 11.

6. 22/11/56, pp. 8-10; c.f. 'La procession', p. 73.

7. 3/11/55, pp. 10-12-

8. Ib., p. 15; c.f. 'La procession', p. 75.

9. 3/11/55, pp. 10-11; c.f. 'La procession', pp. 72, 80-1.

is deeply anti-'theological' (in the strict sense).¹ Arianism is nothing other than 'une certaine vision purement économique de la Trinité'.² Western trinitarian thought is simply not *Θεολογία*, the contemplation in 'unknowing' of the fathomless mystery of divine personality:³ 'La différence de ces deux conceptions trinitaires détermine, dans les deux cas, tout le caractère de la pensée théologique, et ceci dans une telle mesure qu'il devient difficile d'appliquer, dans un sens univoque, le même nom de théologie à ces deux modes de traiter des réalités divines'.⁴ What the Cappadocians, Dionysius, Maximus, or Palamas understood by *Θεολογία* has no place here.

Latin thought thus trivialises the whole idea of personality. The classical definition of persons, by Boethius, fundamental for all scholastic writing on the subject, itself bears witness to this, explaining 'person' as substantia individua rationalis naturae, treating it, that is, as reducible to nature, one instance among others of a natura, not per se unique, as if a satisfactory account could be given, without remainder, of a person in terms of common characteristics.⁵ Substantia here is, as Lossky admits, merely a literal rendering of *ὑπόστασις*, and the definition does correspond to the common sense of the Greek word;⁶ but Latin theology stops there, accepting this sense as determinative. Richard of St Victor's definition (divinae naturae incommunicabilis existentia), and his insistence that a person is primarily 'bearer of a proper name' (a name which answers to quis? not quid?),⁷ marks an advance, though not a wholly satisfactory correction. In the long run, a philosophy of existence is little better than a philosophy of essence as an

1. 27/10/55, pp. 21-5.

2. *Ib.*, p. 21.

3. *V.*, e.g., 22/11/56, pp. 25-6.

4. 'La procession', p. 76.

5. *V.*, e.g., 'La notion théologique', pp. 114-18; 10/11/55, pp. 15-16.

6. 'La notion théologique', pp. 113-14.

7. De Trinitate, IV,7, PL 196, 934-5.

expression of personal reality. We have noted ¹ that Lossky was dissatisfied with von Balthasar's assimilation of ὑπόθεσις and ὑπόστασις in Maximus to esse in Aquinas. Lossky questions ² whether the 'caractère inconceptualisable' of Aquinas's esse is at all the same as the mystery of the person, human or divine. Aquinas's theory applies to created individual substances in general, and so tells us nothing about persons as such; he practically identifies esse and ὑπόστασις on the created level, but clearly cannot affirm three esse's in God, whose essentia and esse are the same. Richard of St Victor, on the other hand, is happy to speak of three divine existentiae, but draws no conclusions about created persons. Neither has grasped that personality is something common to God and man, and absolutely irreducible to 'natural' terms, even to language about the mystery of 'existence' on the natural level. ³ We have a great gulf fixed between what 'person' or 'hypostasis' may mean in divinis and what it may mean in other contexts; and Aquinas perpetuates the archaic sense of 'hypostasis' which makes 'person' a sub-class of 'hypostasis' and no more. There is no attempt to follow through the implications of the Trinitarian and Christological use of the words. Western theology assumes, in practice, that the problem of personality can be resolved on the level of 'ontology', without appeal to the 'méta-ontologie' demanded by revelation, which only God Himself can fully comprehend. ⁴

If personality in the Trinity is secondary to, or reducible to the modalities of an abstract essence, if personal act is not a real transcendence of static nature, this clearly has consequences for our view of the relation between God and man which we call 'grace'. For Eastern theology, the question is relatively straightforward: grace is God's ἐνέργεια,

1. *Supra*, ch. 1, p. 24.

2. 'La notion théologique'; p. 119.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 119-20.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 120-1.

or, better, God ἐν ἐνσώματι, fully present and fully communicated in His act. ¹ There is a distinction between God and grace, but no separation, ² so that we can never say 'God and grace', as if they were discrete entities. ³ The West, however, postulates a doctrine of the 'created supernatural', a level of being apparently supposed to be intermediate between God and man, a reality created by God, an effect of His divine causality operating upon the human soul, ⁴ a habitus 'connatural' with man, yet not proper to his nature as such; ⁵ and this is an inevitable consequence of the notion of God as essence. In this system, 'Le seul rapport qui peut être conçu ici, c'est le rapport de la cause à l'effet': ⁶ the communion ἐν ἐνσώματι of divine and human persons is replaced by the causal agency of one individual substance upon another. Human nature is, indeed, altered in the life of grace, but the alteration is formal, the addition of new 'natural' or 'naturalised' dispositions or qualities: which is far removed from the Orthodox vision of human nature deified by active personal participation in the life of God. ⁷ Thus Orthodox view is not, of course, 'pantheism': ⁸ the ontological gulf between created and uncreated persons remains, even when human nature may be called (as it is by Maximus and Palamas) 'uncreated by grace'. ⁹ In scholasticism, the ontological gulf is not between created man and uncreated grace but between created nature with created 'supernature' and the divine nature: ¹⁰ grace may become 'connatural' with man (although strictly extrinsic to his own nature), but it is never 'connatural' with God. ¹¹ 'La coupure entre Dieu et le

1. M.T. pp 87 ff.; 16/2/56 and 1/3/56, passim, 28/3/57 & 4/4/57, passim, etc.

2. Eg, 4/4/57, p. 23; c.f. M.T., pp. 85-7.

3. Ib., p. 16.

4. M.T., p. 88; 16/2/56, p. 10. 28/3/57, p. 17, 4/4/57, p. 19, etc.

5. 4/4/57, pp. 20-2.

6. 29/11/56, p. 8.

7. M.T., pp. 87-9, etc.

8. 29/11/56, p. 8.

9. M.T., p. 87; 16/2/56, pp. 23-4, 1/3/56, p. 3, 21/3/57, p. 25.

10. 29/11/56, p. 9.

11. 4/4/57, p. 22.

surnaturel d'un côté, et la coupure entre le surnaturel ou la grâce et nous de l'autre, voilà une des conséquences très importantes de cette conception filioquiste'.¹ Late mediaeval nominalism, and the Protestant conception of grace (as wholly extrinsic) which grew out of it² are a natural development from the basic of 'filioquisme', that there is no possibility of real communion between God and man, at either the personal and the natural level.³ Protestantism does represent, in its way, a reaction against scholastic impersonalism towards a Biblical, Hebraic, personalist faith; yet it falls, finally, into the opposite error to that of Catholicism, and ignore the leve of 'nature' (in God and man) completely.⁴ This lack of interest in the 'divine ontology', in what is objectively the case about God, leads to the virtual disappearance of creative Trinitarian theology among Protestants;⁵ paradoxically, Trinitarian personalism cannot survive without proper consideration given to the divine nature. Thus the filioque has succeeded in atrophying Trinitarian theology in both branches of Western Christendom, as it has distorted the doctrine of grace: the filioque implies, initially, an 'essentialist' view of God, so that the relation of God to man is, inescapably, seen as extrinsic, whether this manifests itself in the Roman doctrine of created grace, or in the violent reaction of the Reformers towards an 'Old Testament' picture of grace as exclusively the personal attitude of God to man. Protestantism avoids pure essentialism, but is no more capable than Catholicism of avoiding the basic model of God and man as two individual entities confronting each other. And if God is seen as an individual entity, in this sense, real Trinitarianism has no chance. Lossky nowhere discusses what is surely the most creative piece of Trini-

1. 29/11/56, p. 10

2. V. 28/3/57, pp. 20-5.

3. 29/11/56, p. 11.

4. Ib., pp. 15-16.

5. Ib., p. 16.

tarian speculation in 20th century theology, Barth's exposition in the first volume of the 'Church Dogmatics';¹ but, remembering his critique of Bulgakov's work on the subject, he would surely have seen Barth as proposing a very similar, idealist-influenced scheme, a personalist monism,² as opposed to scholastic essentialist monism - a striking confirmation of his general thesis.

Again, Lossky's belief in the organic unity of Christian theology is made perfectly clear. If the question be put of how we know the Boethian and Thomist view of the person to be a false development, the answer is simply that the history of Western theology shows that this view cannot 'carry' a satisfactory and fruitful trinitarian theology, without which, dogmatics in general is doomed. And the classical expression of this catastrophic view, the filioque with all its implies, is (though unrecognised as such by the West) the keystone of a whole edifice of heterodoxy, Catholic and Protestant: it fixes, once and for all, the notion of God as individual, an individual substance or subject, constituted by a set of logically deduced internal relations. Since (as was noted in our last chapter) ecclesiology is, for Lossky, intimately bound to trinitarian belief, he looks for the consequences of 'filioquisme' in the Western doctrine of the Church as well as its doctrine of grace: and, if God is conceived as individual, it is perfectly plain that there can be no room for the Church as imago Trinitatis in Lossky's sense.³ The idea of Catholicity based on 'la catholicité divine, si l'on ose appliquer ce terme ecclésiologique à la Sainte Trinité',⁴ disappears. Only a consistently pluralist trinitarianism can support a correct understanding of catholicity; whereas what we find the West is what Nikos Missiotis has

1. Edinburgh, 1936; 1, § 9.

2. V., e.g., ib, pp. 403 ('We are speaking not of three divine "I's" but thrice of the one divine I'), 411 ('We can as little speak seriously of a tri-personality of God as of a triessentiality'), etc; for Barth's defence of the filioque, v. ib., 12, pp. 547-57.

3. V. supra, pp. 100-102.

4. 'La conscience catholique', p. 190.

aptly called ¹ 'Christomonism', the excessively historicist position that the Church is merely 'une société de chrétiens créé par le Christ'. ² This is an attitude which puts so great an emphasis upon the Church as the body of Christ that it issues in a 'totalitarisme sacramentaire', ³ an utterly unbalanced concern with the corporate and institutional aspects of Christian life, so that the life of the Spirit in the conversion and growth of particular believers takes a secondary place. There is here an 'idée idéologique au fond', ⁴ an idea of a body whose members are guaranteed salvation simply in virtue of their status as members. Because the filioque suggests a 'unilateral' subordination of Spirit to Son, ⁵ the idea that the Spirit's sanctifying work in each distinct person is equally important with the economy of the Son is not developed. Yet, 'il n'y a pas de sainteté collective', ⁶ the holiness of the Head, the objective holiness of Christ, does not and cannot constitute the holiness of each member of the body (as, equally, it does not and cannot depend on the holiness of the members, their various degrees of response to the Spirit). ⁷ Ecclesiology demands a proper consideration for the element of free personal response to the grace of Christ, response grounded in the free personal witness of the Holy spirit to Christ. ⁸

In an environment such as Western Christendom has become, an environment in which personal liberty is neglected, the development of a real ecclesiastical absolutism in the shape of the Papacy is a perfectly natural

1. In 'The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology' ('The Orthodox Ethos', ed. A.J. Philippou, Oxford, 1964, pp. 32-69), pp. 35 ff.; c.f. 9/2/56, pp. 12-13.
2. 9/2/56, p. 18; the phrase is, however, as Lossky regretfully admits, that of an Orthodox Catechism; c.f. also 2/2/56, p. 15.
3. 2/2/56, p. 5; c.f. M.T., p. 186, 'Redemption et déification', p. 103, 'Du troisième attribut de l'Eglise', p. 177, 'La conscience catholique', pp. 185, 188, etc.
4. 2/2/56, p. 5.
5. 9/2/56, pp. 8-9.
6. 11/4/57, p.11.
7. 17/5/56, pp. 33ff. In criticising the notion of 'collective holiness', Lossky may also have had in mind the view of Soloviev on this subject: v. infra, ch. 7.
8. 22/11/56, p. 22.

process.¹ Christ is seen primarily as Lord of the Church, 'monarch' of the Church: 'Ayant perdu de vue [la] monarchie du Père dans la Trinité, on a institué une monarchie du Fils qui représente le Père dans l'Eglise, monarchie du Fils qui peut être représentée alors par un vicaire du Fils, qui serait alors le chef visible de l'Eglise..... Il n'y a plus d'Eglise à l'image de la Trinité'.² In the West, forms come to predominate over life; canonical order, and no more, is seen as constitutive of the Church. The infallibility promised by Christ becomes a matter of legal guarantee rather than growth in the knowledge of truth through growth in fellowship, in the catholicity of the Holy Spirit.³ Lossky quotes with approval Momyakov's dictum: 'chez les catholiques c'est l'Eglise sans l'homme.... Chez les protestants, c'est l'homme sans l'Eglise'.⁴ Again, 'filioquisme' is at the root of the Protestant revolt: the radical impossibility of communion between God and man implied by the filioque produces the characteristic Protestant division between the Church known to man and the Church known to God ('l'Eglise dans le plan eschatologique'), classically articulated by Calvin.⁵ The Reform was initially a revolt in the name of the human person and of the Holy Spirit, and, as such, was unquestionably good; but it ended with a theology in which the personal, the particular, the subjective, was elevated to the status of ontological and general truth,⁶ the worst instance of this being the absurd and appalling doctrine of double predestination.⁷ It is, ultimately, a theology as unbalanced and uncatholic as that which had gone before. The necessary role of the Spirit as holding the personal and natural orders together is

1. *Ib.*, pp. 23-4.

2. *Ib.*, p. 24.

3. *Ib.*, p. 23; on the development of doctrine, c.f. 17/5/56, *passim*.

4. 11/4/57, pp. 25-6,

5. 5/4/56, pp. 10-11.

6. *Ib.*, p. 7; 2/2/56, p. 10.

7. 5/4/56, p. 13; 2/2/56, p. 10.

ignored throughout 16th century theology, Catholic and Protestant,¹ and Western theology thereafter enters on the last stage of its decadence, the gradual degeneration into textbook scholasticism on the one hand, and vacuous Protestant liberalism on the other.

Just as serious is the consequence of 'filioquisme' in personal spirituality. Lossky delivers himself of some surprisingly critical judgments of Carmelite teaching, especially St John of the Cross's doctrine of the two 'nights', and asserts firmly in M.T.² that, in the East, aridity and (a fortiori) dereliction are spiritually pathological conditions, 'never thought of by the mystical and ascetical writers of the Eastern tradition as a necessary and normal stage in the way of union'.³ Fidelity in such a condition may be a mark of real sanctity in the West, but the notion of a 'tragic separation from God' in the Christian life is a purely Western phenomenon, grounded in the Western attitude to the Spirit. 'Since the separation, the ways which lead to sanctity are not the same in the West as in the East. The one proves its fidelity to Christ in the solitude and abandonment of the night of Gethsemane, the other gains certainty of union with God in the light of the Transfiguration'.⁴ In a footnote, Lossky qualifies this somewhat sweeping assertion, allowing that this is a 'delicate and subtle matter'; but his contention stands, and he elaborates it further in his lectures.⁵ The Night of the Spirit, he argues, leaves no place for the evolution of the believer's conscious life, and so suggests that sanctification is an automatic and quasi-biological process, a mysterious growth imperceptible to the subject's consciousness, in which the subject is wholly passive; and, although consciousness does not constitute personal existence, it is indispensable to it.⁶ As we noted in ch. 3,⁷ full communion with God

1. 5/4/56, passim.

2. Pp. 225-7; c.f., 'Lumière', p. 54, n. 36.

3. Ib., p. 225.

4. Ib., p. 227.

5. 8/3/56, pp. 25 ff.

6. Ib., pp. 26-7; c.f. 'Ténèbre', p. 31.

7. Supra, p. 82.

means that the subject not only knows, but knows that he knows. St John's Night of the Spirit seems, therefore, a sub-personal experience (if that is not a contradiction in terms), and witnesses to the great Carmelite's failure to develop a satisfactory notion of the person.¹ Properly, 'l'homme total prend part dans l'expérience, dans la vie, dans l'union avec Dieu', Spirit, soul, and flesh;² and this dimension is absent from Carmel. This critique illustrates what Clément³ identifies as the dominant concern in Lossky's theology, the intimate connexion postulated between doctrines of the Holy Spirit and doctrines of human personality. Not only is God cut off from man by the subordination of the Spirit, but also it becomes impossible to see how the whole man can be grasped and transfigured by the grace of God; so that the idea of human wholeness (that is, of personality) becomes remote and abstract. The only contact between God and man is the obscure causal agency of God upon the depths of the soul, an indiscernible process, more analogous to physical growth than to personal relation: there is no sense of a whole life lived consciously in the joy of the Spirit. It is worth noting that Lossky's emphasis here on consciousness as a necessary mark of personality should be seen in the light of his trinitarian thinking: following Metropolitan Sergei,⁴ he is convinced that the orthodox form of trinitarian pluralism does involve an assertion of three distinct consciousnesses. Western trinitarianism does not regard personality in divinis as including consciousness, so it is not surprising that the notion in creatis is fragmented and unsatisfactory.

Thus the abnormality of Western Christian thought is seen to extend in its effects even to the higher levels of contemplative prayer; God

1. 8/3/56, p. 27.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 28-9.

3. In his obituary essay on Lossky.

4. *V. supra*, ch. 2. Lossky's tribute to Sergei in the Memorial Volume published by the Patriarchate ('Dukhovnoe nasledstvo Patriarkha Sergiya', 'The Spiritual Legacy of Patriarch Sergius', Moscow, 1947, pp. 263-70; E.T. in 'Diakonia', 6, 1971, pp. 163-171) stresses his indebtedness to the Patriarch in the evolution of his thought on the question of personality; but we must allow for the characteristic exaggeration of an official panegyric. There are few other indications of any real dependence.

still sanctifies His servants in this situation, but only through their trust and patience in the exile which they have unwittingly imposed upon themselves. The interdependent doctrines of the Holy Spirit and personality manifest the usual Western atrophy and distortion. Western theology provides a negative demonstration, as it were, of the integrity of the theological enterprise: theology, like the Church, is 'catholic', a unity-in-diversity, so that the sickness of the part is the sickness of the whole. Lossky suggests further areas in which this sickness is apparent - the lack of the conception of the transfiguration of matter by sanctified man,¹ the absence of an epiclesis from the Roman Mass (a 'réduction de la liturgie au moment christologique'),² and so on - but enough has been said to indicate the main outlines of his polemic. It is an impressive achievement, consistent, ingenious, and original; but, on closer examination, it will be found to beg a host of questions, and to be guilty of a great deal of misrepresentation. Clearly, it is impossible to enter into all the issues raised in anything like satisfactory depth within the compass of the present thesis; but a brief examination of one or two salient points will substantiate the charge. And insofar as Lossky's polemic is an integral part of his theological work, such an examination is desirable for the better understanding of this work.

His attack on the Carmelite contemplative tradition shows Lossky at his worst: although he must have had some familiarity with the works of St John, and the treatments of his thought by, for instance, Garrigou-Lagrange, Maritain, and Mascall, in their Thomist syntheses, his interpretations are naive and superficial in the extreme. In M.T.³ he appears to make no distinction whatsoever between 'states of dryness' and 'the dark night of the soul', and makes the astounding claim⁴ that both resemble accidie. It

1. 8/3/56, pp. 28-9, 7/12/56, p. 1., 27/12/56, pp. 12 ff.
2. 9/5/57, pp. 17-18, for an interesting discussion based in large part on Lossky's inchoate Eucharistic theology, v. B. Bobrinskoy, 'Quelques réflexions sur la pneumatologie du culte', in 'Mélanges liturgiques offerts au R.P. dom Bernard Botte, O.S.B.', Louvain, 1972, pp. 19-29.
3. P. 225.
4. Ib., p. 226, and 'Lumière', p. 54, n. 36.

is plain that he has either not noticed, not understood, or not cared to examine the distinctions drawn by St John between the Night of the Senses and the Night of the Spirit. The former involves the purgation of the believer's knowledge of God of all reductions of God to concepts, and all limitations of the action of God to certain emotional states: it involves, therefore, conditions of emotional and imaginative aridity, in which the believer is thrown back on the naked act of the will, which is faith. ¹ The latter involves the purgation of all remnants of moral, imaginative, volitional and spiritual imperfections, the utter voiding of self: and, as such, it involves a profound sense of abhorrence at both the epistemological and the moral and spiritual distance which separates the believer from God. ² The soul's clearer awareness of God as He is produces a horror at its own impurity, leading to the belief that God is 'against it' and cannot love or save it. ³ It should from this be perfectly plain that St John's doctrine is far more complex than Lossky allows, and that the comparison of either Night with accidia is simply absurd. It should also be plain that the allegation of passivism or automatism is wholly misplaced: for St John, the will and even the understanding are active throughout, 'not..... in the way which is usual and natural with them - that is, by reason and imagination - but supernaturally, through the unction of the Holy Spirit, which they receive passively, without any effort of their own'. ⁴ And certainly St John's profound and nuanced

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1. V. esp. 'The Ascent of Mount Carmel', Bk. II, chs. II-VI ('The Works of St John of the Cross', tr. E. Allison Peers, London, 1934, Vol. I pp. 68-87).
 2. 'The Dark Night of the Soul, Bk. II, passim (Ib., I, pp. 398-486).
 3. Ib., esp. pp. 406-8.
 4. Peers' notes to 'Carmel', II: XIV, 11; ib., I p. 125, n. 3. The alleged tendency of St John to passivism was discussed exhaustively in the 17th century; for the definitive reply to the questions put by the Inquisition, v. Basilio Ponce de Leon's defence of various of the Saint's propositions, reproduced in Peers, ib., III, pp. 382-434, esp. pp. 406-11.

conception of faith does not suggest an impersonal view of the process of sanctification; as also his meditation in 'The Living Flame of Love'¹ on the 'overflow' of the life of the spirit into the body, as manifested in St. Francis's stigmata, do not suggest that he saw the body as deprived of any share in the divine life granted to the soul. An examination of St John's doctrine in detail would, in fact, reveal a thoroughgoing 'apophatic attitude' in the sense which Lossky attributes to the Eastern Fathers: an apophasis, that is, grounded in the 'ekstasis' and kenosis of the subject in immediate personal relation to God. It is also worth noting that, contrary to Lossky's assertion, the experience of a 'Night of the Spirit' is not at all uncommon in the East. He allows² such an experience in the case of St Tikhon of Zadonsk; but any student of Russian spirituality will be inclined to discount this, on the grounds of Tikhon's heavy dependence on Western guides and his strongly melancholic temperament. More to the point, and more closely parallel to what St John seems to mean, is what is recorded of many of the Desert Fathers, from Antony onwards, of St Serafim of Sarov, and, most recently, the Starets Silouan of Mount Athos³ - a deep sense of abandonment, and a kind of self-condemnation to hell, which, paradoxically brings man closer to the Spirit of God in conforming him more closely to the kenosis of Christ.⁴ Thus Lossky's attempt to relate the 'dark night' to the filioque is confuted by his own tradition: in East and West alike, the way of union has its dialectical movement, the interplay of darkness and light, dereliction and repletion, so long as it retains what Lossky himself so fervently insisted on, the eschatological and dynamic movement of ἐκστασις; and

1. *Ib.*, III, pp. 45-6, 146.

2. *M.T.*, p. 227, n. 1.

3. V. 'The Undistorted Image', Archimandrite Sophrony (London, 1958), pp. 24-5, 29, 35, 105 on this experience in Silouan and others.

4. *Ib.*, p. 105.

ἑκτετακτῶς . 1

The theological and metaphysical scheme presupposed by St John of the Cross is, of course, Thomism (in a fairly broad sense - Thomism, that is, as mediated by centuries of disciples of and commentators on Aquinas). If we turn to Lossky's criticisms of Thomism, we find a parallel one-sidedness and a sometimes almost incomprehensible failure to do justice to Aquinas's intentions and to the sense which he explicitly attributes to the terms he uses. Thus, for instance, Lossky's discussions of the terms relatio and oppositio in Aquinas seem to bear little relation to the work these words do: there is a serious confusion of the logical and the ontological in Lossky's critique. Throughout 'La procession', Lossky reiterates that 'opposition' implies a reduction of the Trinity to 'dyads' of mutually exclusive terms, logical not personal terms, and so is a wholly inappropriate category; and there may also be a hint that some kind of personal opposition, 'l'exclusion des autres..... opposition à ce qui n'est pas "moi"', ² is not far away. The point Lossky is making is that personal diversity, being non-conceptualisable, is not reducible to logic: the absolute distinctness as persons of the three defies a logic that can only operate with pairs of terms. ³ However, the question is by no means so clear-cut. We revert to the question raised in ch.3 ⁴ with reference to Dionysius's notion of the Trinity: granted that the depths of God's personal life are absolutely inaccessible to us, we still need to talk about the diversity of the hypostases, to name them; which involves us

1. V.P. Miquel, 'La conscience de la grâce selon Syméon le Nouveau Théologien' ('Irenikon', XLII, 1969, pp. 314-42), p. 342. The contrast drawn by Lossky ('Ténèbre', p. 31) between St John and Gregory of Nyssa rests on an entirely mistaken notion of what the Carmelite Doctor meant by 'darkness'; and an examination of Bk II, ch. V of the 'Dark Night' (Peers, I, pp. 405-8) should make St John's closeness to the Cappadocian and Dionysian tradition in this matter perfectly clear.
2. 'Rédemption et déification', p. 104.
3. 'La procession', pp. 80-1, etc.
4. Supra, pp. 79-80.

in some kind of logical process, will we or no. As Gregory of Nyssa implies, we are bound to the pattern of 'A is not B and ^{not} C; B is not A and not C; C is not A and not B'; that is, to a logic of relationes oppositae, a logic concerned with 'the simultaneous presence of two related entities seen as being on the same level and distinct'.¹ In the sense that 'A is not B' and 'A is not C' are two-term propositions and could not be otherwise, we are here dealing in 'dyads'; but this is simply the exigency of any imaginable propositional calculus. If we are to talk about the persons of the Trinity, then, at one level, we cannot avoid insisting on our names for them having exclusively of reference; and, in divinis, this can only be secured by the logic of relationes.² Lossky fails to see that, however much room one gives to the apophatic recognition of that which, in God and man, is beyond concepts and logic, so soon as we begin to use words about the distinction of the divine persons, we are obliged to use them in some kind of logical structure; otherwise (as remarked above)³ we risk the complete dissolution of trinitarian theology in an unbridgeable gulf between God in se and God as we know Him.

Aquinas nowhere says Persona est relatio (as Lossky alleges):⁴ his discussion in S.T., I. 29,iv turns upon whether persona refers to the divine nature or not, and he concludes that Persona divina relationem originis significat per modum substantiae seu hypostasis in divina natura. That is to say: in discourse about God, 'person' designates something distinct by virtue of a relation of origin and subsisting as a really distinct hypostasis of the divine nature. Admittedly, this is an exceptionally difficult section of the Summa; but it seems fairly clear that

1. C. Velecky, in an excellent glossary appended to his edition of S.T. I, 29 and 30, Vol. VI (1964) of the new Dominican edition of the Summa (London, 1963 -), p. 161, s.v. 'relative opposition'.
2. Velecky, ib., pp. 141-147, passim.
3. Pp. 79-80.
4. M.T., p. 57.

Aquinas does not regard persona and relatio as interchangeable terms (if only because he has established in I, 28,iv that there are four relationes reales in GOD - paternitas, filiatio, spiratio and processio). As Velecky explains,¹ Aquinas is saying that persona refers to a certain distinct and unique way in which two terms in the Godhead share their divinity: relatio originis, if it is relatio realis, as it is in God, means precisely this, the communication from X to Y of what X is, X's natura. The 'intentional' sense of persona is not wholly absent. Nor is it true to say that this gives natura priority: in God, relatio is 'real', that is, substantial, the relationes are in re the divine nature. To the question 'What are the personae?' the answer is 'God', that is, the divine nature: 'in God, "relation from the point of view of its existence.... is the divine nature".'² The distinctions between the persons are said to be non-absolute simply because an 'absolute distinction', in Aquinas's vocabulary, would mean a distinction in essentia.³ Thus the names of the relationes or personae are not interchangeable with 'essential' terms: both sets are equally true, but our finite minds cannot manage both together, cannot grasp unity and trinity simultaneously.⁴ Lossky's curious remark⁵ that if, for the scholastics, 'what - is - not - essence' is not God, then the divine persons cannot be God unless 'reducible' to essence shows a serious misunderstanding of what 'essence' means to Aquinas; since it is obvious that any answer to the question 'quid?' as regards the persons other than divina natura would mean that they were not God.

Of course, Aquinas's trinitarian speculations have a highly abstract air, and his conception of personality has little in common with Lossky's

1. Op. cit., p. 141.

2. Ib., p. 143, quoting from I Sent. 20, I, i.

3. V. ib., p. 159, s.v. 'essential term'.

4. Ib. 29/11/56, 143-4.

yet there is good reason for saying that it has more in common with Lossky's view than with the definitions of, say, Damascene, in this sense, that the notion has begun to be 'psychologised' by the time of Aquinas, as it never was in the Greek Fathers. As Velecky suggests,¹ the fact that Aquinas substitutes intellectualis for rationalis in the Boethian definition is significant: intellectualis, for St Thomas, describes a being possessed of knowledge and love, a knowledge that is 'an intimate penetration into the meaning of a reality'.² Thus the person comes to be seen as an 'ultimate centre of activity and responsibility', a subject in something like the modern sense.³ Here is the key to Aquinas's careful distinction of persona from hypostasis: the individual subsistent of a 'rational' or 'intellectual' nature is that which not merely actualises but consciously, freely and responsibly actualises the nature.⁴ Hypostasis remains a more generalised term⁵ - hence its capacity for assimilation to esse. Thus it is not true that persona in divinis has nothing significant in common with persona in creatis, and Aquinas is justified in claiming⁶ that persona is not predicated equivocally of God: the sense of persona as 'free and self-conscious subject' sketched by Aquinas is certainly available for theology and anthropology alike. In fact, St Thomas's interpretation of persona represents a very important advance in terminological precision, decisively removing the ambiguities associated with a term like hypostasis,⁷ and making explicit the 'personalist'

1. Op. cit., pp. 132, 146-7;

2. Velecky, *ib.*, p. 147.

3. *Ibid.*

4. S.T. I, 29, I, concl.; V. the excellent work of A. Malet, 'Personne et amour dans la théologie trinitaire de Saint Thomas d'Aquin' (Paris, Vrin, 1956) pp. 80-98, *passim*. On the whole issue of Aquinas's trinitarian theology, Malet takes issue with those, including (pp. 71-2) Lossky and Bulgakov, who have accused Aquinas of impersonalism, refuting (I think satisfactorily) the charge that he gives some sort of primacy to the divine essence (pp. 71-6) and that he regards the relationes as the 'ground' of the persons (pp. 91-2).

5. *Ib.*, II.

6. *Ib.*, IV, ad 4.

7. On this ambiguity, v., e.g., von Balthasar, 'Liturgie cosmique', pp. 164 ff.

implications of the use of ὑπόστασις by the Fathers. So, Lossky's claim ¹ that Aquinas goes no further than the Greek Fathers or Boethius in the understanding of personality is not really tenable; as we noted with reference to Augustine in the last chapter, Lossky is assuming a history of doctrinal and spiritual development to which he is heir, without any serious attempt at understanding its nuances and details. Although he states in 'La notion théologique', ² that he is not writing an historical study, and although he is critical ³ of those who perpetrate anachronisms in patrology, 'en mettant du Bergson dans saint Grégoire de Nysse ou du Hegel dans saint Maxime le Confesseur', this (and other essays) exhibits a certain amount of confusion on this point, manifested in the idea, which we have already seen to be distinctly problematic, that, in spite of everything, one can extract from patristic data implicit or embryonic doctrines on various points. While it may be perfectly true that certain uses of ὑπόστασις, especially after Chalcedon, 'demand' a revision of the concept, it is misleading to ascribe to the Chalcedonians or neo-Chalcedonians an 'implicitly' different notion. Historical accuracy should allow us to say no more than this, that there is a continuing line of development in the uses of the word, and that its explicit revision or refinement was a protracted process, to which a great variety of thinkers contributed; and that, among these, Aquinas holds an important place, as one of the foremost contributors to the 'psychologising' of the term.

To return to the questions posed at the conclusion of the preceding chapter: ⁴ Lossky criticises Boethius, Aquinas, and the Western tradition in general for an unimaginative conservatism in their handling of the term ὑπόστασις, and their failure to develop the incipient personalism of the Eastern Fathers, and attempts to shore up this condemnation by demonstrating

1. 'La notion théologique', p. 114.

2. Pp. 109-110.

3. Ib., p. 109.

4. Supra, pp. 125-9.

the poverty and rationalism of Thomist trinitarian theology, and the automatism and passivism of Western spirituality in its classical articulation by the Carmelites. In the present chapter, we have questioned the justice and the cogency of this criticism at several points. Lossky's interpretation of St John of the Cross is superficial and inaccurate; and his attack on scholastic trinitarianism is characterised by massive oversimplification. His complaint about the scholastic understanding of hypostasis is largely invalidated by the fact, which he ignores, of the greater terminological complexity and precision of Latin theology, which allowed Aquinas to distinguish clearly between ὑπόστασις in ^{its} common Greek metaphysical or ontological sense (meaning ἄτομον), and ὑπόστασις in its theological (Trinitarian and Christological) usage, and to begin to make explicit the latent 'personalist' corollaries of this latter usage. The understanding of persona which emerges is one which does allow for a measure of real trinitarian pluralism, ¹ a plurality of consciousnesses, and for a genuine analogy between human and divine personality. Lossky's ruling controversial concern was to demonstrate that the Schism represented a really theological, not simply a political or cultural, division ² (it is perhaps connected with his insistence on the autonomy of theology); consequently, he tends to begin from an 'Orthodox' viewpoint (itself usually a far more complex and historically conditioned position than he admitted) and to cast about for its antithesis in the West. The filioque becomes - if the expression may be pardoned - a kind of deus ex machina, invoked as the root of all manner of supposed enormities in Western Christendom; the reasoning behind this being, apparently, that since the filioque

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1. This judgment is supported by L. Hodgson ('The Doctrine of the Trinity', pp. 155, 164-5), E.J. Bicknell ('Essays Catholic and critical', ad. E.G. Selwyn, London, S.P.C.K., 1926, pp. 148-50), Barth (C D.I., pp. 410: he regards Aquinas as almost excessively pluralistic), and others.
 2. On this, v. esp. the Introduction to M.T.

was the ostensible theological occasion of the schism, all subsequent divergences, real or imagined, must be traceable to this radix malorum. And, while the desire to defend the autonomy and the integral wholeness and interdependence of dogmatic theology is wholly comprehensible and laudable, we are entitled to question whether so wholesale a polemical programme is the fittest means towards such a defence.

Does nothing tenable remain of Lossky's critique? Perhaps the most basic point still stands: there is a debate here about methodology. In an important sense, it does not matter if Aquinas's terminology is patient of an interpretation congenial to Lossky, since there remains a fundamental difference in what they regard as the proper starting-point for theology. Not even the most sympathetic of Aquinas's exegetes could claim that the Summa is Christocentric in structure and method;¹ whereas Lossky's system is constructed throughout with reference to the revelation of God in Christ. Although we may discern the outlines of an 'intentional' view of personality in Aquinas, there is nothing to correspond to the kenotic model developed by Lossky. Aquinas begins from an unobjectionable and uncontroversial definition of the normal uses of persona, and, indeed, extends and enriches its content a good deal; but (pace Velecky)² there is not much to suggest a radical revision of the notion on the human level as a result of its theological use. From Lossky's point of view, this is a victory for conceptualism, for the pride of the intellect closed to revelation: it is a theology without metavoid, devoid of the 'apophatic attitude', and so (as we have said before) not really theology at all, as far as Lossky is concerned. His

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1. On this question of the non-Christocentric structure of the Summa, v. P.E. Persson, 'Sacra Doctrina: Reason and Revelation in Aquinas' (Oxford, 1970) pp. 243-9.
 2. *Op. cit.*, p. 148: 'If the highest form of "personality" is to be found in God, we learn from the treatise that personality is achieved not through isolation but through communion.'

unfairness and inaccuracy in particular criticisms of the West are not of primary significance: the essential complaint about Western intellectualism and subordination to philosophy remains unaffected, raising the whole question of rival conceptions of precisely how God is known, and how His activity is mediated in the world to created subjects, Lossky's solution, as has already been indicated, is Palamism: man knows God in 'apophatic' or 'ekstatic' or 'kenotic' personal encounter, and the Palamite scheme is introduced to explain (so far as is possible) how, metaphysically, the finite and the infinite can really commune with each other. To complete our examination of Lossky's polemic, then, we shall proceed to consider his use of this scheme.

CH. VI.

THE DEBATE WITH THE WEST (2)

On the surface, the Palamite position is simple: God is not knowable or communicable in His 'essence', and is known, communicated, and participated in His 'energy' or 'energies'. However, He is equally fully present in both these 'modes': the human person participating in the energies is genuinely participating God, and so is 'deified' by this participation. The energies are not identical or comparable with the hypostases, but are held in common and exercised in common by all three persons. And they are exercised through all eternity, independently of the world's existence, since the divine οὐσία is always ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ. In relation to the world, however, they are what Dionysius calls προόδος; they are what is designated by the 'divine names'; in the terminology of Maximus, they are the λόγοι, the divine ideas, of created things. Grace is nothing other than uncreated 'energy', and the light whereby we see God, whether in this world or in the age to come, is likewise uncreated 'energy': it is the light which the apostles saw in the figure of Christ at the Transfiguration. This position is set out at great length and in great detail throughout Lossky's work,¹ almost always with

1. M.T., ch. 4, passim, ch.5, pp. 94-100; 'Lumière', passim; VG, ch. 9, passim; 17/11/56, pp. 8-28, 24/11/55, passim, 12/1/56, pp. 5-15, 16/2/56, passim, 1/3/56, passim; 18/10/56, p. 3, 25/10/56, passim, 8/11/56, pp. 5-6, 13/12/56, pp. 1-11, 21/2/57, pp. 6-7, 21/3/57, pp. 19-25; T.D., A, pp. 88-91, 99-108; etc.

reference to its antecedents in earlier Eastern Christian thought - not only Maximus and Dionysius, but the Cappadocians as well. VG is basically a sustained argument for an unbroken continuity in Eastern theology from Irenaeus to Palamas, and, as we have noted, ¹ it is in part prompted by a desire to refute the attacks of scholars who discerned a radical discontinuity between Palamas and the earlier Greek Fathers. Interestingly enough, Lossky also appeals for support to Metropolitan Philaret, ² who, in one of his Christmas sermons (on ~~1~~ K. 2¹³; delivered in 1821), speaks at length of the eternal 'glory', enjoyed by the persons of the Trinity, which is communicated to men in the Incarnation. This is a valuable testimony: Philaret is unlikely to have studied Palamas in extenso (hardly anyone did before 1900), and the sermon does seem to suggest that some kind of doctrine of the divine energies persisted through the centuries in a rather imprecise form at the level of the monastic piety which Philaret represented. ³ So that the claim which Lossky regularly makes, that the Palamite doctrine is 'the teaching of the Eastern Church', is not, it appears, so historically indefensible as scholars such as Jugie have argued.

The polemical import of Palamism, for Lossky, is most evident in relation to the Western capitulation to philosophy: scholasticism interprets the simplicity of God as the simplicity of His essence, the absolute identity of the essence with its attributes and operations, thus, once again, implying that God is primarily impersonal. ⁴ The notion of God as simple essence reduces His unknowability to a mere matter of degree:

1. Supra, pp. 77-78.

2. M.T., p. 75; the reference is to a French translation. The Russian original may be found in 'Slova i rechi.... Filareta', (Moscow, 1848) I, pt. 1, pp. 3a-6b; and c.f. his sermon on the Transfiguration, *ib.*, I, Pt 1, pp. 676-71b.

3. The inclusion in the 'Dobrotolyubie' of texts from Palamas must have been a contributing factor in this.

4. M.T., pp. 78, 88; 'Lumière', p. 45, 29/11/56, pp. 5-6, 21/3/57, pp. 23-4.

human minds are accustomed to knowing things which are composite, and so cannot readily accept the notion of an object which, being simple, cannot be dealt with in the terms of a finite conceptual calculus; but some knowledge is still possible by analogy. We can still remain on the level of the knowledge of objects by a conceptual machinery. There is no radical, personal depth in God that we cannot penetrate. ¹ The Beatific Vision is made onto an intellectual vision of God's essence, 'remplaçant une réalité religieuse par un concept intellectualiste'. ² It is the same point precisely as Lossky makes in his critique of 'filioquisme' - the unity of God is no longer a personal principle but an intellectual construct. Properly, the divine simplicity (itself a philosophical rather than a religious notion, and so of secondary importance)³ is a matter of the perfect unity of the Trinity in the monarchy of the Father: ⁴ scholasticism, in refusing to distinguish between essence and energy, does away with the freedom of God, His capacity to 'transcend His transcendence' and go out from His essence in relation. ⁵ Palamaism is 'the dogmatic basis of the real character of all mystical experience', ⁶ the explanation of how we may become, in the words of II Pet.1,⁴ 'Partakers of the divine nature'. It is because the West has failed to understand this that it has lost all sense of deification as the end of Christian life, since the notion of created grace and a created light of glory whereby God is seen empties all content from the doctrine of a

1. 'Lumière', p. 45.

2. Ib., p. 51; c.f. supra, pp. 192-3.

3. M.T., pp. 78-9; 'Lumière', p. 45.

4. 24/11/55, pp. 7, 17; etc.

5. M.T., p. 73; 'Lumière', p. 50; 24/11/55, p. 17; etc.

6. M.T. p. 86.

real participation in the uncreated life of God.¹ Obviously the consequences of the Scholastic view of the divine simplicity in this sphere are precisely the same as ^{the} consequences of 'filioquisme'; the rejection of the Palamite distinction by the West is an inevitable by-product of the essentialism which established the filioque. As this suggests, Lossky sees a peculiarly close link between the Holy Spirit and the divine energies. In the economy of grace, it is the Spirit Who realises in the created world the activity of God; Who, at creation, animates what the Word calls into existence and directs it actively towards perfection and union with God; ² Who, under the Old Dispensation, calls the Chosen People back to the Word revealed in the law by His inspiration of the prophets; ³ and Who, at Pentecost, finally descends personally to consummate the work of Christ, the Word Incarnate, to bear witness to Christ's divinity, and to make men partakers of that divinity in the Church. ⁴ These are the 'three circles' of the Holy Spirit's activity (an image borrowed from Maximus), in the natural order, the Old Covenant, and the Church. ⁵ The Old Testament saints, living and dying before Pentecost, know the Spirit and the grace of God only as 'external' realities, acting on them casually; only after Pentecost does total personal sanctification become possible, by the full indwelling of the Spirit's divine energies in the purified and 'personalised' nature of man recreated in Christ. ⁶ The Holy Spirit is not the same as the grace of God, as many of the earliest Christian theologians, and Peter Lombard in the

1. V., e.g., MT., pp. 75-8; though note that this greatly exaggerates the kinship between the views of Palamas's opponents and Thomism, c.f. ib., pp. 220-1, 16/2/56, passim, 21/3/57, pp. 19, ff., 28/3/57, passim 4/4/57, passim etc.
2. M.T., pp. 100-1.
3. 22/12/55, pp. 36-7, 29/12/55, pp. 11-15, 26/1/56, pp. 1 ff.; T.D.C., pp. 29-32.
4. M.T., ch. 8, passim; 'Rédemption et déification', passim, 'La Tradition et les traditions', passim, esp. pp. 151, ff.; etc.
5. 15/12/55 - 26/1/56, passim.
6. M.T., pp. 133-4, 29/12/55, pp. 11 ff.; T.D., C, pp. 28-29.

early Middle Ages supposed; ¹ but the distinction (which must be made) between God and grace, between the Holy Spirit and His charisms, is not, in Thomist fashion, a distinction between the uncreated and the created, but one between person and energy. ² In a theology which has no conception of the divine energies, there is an endemic tendency to confuse these two orders, the personal and the economic; so that, in Peter Limbard, and, later, in Protestantism, the Holy Spirit is, as it were, made to do the work which the energies do in Orthodox thought, ³ and where this is so, grace cannot be seen as other than 'forensic' and external, ⁴ purely a relation and never participation. ⁵

What must be emphasised, of course, is that this role of the Spirit belongs only to the level of economy and manifestation. At this level, we may speak of the Father as almost the same as the divine essence ('il se rapproche infiniment [à] l'essence'), ⁶ as the Spirit is almost the same as the divine energy. It is the Father Who is the primary possessor of all divine attributes, the Son Who is the concrete revelation of these attributes, and the Spirit Who reveals and realises the Son's act of reflecting what is the Father's. ⁷ It is in this sense that, in the Trinity, the Spirit is an image of the Son, and the Son of the Father: each is an image of, not the person, but the nature of another. ⁸ Therefore,

1. M.T., p. 213, 27/10/55, pp. 11-12, 16/2/56, pp. 2 ff., 4/4/57, pp. 14-18.

2. 4/4/57, pp. 19 ff., 23 ff.

3. 10/11/55, p. 19; 29/11/56, passim, 4/4/57, passim.

4. 4/4/57, pp. 17 ff.

5. 28/3/57, p. 25.

6. 17/11/55, p. 22.

7. M.T., pp. 82-3; 'La procession', pp. 87-92; 17/11/55, passim, 24/11/55, pp. 1-3, 16; 15/11/56, passim, 22/11/56, pp. 3-7; etc.

8. M.T., pp. 84-5; 24/11/55, pp. 1-3, etc.; R.P.C. Hanson's criticism of Lossky, and the Eastern tradition in general, for this use of the idea of 'image' ('The Attractiveness of God', London, SPCK, 1973, pp. 131-5) entirely misses the point that 'image' for Lossky does not have anything to do with the relations of the persons as such and in themselves.

there is a sense in which the filioque is perfectly orthodox ¹ (although the Byzantine compromise of *διὰ τῶν* may still be preferable), a sense which is dependent on the essence - energies distinction, and so is not available to the Western defenders of the word. Lossky is (as we have seen already) ² prepared to give the benefit of the doubt to Augustine, and he extends this also to the Cistercian Fathers, ³ and even to the Spanish councils which first inserted the term into the Creed; ⁴ there is a tradition in the West which is Orthodox in spite of itself, in spite of its lack of the conceptual tools needed to make this Orthodoxy clear. What is more, this does not mean simply that the filioque or *διὰ τῶν* refers to the 'temporal mission' of the Holy Spirit alone: God eternally manifests Himself. He is eternally *ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ* so that this manifestation is not merely economic or relational. 'Indépendamment de l'existence des créatures, la Trinité se manifestait dans le rayonnement de Sa gloire'. ⁵

Here we encounter a difficulty. How, it may well be asked, can there be 'manifestation' in abstracto, without any recipient of the manifestation? If 'energy' is primarily manifestation, 'rayonnement', we are practically bound to postulate the co-eternity of the world with God (which Lossky refuses to do). But, the Palamite will reply, this is purely a verbal problem: 'expression' or 'manifestation' is simply intended to designate God's eternal transcending of His essence, and this need not logically imply any relation to anything exterior. ⁶ Lossky, however, has informed us ⁷ that 'essence' in Byzantine theology means God

1. 'La procession', pp. 92-3; 17/11/56, p. 27; 15/11/56, pp. 11-12.

2. *Supra*, pp. 128ff.

3. M.T.; p. 65, nl; 15/11/56, p. 23.

4. 'La procession', p. 92.

5. 'La procession', p. 91; Hanson (op. cit., p. 132) makes the further mistake of assuming that Lossky's distinction of Trinitarian relations ad intra and ad extra is no more than 'the distinction between the temporal and the eternal missions of the Spirit', c.f. 'Lumière', p. 49.

6. M.T. p. 74.

7. 17/11/55, p. 9.

'en dehors de tous rapports avec la créature': on this definition, 'essence' must include the eternal outgoing of God in 'energy', even if it does not include the temporal realisation of this outgoing; The problem seems to be that Lossky (and Palamas before him),¹ having begun with the essence-energies distinction as a basically epistemological tactic (God is knowable in energy and not in essence), has hardened it into a metaphysical division in the Godhead itself; and, as such, its consistency and intelligibility are greatly weakened. When we are told² that grace is 'un nouveau mode d'être divin qui est dû justement à ce rapport nouveau qui existe du moment où Dieu crée quelque chose qui lui est extérieure', and recall that grace is identical with God's uncreated energy,³ we may well be puzzled. The energies may not depend on there being a world 'outside' God, but obviously creation is supposed to make some sort of difference, in establishing a 'rapport nouveau'. A simple solution would be to say that energy is undivided in itself and multiple in its relations:⁴ but in fact, neither Palamas nor Lossky seems to want to say this. So far as any very clear doctrine can be extracted from Palamas on the subject, he appears to suppose that there is a real, not merely notional or relative, plurality of energies.⁵ When he speaks of the oneness of the energies, as sometimes he does,⁶ it is to stress that they are exercised absolutely in common by the three persons, because 'energy' is proper to nature rather than person: insofar as the essence is one, it unites the energies in itself in one *ἐνέργεια*.⁷ The

1. V. E. von Ivanka, 'Palamismus und Vätertradition' ('L'Eglise et les églises', II, Chevetogne, 1955, pp. 29-46), p. 46, and J. Meyendorff, 'A Study of Gregory Palamas' (London, 1964), pp. 226-7.
2. 16/2/56, p. 21; and c.f. M.T., pp. 71 ff., which, despite p. 74, suggests some dependence of the energies on creation.
3. M.T., p. 87, etc.
4. V.C. Journet, 'Palamisme et Thomisme' ('Revue Thomiste', 60, 1960, 3, pp. 429-452), p. 446; P. Sherwood, Glorianter Vultum Tuum, Christe Deus (SVSQ, 10,4, 1966, pp. 195-208), p. 199.
5. V., e.g., Cap. 100, PG 150, 1189D-92A, Cap. 145, PG 150, 1221C; Tr. III, 2, 7, (pp. 654-7); Meyendorff, op. cit., p. 221.
6. E.g., Cap. 113, PG 150, 1197D; 127, PG 150, 1209C; Theoph., PG 150, 949A-C.
7. Tr. III, 1, 23 (pp. 600-1) and 2, 7 (654-7).

question is complicated by Palamas's attempt¹ to demonstrate that there are energies which 'have a beginning and an end' and others which are eternal (*πρόγινωσις, θέλησις, πρόνοια* and *ἀποψία*, for example): and the latter class certainly seem to have as much or as little real plurality as the former, the only difference being that between eternal and temporal activity. As for Lossky, he can speak² of 'particular' energies, and of the energies as manifesting 'the innumerable names of God..... Wisdom, Life, Power, Justice, Love, Being, God - and an infinity of other names which are unknown to us'; which certainly suggests a real plurality independent of the plurality perceived by our minds.

What Palamas and Lossky seem to be saying is roughly this: we know God only insofar as He acts upon us; and by discerning this action in both specific acts and 'characteristic' acts, that is, by abstracting features from particular acts of grace and providence as consistent subtending principles, we come to see that God's *ἐνέργεια* is more than merely His action upon us, but is, ultimately, what He does and is in His eternity. A particular human condition say, may be effected by, an *ἐνέργεια* with a beginning and an end; but what, so to speak, energises the *ἐνέργεια* has no beginning or end.³ The particular act of grace or love reveals God as eternally grace - full and loving. So far, this makes perfect sense; but confusion enters in at the point where the plurality of 'characteristic' acts (grace, love, wisdom, justice, power, and so on) is supposed to be more or less the same as the plurality of specific acts. The multiplicity of the divine attributes is seen as something closely analogous to the concrete multiplicity of different things. Hence, Palamas can say⁴ - with a startling philosophical naïveté

1. Tr., III, 2, 7-11.

2. E.g., M.T. p. 80.

3. V. Meyendorff, op. cit., pp. 163-4.

4. Cap. 145, PG 150, 1221C.

- that we must distinguish οὐσία from ἐνέργεια in order to avoid polytheism, a multiplicity of divine things, because the ἐνέργεια are so many. And if the distinction is being made on grounds like these, it is inevitable that it will suggest two very clearly delimited modes of being in God, one absolutely simple, the other multiple; ¹ and the problem is posed of how they can be said to be the same in re, to have the same 'content', God. For the Aristotelean, the οὐσία of anything is what supplies the answer to a τί ἐστίν ; question, 'What is it?' If God is οὐσία and ἐνέργεια in the sense of two distinct modes, and yet is actually one in re, we should have to say that the οὐσία of the οὐσία and the οὐσία of the ἐνέργεια were identical; which is, to say, the least, clumsy, and very nearly nonsensical. And the Aristotelean sense of οὐσία cannot be simply abandoned, since it is at the root of the classical Eastern Trinitarian formulations. Equally, clearly, to deny that οὐσία and ἐνέργεια were one in re would be disastrous.

Lossky is not wholly unaware of this problem. At several points in his work he appears to be vaguely conscious that there is a difficulty about what exactly the energies communicate to man in their action on him. One of the major points about Palamism, is, after all, that it purports to explain how men can be 'partakers of the divine nature': are we then to say that 'nature' and 'essence' are the same, and that we participate in the essence through the energies? or that the divine nature is the common content of essence and energies, and we participate in the nature without participating in the essence? The trouble is that

1. This is precisely how the distinction is presented by P. Sherrard: 'We can conceive neither of the relationships of God to creation, nor of how all things participate in His divinity, except by distinguishing His entirely simple, immutable and incommunicable Essence from His multiple and communicable powers and energies') 'The Greek East and the Latin West', London, 1959, p. 38). Lossky speaks in terms of 'modes of divine existence' in M.T., pp. 69,74, and 89; 'Lumière', pp. 49-50; 17/11/55, passim, 16/2/56, pp. 15,21; 8/11/56, p. 5; 'Eckhart', p. 344; and T.D., A, pp. 99-102.

Lossky has used 'nature' in the Trinitarian context—to mean what the Eastern tradition designates unanimously as οὐσία. Of οὐσία and φύσις he says¹ 'Ces deux notions coïncident, sans s'identifier complètement', but does not make it clear precisely how they are not identical. In M.T.,² in the context of his discussion of Palamism, he can say that 'the essence of God' is 'His nature, properly so-called'; and this only a page later than the statement³ that 'The divine nature must be said to be at the same time both exclusive of, and, in some sense, open to participation'. Later in the same chapter,⁴ we find that our union with God in grace makes us 'participate in the divine nature, without our essence becoming thereby the essence of God'. Again, in the lectures for 1955-6, life in grace is said to be participation 'à la nature commune de la Trinité' (Lossky refers to John 16¹⁴⁻¹⁵);⁵ but this is apparently contradicted a little later, when Lossky denies⁶ that the Holy Spirit confers the divine nature upon us. It is in this connexion⁷ that Lossky uses Palamas's curious argument⁸ that, if we participated in the divine οὐσία directly, we should be on the same level as the persons of the Trinity, and God would then be *μυρωνοειδής*; the barrier between created and uncreated would be utterly abolished.⁹ Since Lossky's affirmations elsewhere¹⁰ that we never cease to be created persons even if our nature is deified, 'uncreated by grace', deal quite satisfactorily with the problems raised by the notion of participation, the Palamite argument seems a gratuitous and rather baroque refinement. In short, it is

1. 'La notion théologique', p. 113, n.1.

2. P. 70; and c.f. 27/12/56, p. 1.

3. *Ib.*, p. 69.

4. P. 87.

5. 2/2/56, p. 17; and c.f. 22/11/56, p. 3 and 21/3/57, p. 21.

6. 16/2/56, p. 8.

7. *V.* also M.T., pp. 69-70, and 'Lumière', p. 50, n. 27.

8. *V.*, e.g., *Theoph.*, PG 150, 941 A.

9. *V. Meyendorff*, *op. cit.*, pp. 176-8.

10. E.G., M.T., pp. 165-6; 16/2/56, p. 23 (where the analogy of the Incarnation is used: Christ does not cease to be a divine person when He assumes human nature, so we do not cease to be human persons when we are made partakers of the divine nature).

practically impossible to extract a consistent account of what participation ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ means from Lossky's writings and lectures. On the one hand, we have a model of the energies communicating 'God' or 'divinity' or the divine 'life'¹ - that is, the divine 'nature' as active and outgoing;² on the other, we have a very serious terminological confusion, and a naively materialist idea of participation which impels Lossky to deny, implicitly or explicitly, that we ever really come into contact with the divine nature at all, since it is, properly, the incommunicable which is 'possessed' only by the persons of the Trinity.

I use the word 'possessed' advisedly: Lossky and Palamas both speak on occasion of οὐσία as something which entities have (rather than are). 'Ἐξεῖ ὁ Θεὸς', writes Palamas,³ καὶ ὁ μὴ ἔστιν οὐσία; and Lossky's lapidary assertion, repeated in various places and various forms in his work,⁴ that 'God is more than essence, suggests a similar view. 'The theology of the Eastern Church distinguishes in God the three hypostases, the nature or essence, and the energies' -⁵ not merely two, but, it seems, three 'modes of existence' spoken of as if they were 'parallel' realities; but this phraseology only echoes Palamas: Τριῶν ὄντων τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὐσίας, ἐνεργείας, Τριάδος ὑποστάσεων Θεῶν ...⁶ We have already noted⁷ Lossky's defence of Palamism on the grounds that, if 'ce qui n'est pas l'essence... n'est pas Dieu', the hypostases cannot be God (unless conceived à la manière Romane, as relations internal to the essence); yet this is in the context of an argument⁸ (with an imaginary scholastic interlocutor) which strenuously denies that 'les énergies s'ajoutent à l'essence'.

1. E.g., 'Ténèbre', pp. 34-5; 2/2/56, p. 17, 9/2/56, p. 11, 16/2/56, p. 16; 11/4/57, p. 2; etc.
2. T.D., A, pp. 99-102, esp. pp. 101-102!
3. Cap. 135, PG 150, 1216 B; and v. Meyendorff, op. cit., p. 215.
4. E.G. M.T., pp. 73 and 240; 'Lumière', p. 50; etc.
5. M.T., pp. 85-6.
6. Cap. 75, PG 150, 1173 B.
7. Supra, p. 159.
8. 29/11/56, pp. 6-7.

Lossky is attempting to establish that the distinction of essence from energy does not affect the divine simplicity, does not make God a composite of essence 'plus' energy; and, following Palamas,¹ he claims that, if the distinction of person from nature in God does not imply any kind of composition, neither does the distinction of essence from energy. What is regrettable and confusing in this is the statement that the hypostases are not the essence of God: granted that, as Lossky regularly says,² the persons 'contain' the οὐσία and are not simply reducible to it, this by no means suggests that the persons are not οὐσία. Quite the contrary: 'the divine essence' is still the correct answer to the question 'What are the persons?' If any other answer could be given, Trinitarian theology would be reduced to nonsense: it is merely common sense to say that if anything is not 'in essence' God, it is not God, because 'the divine essence' or 'substance' or 'nature' is - or should be - a shorthand form of 'what-it-is-to-be-God', and no more. Lossky has fallen into exactly the sort of error he professes himself anxious to avoid - 'un durcissement doctrinal', suggesting that 'il y a l'essence qui est fermée, qui est transcendante, puis il y a les énergies qui se dégagent de l'essence, qui la manifeste sans la manifester, et qui sont autre chose'.³ In implying that it makes sense to speak of the persons as 'not-essence', he implies precisely the model which he ostensibly rejects as crude and naïve - the divine essence and the divine persons and the divine energies, a complex of 'modes' which we lump together as 'God', the divine 'nature' existing in diverse ways whose mutual connexion is vague and obscure.

1. V., e.g., Cap. 91, 1185 CD.

2. Supra, ch. 3.

3. 17/11/56, p. 13.

Confronted by these confusions and incoherences, we may well be prompted to enquire what it is that makes the concepts of 'essence', 'nature' and 'energy' so hard for Lossky (and the whole Palamite tradition) to handle. A satisfactory answer to this would require an exhaustive analysis of the history of these terms in Eastern theology, and in the philosophical milieu from which they were originally borrowed; and such an analysis would be beyond the scope of this thesis. However, I wish here to suggest some of the lines along which I believe a study of the question might profitably proceed,¹ and to indicate - necessarily in a very sketchy manner - the complexity of the problems in the history of philosophy and theology which underlie Palamas's language.

My first point is a familiar enough one: that there is, in classical and post-classical philosophy a dauntingly wide range of senses in which *οὐσία* can be used. Aristotle, in the 'Metaphysics'² and the 'Categories',³ offers us over half-a-dozen meanings, and it is notoriously difficult to disentangle these from one another, and to find an 'Aristotelean doctrine of being'.⁴ Plato, on the other hand, and the whole tradition deriving from him, presents a rather different account; and the mixture of Platonic and Aristotelean ideas of 'being' in the later Neoplatonists (Proclus especially) is one of the things that makes their systems so bewildering and opaque to the modern student. For Plato, 'being' signifies 'being something', that is, 'being something determinate':⁵ hence, in the 'Republic', *τὸ καλὸν*, being beyond all determination, the source of determinate existence, is *ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας*; and,

1. I hope to expand elsewhere some of the suggestions which follow.

2. Δ, 8 (1017610 - 26), Z, 2-3 (1028 b 8 - 1029613) and passim.

3. 5, 2a 11-4 a 22.

4. V., e.g., the monumental study of J. Owens. 'The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian "Metaphysics" ' (with a preface by Gilson; Toronto, 1951).

5. V. G.E.L. Owen, 'Plato on Not-Being' (Plato: a collection of Critical Essays. I. Metaphysics and Epistemology'; ed. G. Vlastos, Doubleday, N.Y., 1971, pp. 223-267).

6. 509 C.

in the 'Parmenides', ¹ τὸ ἔν , which is beyond all limit of form or relation, οὐσαμῶς οὐσίας μετέχει . ² Aristotle, however, eventually proposes ³ a far more strictly 'existential' sense for οὐσία, when, dealing with immaterial substances, he concludes that their οὐσία - in this case, their τὸ τὶ ᾗν εἶναι - must be activity, ἐνέργεια , since they are immaterial and eternal. That is : in order to be able to use the term οὐσία of suprasensible realities, Aristotle is compelled to refine and generalise the concept to the single notion of actuality, 'being there', ⁴ the one notion which covers all other definitions of οὐσία , the one sine qua non for the application of the term 'being'. And clearly, in this sense, Aristotle's God is οὐσία , and it would make no sense to speak of Him as ἐπέκεινθ τῆς οὐσίας . ⁵ However, we should also remember that the vast majority of thinkers between Aristotle and - say - Leontius of Byzantium and his followers regarded Aristotle as 'the supreme master in logic', ⁶ and were primarily concerned with demonstrating and defending the agreement of Aristotle with Plato; so that the Aristotelean senses of οὐσία which are noted and employed in this period are generally the purely logical senses. Οὐσία is form, 'essence', determination, τὸ τὶ ᾗν εἶναι and so on; which leads us back to the Platonic position, that the Absolute, or the Good, or the One is beyond οὐσία , a position classically stated by Plotinus. 'A being for Plotinus is always limited by form or essence..... That which is beyond the limitation of form is beyond being'. ⁷ From the supersubstantial One issues Nous, Intellect, which contains the fullness of being, life and thought, ⁸ and which is therefore (inter alia) οὐσία par excellence;

1. 137 C-142 A.

2. Ib., 141 E.

3. Met. A , 6 (1071b 20).

4. V.J.H. Randall, 'Aristotle' (N.Y. 1960), pp. 129-133.

5. Met. A regularly uses οὐσία in speaking of God; c.f. Met. N 1091 b, 13.

6. R.T. Wallis, 'Neoplatonism' (London, 1972), p. 24.

7. A.H. Armstrong, CH. p. 237.

8. Ib., p. 246.

and from Intellect issues $\Psiυχή$, Soul, which animates the world, actualising the $λόγα$ of Intellect, the intelligible determinations and forms of things, in a material universe.¹ $Οὐσία$ is thus never applicable 'outside' the world, because only in the world (pre-eminently) in the intellectual world) are we dealing with determinate forms, 'essences'.

This (very briefly and approximately) is the philosophical context in which the Fathers began to speak of $οὐσία$, $ἐνέργεια$, $δύναμις$, $περόδος$, $λόγος$, and so forth. They had, however, an added complication after the Council of Nicaea, in the fact that Christ had been declared $ὁμοούσιος$ with the Father; and, although the Fathers of Nicaea and St Athanasius probably had no intention of employing $οὐσία$ here in a technical or philosophical sense,² the word rapidly acquired such a sense, and (as we have seen already)³ came to be used by the Cappadocians and others to express what Aristotle had called $δευτέρα οὐσία$ in the 'Categories'. Thus 'the divine substance' (or 'essence') is confirmed as a possible expression for the Christian, as it could not be for the Neoplatonist; while, at the same time, the Christian mystical tradition had learned to speak of God in a strongly Platonic or Neoplatonic manner, asserting His transcendence of $οὐσία$, His $ὑπερουσίτης$ (though that particular term is a later borrowing from Proclus).⁴ This latter tendency reaches its climax in Pseudo-Dionysius, with his repeated insistence that God is $ὑπὲρ πάντων οὐσίαν$ ⁵ and survives in Maximus and Palamas. Maximus at least makes some attempt to distinguish different senses of 'being' by evolving a more nuanced and

1. *Ib.*, pp. 250-8.

2. V. G.C. Stead, 'The Significance of the "Homousios" ' (*Studia Patristica*, III, 1, Berlin, 1961, pp. 397-412).

3. *Supra*, ch. 3.

4. V. e.g., Origen, *Contra Celsum*, VI, 64; in *Joh.*, XIX, 6 (as the latter shows, Origen is far from consistent in his terminology); Clement (*Str.* V, 2, 73, 1 f.) prefers to speak of God's transcendence of $τὸ ὄντα$ but the sense is the same; yet he too can sometimes speak of the divine $οὐσία$ (following Philo).

5. *De myst. theol.*, I, 1, PG 3, 997B; cognate expressions appear throughout this work. V. I.P. Sheldon+Williams, CH. p. 469.

sophisticated vocabulary than most of his precursors possessed; ¹ but Palamas retains a very Plotinian and Dionysian approach, with little attempt at a real synthesis. ² There are several places where he comes very close indeed to the statement that οὐσία can be applied only to the world; ³ and Cap. 78 ⁴ rather confusingly states that God's φύσις is utterly different from that of creatures, and then goes on to say, in very strong terms that God is not φύσις at all (if the world is φύσις, God is not, and vice versa): a good example of vacillation between the logical and the metaphysical senses of a term.

Turning to the history of the word ἐνέργεια, we find a similar set of ambiguities. For Aristotle, as we have already indicated, it means purely and simply 'actuality'; more precisely, an ἐντελεχεία, a kind of activity which includes its own end, or is its own end (an activity such as seeing or understanding, as opposed to one like learning or building, which is directed towards some external end or limit). ⁵ A natural extension of this is Plotinus's preference for ἐνέργεια instead of ἐνεργεία ^{στ} ^{δν} in referring to an actual entity; ⁶ so that ἐνέργεια takes on a very concrete connotation. Plotinus, however, also follows and develops Aristotle's thought in envisaging the One as ἐνέργεια. ⁷ This is significantly different from the later Neoplatonic use of the term as the third in a triad whose first two members are οὐσί (or ὑπερσίς) and δύνamis. In Porphyry, Iamblichus, and Proclus and the Athenian School, the triadic structure of reality became a commonplace, and was eventually expressed by the Athenians in a whole hierarchy of triads; ⁸

1. V. Sheldon-Williams, *ib.*, pp. 493 ff; von Balthasar, 'Liturgie Cosmique' pp. 159-174, esp. 159-162 (on οὐσία and ἐνεργεία).
2. V., e.g., T. I.3.23; II.3.8.33; III. 1.2.3, III.2.7,12, etc., for uses of ὑπερσίς and cognates.
3. Notably, Tr. II, 3.33.
4. PG 150, 1176 B; c.f. Tr. III. 2.5
5. Met. Θ 6, 1048a25 - 637.
6. V.P. Merlan, CH, p. 50.
7. *Ibid.*; with reference to Enn. VI, 8,20.
8. V. A.H. Lloyd, CH, p.314, for a long (though incomplete) list of such triads.

the formal principle on which all were constructed was a pattern of wholeness or simplicity emerging into multiplicity and returning towards primitive wholeness (μονή, πρόσδος and ἐπίστροφή). The first term is 'imparticipable',¹ (ἀμέθεκτος), the second is 'participable' (μέθεκτος), the third, 'participant' (μετέχων); in general metaphysical terms, they are the categories of οὐσία, ζῶή and νοῦς. Here, then, ἐνέργεια designates the manner in which an entity actively participates, and thus tends towards, primitive ontological purity or simplicity. Further: in addition to these various senses of ἐνέργεια, there was in Hellenistic thought a long-standing tradition of speaking of God or the gods as knowable through their δυνάμεις, or present in the world ἐν δυνάμει.³ The eclectic De mundo (a work of perhaps the 1st century A.D., attributed, until the time of Proclus, to Aristotle) asserts⁴ that the world is, as the Stoics claimed, θεῶν πλέα, but θεῶν δυνάμει not θεῶν οὐσία. Philo⁵ sometimes uses similar language to underline God's total transcendence: all we see and know in the world is the remote effect of God's δυνάμεις, which we can never see in their purity as they are 'essentially', around the sole real Being (περὶ τὸ Ὄν). We see, that is, the ἐνέργεια of God's δυνάμεις, God's powers in action in the world; and this use of ἐνέργεια should remind us that the word was by no means a clearly defined technical term, and could still be used in the Hellenistic world to mean simply 'act' or 'operation'.

It is this non-technical sense which, I should argue, is the sense of ἐνέργεια in the Cappadocians, with their deep indebtedness to Philo.

1. Or 'unparticipated'.

2. V. E.R. Dodds' edition of Proclus's 'Element of Theology' (Oxford, 1933), Appendix I, p. 313.

3. There is a hint of this as early as Xenophon, who (in Mem. IV, iii, 13) credits Socrates with saying that God is knowable in His 'works', though invisible to us (... οὗτος τὰ μέγιστα μὲν πρῶτων ὁρᾶται, τὰ δὲ δὲ οἰκονομῶν ἀόρατος ἡμῖν ἔστιν).

4. 6. 397 b 17-20.

5. E.g., Imm. 78 ff.

There are many passages ¹ in which the Cappadocians draw some kind of distinction between the unknowability of God's οὐσία and the knowability of His δυνάμεις or ἐνεργεῖαι, but, as von Ivanka has pointed out, ² any possibility of a strict distinction of the Palamite kind is ruled out by various other passages ³ in which the ἐνεργεῖαι or δυνάμεις are themselves said to be unknowable, and by the fact that many of the 'Palamite' passages are themselves very clearly argument of an ad hominem sort. To say, with Basil in de Spiritu Sancto, that God's οὐσία is simple and his δυνάμεις multiple is merely to make the obvious point that God's attributes are manifold, that there are many ways in which He exercises His might in the world; and Basil can also state ⁴ that the ἐνεργεῖαι enable us to consider the divine φύσις. The widely diffused idea (which Lossky did a great deal to popularise) that the Palamite distinction, as a metaphysical scheme, goes back to the Cappadocians is quite plainly mistaken. Lossky, especially in VG, ⁵ is inclined to read the Cappadocians through excessively Palamite spectacles, and simply ignores the evidence which points to a more complex interpretation; though he is compelled to allow ⁶ that Gregory Nazianzen, at least, is not always as clear as he might be on the subject of God's incomprehensibility 'in essence'. Basically, the Cappadocian position seems to be that God's οὐσία (in a loosely Aristotelean sense, approximating perhaps to τὸ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ) cannot be known by man as God knows it; what we know of God,

1. Basil, de Spiritu Sancto, 9 PG 32, 108D; Ep. 189, ib., 692C - 693D; Ep. 234, ib. 869 AB; Gregory Nazianzen, Or. 38 (in Theophaniam), 7, PG 36, 317 B; Gregory of Nyssa, Contra Eunomium 13, PG 960C-961A; etc.
2. Op. cit., passim.
3. E.G., Basil, Adv. Eun. 32, PG 29, 648 AB; Gregory of Nyssa, In Cant. 11, PG 44, 1009B, De Beat. 7, ib. 1280 AB.
4. Ep. 189, 692 D.
5. Ch. 4, passim, esp. pp. 65-6, 71; and c.f. M.T., pp. 71-2.
6. VG, p. 69.

our incomplete notion of His 'essence' or nature, we know through His acts in the world. This is a simple enough scheme, and, it should be noted, is not complicated by the problem of 'participation'; while clearly related to Palamism, it is less 'scholastic', less metaphysical more strictly epistemological. ¹

It is Dionysius who is chiefly responsible for proposing a distinction of the Palamite sort as a metaphysical thesis, by his adaptation of Proclus's cosmology. The multiplication of the One in the 'henads' of Proclus's system becomes the 'diffusion' of God in His *πρόοδοι* or *δυνάμεις* in Dionysius, the hierarchy of 'processions' beginning with the persons of the Trinity, ² and descending to the world, in which they are the multiple modes in which creatures participate the divine being, the *ἀναλογία* of creatures with God. ³ In themselves, they are one *ὑπερούσιος ἁπλῆς*, ⁴ but relatively they are the multiple volitions of God (*θεῶν θελήματα*) ⁵ upon which creatures are founded, the *αἰτίαι* of things. This particular point is taken up by Maximus and developed, with a rather more Philonic vocabulary, in his theory of the many *λόγοι* in the one *Λόγος*, ⁶ the divine ideas of things, towards which they tend. God wills and creates diverse and multiple creatures in a single act: we are not dealing with a world of ideas eternally and 'essentially' laid up in God. Maximus is far clearer than Dionysius that the multiplicity of the *λόγοι* is relative to creation: in the *λόγοι* we behold the *ἐνεργεῖαι* of God as if they were many, our intellect instinctively multiplies the operations

1. I cannot wholly agree with Sherwood (op. cit., pp. 196-7, 199) that, although the *οὐσία* - *ἐνεργεῖαι* terminology in the Cappadocians is a 'conceptual tool' rather than a 'commanding theory' (as it remains even in Palamas) it still has a 'metaphysical' content of some sort, 'stemming from Aristotle'.
2. *De div. nom.* II, 99, PG 3, 674 D - 677 C.
3. *E.G. de div. nom.* IX, 7, PG 3.
4. *Ib.*, I, 4; this still leaves open the question of whether their multiplicity is real or merely a conceptual convenience.
5. *Ib.*, V, 8.
6. *V. e.g.*, *Amb.* 7, PG 91, 1081 AC.

of God into an infinite plurality.¹ The use of ἐνέργεια here seems to be related to its use in the οὐσία - δύναμις - ἐνέργεια triad: the λόγοι represent not a static set of predeterminations, but the active principles drawing creatures back towards God, the Neoplatonic ἐπίστροφῆ . This scheme is more metaphysically developed than that of the Cappadocians, but represents a definite modification of Dionysius. The distinction between the persons of the Trinity and the divine acts is clear, and the plurality of the λόγοι or πρόοδοι or ἐνεργείαι is definitely tied to the plurality of creatures. When Maximus uses ἐνέργεια elsewhere, it is in his polemic against 'monenergism', the view that Christ had only one ἐνέργεια . In this context, the sense is almost purely Aristotelean: Maximus argues that if Christ has two natures, He must have two ἐνεργείαι since ἐνέργεια is an aspect of nature, not hypostasis.² This picks up the Cappodocian insistence³ that the persons of the Trinity are not (as Eunomius alleged)⁴ different in ἐνεργείαι , but possess one undivided ἐνέργεια in virtue of their possession of one οὐσία . Maximus simply makes this more exactly Aristotelean, envisaging ἐνέργεια simply as οὐσία in action: and it is with this in mind that Damascene can describe the divine ἐνέργεια unequivocally as μία οὐσία καὶ ἀπλή .⁵ This solution, however, was very imperfectly understood by most later Byzantine theologians.

Palamas, unfortunately, seems to have been defeated by the confusion and ambiguity of Dionysius. At root, the difficulty is this: for the Neoplatonist, the One is (as we have seen) literally and absolutely beyond οὐσία , and only at a lower level of divinity does οὐσία appear, as something which can be participated, in the multiplicity of ζωή and νοῦς, or δύναμις and ἐνέργεια . There is no problem about participation here, since,

1. *Ib.*, 22, PG91, 1257AB. Alain Riou ('Le monde et l'Eglise selon Maxime le Confesseur', Paris, Beauchesne, 1973, pp. 60-61) is the first to emphasize the significance of this passage for a study of the 'pre-history' of Palamism.
2. *V. Disp. cum Pyrrho*. PG 91, 345D-348A, 337C; *Amb.*, *ib.*, 1052, 1060A; etc.
3. *V.*, e.g., Basil, *Ad. Eun.*, I, 24, PG 29, 565A; Gregory of Nyssa, *Quod non sint tres dei*, PG 45, 133A, *de comm. not.*, *ib.*, 180C, etc.
4. *Apol.* 20, PG 30, 856 C.
5. *De Fid. orth.* I, 14, PG 94, 860C.

although οὐσία is 'in itself' not participable, it is, equally, not 'transcendent'; there is a sense in which ζῶή and νοῦς are, in re, the same as οὐσία. Now, since Christian theology had inherited from Philo¹ the practice of speaking of God as supremely οὐσία; the problem of participation is raised in an acute form. To say that the operations or 'powers' of God make us participate in the divine οὐσία is obviously unsatisfactory; but it looks as though we are committed to saying this if we are using anything like the Neoplatonic triad. Οὐσία is no longer 'non-transcendent'; it is God, it is 'what God is'; and obviously creatures cannot be said to share in what God is. Therefore, what is participated in God's πρόδοσι or δυνάμεις or ἐνεργεῖαι cannot be His οὐσία simpliciter: there must be an ontological difference between οὐσία and ἐνεργεῖαι. The Neoplatonic uses of οὐσία and ἐνεργεῖαι rely on a rather materialistic view of participation, a sharing which is in some sense a real diffusion of a concretised οὐσία; and in the Neoplatonic world, this is perfectly acceptable. Translated into Christian terms, however, when οὐσία becomes 'the divine οὐσία' or, perhaps, 'God as οὐσία',² the retention of the Neoplatonic triad³ in theology demands that qualifications be made in describing the relations of ἐνεργεῖαι to οὐσία. Faced with the Dionysius model of the 'super-substantial substance' participated in its πρόδοσι, and apparently unable to revise the notion of participation so as satisfactorily to exclude the idea that creatures 'possess' οὐσία (that is, θεῶν οὐσία) as the persons of the Trinity do,⁴ Palamas is compelled to

1. The fundamental text for Philo, as for his Christian followers, in this connexion is Ex. 3¹⁴.
2. The persistent confusion of the logical and metaphysical meanings of the term is very apparent again in the fact that θεῶν οὐσία could mean either 'God's substance' or 'the substantiality of God', either what God (logically) is or what He (metaphysically) possesses, contains exemplifies, etc., i.e. 'being', unconditional reality.
3. Generally reduced to a dyad by the identification of δύνάμεις and ἐνεργεῖαι in divinis, on the Aristotelean premise that God's δυνάμεις (potencies) must always be realised in act, ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ; v. Sheldon-Williams, CH. p. 431.
4. Hence the μερισπότητος problem discussed supra, p. 166.

postulate οὐσία and ἐνέργεια as parallel modes of divine existence, while still occasionally ¹ reflecting Maximus's simpler and more intelligible Aristotelean conception of ἐνέργεια as οὐσία -in-act- a conception virtually identical with Aquinas's esse or actus essendi.

This, I believe, is the movement of thought which produce the incoherences of Palamism. Palamas is obviously uncertain as to how he is to define the relation of God's ἐνέργεια to creation, having, on the one hand, a conception of ἐνέργεια as the divine ideas, 'analogies', modes of participation, and so on, and, on the other, the Maximian and Aristotelean view of ἐνέργεια as the eternal actuality of God's (imparticipable) substance. This uncertainty is reflected in the admission ² that the energies can be called *συμβεβηκός πως*, in that they are not a se existentes, and in the awkwardness of the explanation in the 'Triads' (referred to above) ³ of how there are some eternal and some temporally conditioned energies. In the latter case, the model of the energies as concretely multiple in their particular instantiations and determinations is confused with the conceptual multiplicity of divine attributes and divine ideas. The most striking instance of the deleterious effect of Palamas's distinction on the intelligibility of his theological argument is his well-known attempt ⁴ to distinguish essence and energy on the grounds of the necessity of differentiating the generation of the Son from the creation of the world. The former is an 'essential' or 'natural' act, the latter volitional. Palamas appeals to Cyril ⁵ for the legitimacy of this as an argument for

1. V., e.g., the passage quoted by Meyendorff, op. cit., pp. 211-12.

2. Cap. 127, PG150, 1209 C.

3. . 130.

4. Cap. 96-98, 143, PG 150, 1220D, and elsewhere: v. Meyendorff, op. cit. pp. 221-4.

5. Thes. 18, PG75, 312C; c.f. Damascene, de fid orth., I,8, PG 94, 813A. The point is first made by Athanasius; for a Palamite interpretation of Athanasius, v.G.V. Florovsky, 'The Concept of Creation in Saint Athanasius', *Studia Patristica*, VI (Berlin, 1962), pp. 36-57.

distinguishing nature from operation; but, in its original context of anti-Arian polemic, the distinction means simply that the Son is 'naturally' God, not a creature, and that He is in no sense the 'work' of God, an external effect like the effects of God's creative act. In Palamas, the argument reads very oddly; and it is surprising that Lossky regularly uses it.¹ It suggests that *ουσία* and *ἐνέργεια* are, almost, two acting subjects; or that there are two kinds of 'operation' effected by God, internal and external, which are really analogous, that the generation of the Word (and the spiration of the Spirit) is the same kind of act as the creation of the world, distinguishable from the latter only by its being enacted in a different ontological sphere. And it is also worth pointing out that this fits very ill with Lossky's insistence that the Word and the Spirit are the issue of the personal act of the Father rather than of any 'natural' or 'essential' process.

In short, to sum up what has, I fear, been an unwieldy and tortuous discussion, we may conclude that the difficulties and inconsistencies of Lossky's writing on the problem of how God is known and participated by men are the result of his rather uncritical use of a tradition pervaded by philosophical and logical inconsistencies, a tradition which seems never to have been subjected to the rigorous systematisation which, in the West, the Patristic tradition received (for good or ill) at the hands of the schoolmen. As Dom Iltyd Trethowan has remarked in a recent and extremely valuable study of Lossky,² 'Palamas (as has been said about Augustine) had not the philosophy of his theology'.³ It is no derogation of Palamas's real stature as a spiritual and dogmatic teacher to say that his philosophical equipment was unsophisticated, and that the needs of controversy

1. M.T., pp. 73-4; 12/1/56, p. 9; 8/11/56, p. 6 (though here there is a qualification, stressing the inadequacy of the language used).
2. 'Lossky and Mystical Theology', 'The Downside Review', Vol. 92, no. 309, Oct. 1974, pp. 239-47.
3. *Ib.*, p. 243.

drove him to adopt a metaphysical theory fraught with obscurities and contradictions. Equally, it is no derogation of Lossky to admit that, in his reaction to neo-Thomism and to the hostile and dismissive treatment of Palamism by Western scholars, he has sometimes defended what is logically indefensible and theologically dubious.

If we accept this interpretation of Palamism, much in Lossky's anti-Western polemic which depends upon the Palamite scheme must be reassessed accordingly. Thus, Lossky's doctrine of creation ¹ and his criticism ² of the scholastic view of the divine ideas raise serious problems. We are told that the divine ideas are acts of will (Θελήματα) which establish a foundation for created things: they are not pre-existent paradigms, but creative thoughts, 'energies' or, rather 'the different modes according to which created beings participate in the creative energies': ³ God thinks, wills, and creates in one act; which, as Lossky rightly says, is a notion which marks off the Christian doctrine of creation from any kind of Platonic view of the world as 'a poor replica of the Godhead', ⁴ a diluted reproduction of what He is. Creation is a real positing of an other to God, something radically new, ex nihilo. Augustinianism and Thomism, on the other hand, represent a platonising tendency, regarding the divine ideas as determinations within the essence of God: 'the divine ideas remain static - unmoving perfections of God'. ⁵ The Palamite solution avoids the problem of whether this is 'the best of possible worlds' - a problem posed by any variety of Platonism - because it insists upon the sheer novelty, gratuity and contingency of creation: it stresses the unfath-

1. M.T., pp. 94-100; 240-1, 13/1/56, passim; 7/12/56, 13/12/56, passim; T.D. A, pp. 102-108.

2. M.T., p. 95.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ib. p. 96.

omable character of God's freedom, and does not force us into the 'anthropomorphisme philosophique' of imagining God as choosing between alternative abstractly possible worlds.¹ The ideas are genuinely divine, and so eternal; but their eternity is 'contingent', in the phrase of Fr Florovsky,² since in no way do they partake of the necessity of God's essential being-in-Himself. Here as elsewhere, Palamism is seen by Lossky as safeguarding theology against a static, determinist, and impersonal conception of God and His activities, as witnessing to the Biblical concern with God's sovereign freedom.

We can readily accept the importance of such a safeguard; but the question is whether Palamism is the best vehicle for it, and whether Thomism, or other alternative accounts, really exclude or ignore the need of it. In itself, the term 'contingent eternity' is unobjectionable (Aquinas would certainly allow such a concept); but there is a difficulty in speaking of an eternal contingency in God. The eternity of creation (that is, its infinite duration) is not an incoherent idea (though Lossky is, in fact, no more eager than Aquinas to affirm it) and it would be possible to say that, if the world is eternal, then in some sense, the divine ideas of it share this infinite duration, as they are logically posterior to there being created things. What is not coherent is to say that God's intellectual activity as such is contingent or conditioned, without thereby sacrificing that very divine freedom which the theory is designed to protect. Lossky fails to draw one necessary distinction: that between the act of God in relation to God and the act of God in relation to what it enacts or causes.³ The act of God is

1. 12/1/56, p. 22.

2. *Ib.*, p. 15; 13/12/56, p. 10.

3. A point well made by Sherwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 199, 200-1; who notes the same ambiguity of *ἐνεργεῖα* in Maximus: 'It may stand for the activity itself, precisely as issuing from its *ousia*, or it may stand for that which such an activity effects' (pp. 200-1).

what God eternally (in the strictly atemporal sense of the word) does and is: in relation to its tangible effects it may be of finite or infinite duration, and its determinations are contingent on the plurality and variety of these effects. That is to say, we project multiplicity from the effects on to the cause, so that, in theological discourse, the multiple 'ideas of God' are logically derived from creation, they are a convenient anthropomorphism, almost a 'metaphysical fiction'.¹ As 'modes in which creatures participate' or 'imitate' God, they are again, obviously, logically dependent on the existence of creatures; it may be said that God eternally knows all possible modes in which He (that is, His 'essence') is participable,² but this does not and cannot mean that God's essence contains a plurality of concrete 'ideas'. Lossky's presentation of the scholastic view³ on this question is quite erroneous: he attributes to Aquinas the same extremely concrete view of the 'ideas' as he himself proposes, and then (rightly, on such presuppositions) condemns him for refusing to distinguish the ideas from the essence of God.

In short, the debate over creation and the divine ideas in Lossky's work is only a special instance of the general Palamite tendency to hypostatise or 'objectivise' purely epistemological distinctions - in this case, the distinction between the simplicity of God's essence and the plurality of the effects of His action in creating the world. As Fr Trethowan has said,⁴ 'all that we need do is to distinguish our knowledge of him (God), which is always limited, from God himself'; and, in this case, to distinguish the plurality of our apprehensions of God from His own singleness and simplicity. To say that there are many ways of knowing God, or many events or phenomena in which He may be known, is not a statement about God, but

1. V. F.C. Copleston, 'Aquinas' (London, 1955), pp. 102 and 147.

2. V. E.L. Mascoll, 'Existence and Analogy' (London, 1949), pp. 152 ff; S.T.I, 15. II etc.

3. Augustine's is, admittedly, more ambiguous.

4. Op. cit., p. 244.

a statement about the human mind and the human world. To say that God is unknowable is - pace Lossky - formally a statement about the human mind; it is merely nonsensical to say ¹ that God is 'incomprehensible by nature', that is, that incomprehensibility is an 'inherent' property of God, since, for one thing, God must be said to comprehend Himself; and also, 'incomprehensibility', like 'invisibility' or 'intangibility', is a word which can only be applied 'relatively' to other (comprehensible) objects and to potential (comprehending) subjects. This need not by any means reduce us to intellectualism; all we need to say is that God is never knowable by finite minds as He knows Himself. The Thomist and scholastic idea that after this life we see God's essence, an idea unequivocally rejected by Lossky, ² means, in its context, simply that after death we no longer know God through any created species, but see directly, though imperfectly, what He is. ³ This phraseology would be unacceptable to Lossky chiefly, I believe, because of his insistence on knowledge as participation, and his rather unsophisticated understanding (shared with Palamas and many of the Greek Fathers) of participation, an understanding we have already discussed. To know God's οὐσία would be to participate God's εἶσα ; and to participate God's οὐσία would be to be God. To say that our knowledge or participation is incomplete is no help; one either shares or does not share it, and, since it is not divisible into parts, one shares it completely if one shares it at all. ⁴ What is really needed here (as, again, Trethowan points out) ⁵ is a doctrine of 'intentional participation', becoming what one knows, in the sense that the object of knowledge completely occu-

1. As Lossky quite frequently comes near to doing, or implies; e.g. M.T., pp. 30 ('The God of Plotinus is not incomprehensible by nature'), 34, 39; c.f. 'Ténèbre', pp. 27, 28, 'Lumière', p. 45; etc.
2. VG, ch.1, passim; 'La "Vision face à face" ' passim; 'Lumière' p. 51; etc.
3. V. Sherwood, op. cit., pp. 198-9.
4. This view of οὐσία is, of course, fundamental for Lossky's interpretation of the relations of nature and person; every person has and is the whole οὐσία. This is perfectly orthodox Aristoteleanism; but only if taken in a strictly logical sense (v. E. Anscombe and P. Geach, 'Three Philosophers', Oxford, 1961, p.32, on Aristotle's explanation of how the whole can be said to 'be' in each part as the whole definition applies to each part).
5. Op. cit., p. 244.

pies our consciousness ('You are the music while the music lasts'). The Palamite scheme is too concrete, too materialistic, to cope with the complexities of human subjectivity; and Lossky's own analyses of personal knowledge and encounter, the 'sortie de soi-même' of self-forgetting love, show that (whether he realised it or not) he was capable of going beyond the naivete of his chosen authorities. His references to and defences of Palamism obtrude as a piece of imperfectly digested mythological thinking in an otherwise sensitive and nuanced system.

If we cannot accept the Palamite distinction at face value, what becomes of Lossky's efforts (and those of his Eastern precursors) to distinguish an 'essential' procession of the Spirit ex Patre Solo from an 'economic' or 'energetic' procession ex Patre Filioque? Barth¹ attacks the Eastern theologians for asserting that God in Himself is, in this respect, significantly different from God as revealed to us: the Spirit is revealed as proceeding ex Patre Filioque, and that is, by definition, all we can know. It might be answered: since we are compelled to conclude that God in se is not identical with God ad extra, it does not follow that the filioque must be true of God in se; and since we have good reason to suppose that the filioque is destructive of authentically trinitarian theology, we can confidently deny it of the immanent Trinity. Clearly, however, if the ontological distinction between God in se and God ad extra cannot be maintained, this argument will not do. Further, since we have found cause to question whether Western trinitarian theology is quite so hopelessly degenerate as Lossky would have us believe, it is not easy to agree with his unqualified rejection of the filioque at the 'essential' level. Are we, then, obliged to regard Lossky's account of

1. C.D. I, 1. pp. 547-57; C.f. Hanson, op. cit., pp. 134-5.

the filioque as completely distorted by polemical concern, and so invalidated? I think not. There are some indication that, in his last years, Lossky was making some attempt at a reconciliation and integration of his Palamite vocabulary with his more fundamental interest in the distinction of nature from person. In his last course of lectures, exploring the idea of the Spirit as 'image' of the Son and, as it were, 'bearer' of the energies which manifest the nature, he says, ¹ 'En tant que manifestation de la nature divine [l'Esprit Saint] ne procède pas du Père seul, mais il procède du Père par le Fils'; and, a few pages later, ² 'Quand nous parlons de la procession du Saint-Esprit même en termes de lumière qui s'échappe et qui jaillit, ce n'est pas la procession de la personne (qui reste cachée pour nous) que nous entendons par là, mais surtout cette économie, ce jaillissement éternel de la lumière qui est la manifestation de la nature'. Here ex Patre solo and Filioque are opposed, not as 'essential' and 'energetic', but as 'personal' and natural'. ³ 'Nature' clearly means οὐσία and ἐνέργεια, or, rather, in the Aristotelean manner, οὐσία 'in' or 'as' ἐνέργεια; and the absence of the Palamite distinction here makes it easier to see how the double procession, from the Father through the Son, can be truly a fact of the eternal life of the Trinity.

Let us examine a little more closely the logic of this position. If, as Lossky so frequently and fervently argues, ⁴ the unity of the Trinity resides in the personal principle of the Father's 'monarchy', then (very anthropomorphically speaking) the Trinity 'derives' from the Father's option to share His οὐσία. As Lossky says, ⁵ 'Il n'a pas Son essence pour Lui seul'. In this way, the character of divine personality is estab-

1. 22/11/56, p. 4.

2. *Ib.*, p. 7; c.f. 27/10/55, p. 25.

3. C.f. 22/11/56, p. 17.

4. *M.T.*, ch. 3, *passim*; 'La procession', pp. 72-3, 77-9, 81, 85-6; *T D V.*; 3/11/55, 10/11/55, 17/11/55, 24/11/55 (esp. pp. 7 and 17); 1/11/56, 15/11/56, 22/11/56; etc.

5. 'La procession', p. 79.

lished as selfless, self-giving love; without the ex Patre solo this could not be affirmed - certainly not on the basis of any suprapersonal nature which the Father and the Son possess in common. Yet, in a sense, it is the sharing of the Father with the Son that issues in the Spirit,¹ because the relation of duality (as we have noted) suggests a kind of mutual exclusivity, and the self-giving love of the Father could not be 'contained' or adequately expressed in such a relation. What the Father is and does in generating the Son appears clearly only in the procession of the Spirit, the image of the Son. Pace Hanson,² this does not suggest any possibility of 'an infinite series of images or revealers'; all that is necessary is the transcendence of mere duality in a third term, no more. If the Spirit is a witness to the Son, in the Scriptural sense, His witness must, to be valid, be authentically personal and free; and to be personal, His being must derive directly from the Father's monarchy, so that He is, we might say, 'free' of the Son.³ If He is unilaterally dependent on the Son, His testimony is unfree because His personality is imperfect.⁴ Yet, if the relation of kenotic love between Father and Son is to be realised and expressed fully, the Spirit's procession is necessary; and He is, in that sense, dependent on both.

This needs a little further clarification; but Lossky gives no more than a few hints as to how such clarification might be made. From the time of writing M.T. onwards, Lossky displayed a growing interest in the interrelation of the economies of Word and Spirit in the history of salvation, and he comes finally to propose⁵ that the Son and the Spirit are in some way interdependent in eternity. Precisely by avoiding a

1. V. esp. 15/11/56, pp. 3-4: 'Dans le rapport du Père et du Fils est déjà donnée la nécessité du troisième, du Saint-Esprit'; and c.f. 'La procession', pp. 80 ff.

2. Op. cit., p. 134.

3. 22/11/56, p. 21.

4. Here, in effect, the usual argument for the filioque - that the Spirit in the New Testament is always the Spirit of the Son, the Spirit Who bears witness to the Son - is ingeniously turned on its head.

5. 15/11/56, p. 7, 22/11/56, p. 20; c.f. - perhaps - M.T., pp. 55-6, a very unclear passage.

narrowly 'unilateralist' view on the economic level, Lossky is able to continue holding the continuity of the Trinity as revealed with the Trinity as It eternally is. Son and Spirit are 'simultaneously' related to the Father, neither is prior to the other; yet because they directly answer the Father's personal self-gift, because they exist in communion, there is an interdependence between them in their actual being (their ὄντως in ἐνέργεια), as there is between them and the Father. They allow themselves to be defined by each other; as even the person of the Father is defined (as 'source' and ἀρχή) by the existence of the other persons. ¹ The same ideas has been admirably expressed by Paul Evdokimov: ² 'Si on accepte le caractère ternaire de toutes les relations intradivines, on peut, à côté de la formule per Filium poser la formule per Spiritum et même aller plus loin et voir dans le Fils et dans l'Esprit les témoins de la monarchie du Père et dire qu'en cette qualité ils conditionnent l'innascibilité du Père'. If this is so, the filiogue can be read as testifying to that perfect sharing the divine life which characterises the persons of the Godhead: balanced by a spirituque applied to the Son, ³ it directs us to a contemplation of the mutual dependence of Father, Son, and Spirit, in kenosis and self-effacement, a dependence reflected in the economy of grace and salvation. The Spirit is thus a vehicle for the divine ἐνέργεια in that He shows what the divine life is - a life of free, mutual, self-forgetting love, an ἐνέργεια which is fundamentally the personal act of self-transcendence: He embodies the personal ἐνέργεια which reveals God's ὄντως as personal. He is not nexus amoris in the Augustinian sense, but opens to us a sharing in the nexus amoris which is the life of all three persons in their mutual dependence. ⁴

1. V. 15/11/56, p. 7, 22/11/56, p. 14; c.f. 'La procession', p. 79.
 2. 'L'Esprit Saint dans la tradition orthodoxe' (Paris, Cerf, 1969) p. 78. The whole of ch. 6 of Pt.I in this work is worth reading for an unusually illuminating discussion of the Spirit's procession; and c.f. 'L'Orthodoxie', by the same author (Paris, Delachaux et Niestlé, 1965), p. 140.
 3. V. Evdokimov, 'L'Orthodoxie', *ibid.*, for the term spirituque; it does not appear in Lossky, but the conception seems to be the same.
 4. This is essentially a restatement of the doctrine of 'circumcession'; but we have already discussed (*supra*, ch.4) Lossky's hesitations over using such terminology.

Lossky's personalist concern thus seems to have been impelling him towards a deeper affirmation of both filioque and ex Patre solo. A belief in the full personal reality of the Spirit demands a belief that the principle of divine unity is personal, and that the Spirit derives directly and solely from this principle; and at the same time, it demands a recognition that, while independent in origin, the Spirit is interdependent with the Father and the Word in His 'realised' existence, in actu, eternally and temporally. This position, paradoxical as it is, avoids the undeniable awkwardness of both scholastic and Byzantine systems, and conforms to the requirements of Barthian and other theologians, concerned that the doctrine of the Spirit be not divorced from commitment to the absolute centrality of the Word Incarnate, nor subordinated to the needs of the Church or of the mind of man. ² It indicates also the extent to which Lossky was prepared to go beyond his tradition. While hardly ever acknowledging (or even being aware of) this, while continuing to defend a dubious and inconsistent patristic or Byzantine terminology, he is, at the same time, rigorously examining and developing the logic of his sources, and working towards a fresh synthesis expressed in less ambiguous language. In spite of all appearances and opinions to the contrary, Palamism, as a metaphysical thesis, is not the heart of Lossky's theology: the insights of Palamas on several subjects (notably, as we have seen, the role of the body in man's relation to God) are obviously significant, but, finally, they are integrated into a system whose keynote is the relation and distinction between nature and person, not the distinction between essence and energy.

1. V. Barth, op. cit., pp. 548-9; T.F. Torrance, 'Theology in Reconstruction' (London, 1965), pp. 229-30.
2. V. Torrance, op. cit., p. 231; 'There has been.... a persistent tendency to substitute for the filioque either an ecclesialque, the error of Romanism, or a homineque, the error of Neo-Protestantism.'

Conclusion to Part I

Our examination of Lossky's thought has, so far, revealed that, in its maturity, it is an unusually unified system: trinitarian theology, Christology, soteriology and ecclesiology are held together by a common dominating theme - so much so that any separation between these different aspects of theological investigation in Lossky's work seems artificial. This common theme is what I have chosen to call 'personalism'. We have seen that, although Lossky takes up and elaborates themes which are to be found in the Greek Fathers, his general approach takes a great deal for granted which the Greek Fathers knew (and could have known) nothing of. The evolution of the 'modern' notion of the person as a unique, self-aware subject was a slower and more complex process than Lossky was (usually) prepared to allow; and his own special emphases on the 'intentionality' and capacity for self-renunciation of the person, his 'kenotic' view of personality, certainly presuppose a good deal beyond the Greek Fathers. We have already noted that Lossky and Bulgakov, despite their deep disagreements, have a certain amount in common in dealing with the idea of the person; and we have, briefly, indicated Bulgakov's recognition of the 'problem of personality' posed by Russian radicalism, and his attempt to find a point of equilibrium between individualism and collectivism. All this suggests a further line of investigation: how far is Lossky dealing with problems posed and argued within the Russian philosophical tradition? How far, that is, does he presuppose, in his 'personalism', the context of a debate within Russian philosophy? He rejects quite explicitly the answers generally provided by Russian religious metaphysicians but it may be that he begins from some of the same questions.

It will be my contention that he does; and in the second part of this thesis I shall attempt to identify some of the basic concerns of Russian religious philosophy in an endeavour to present Lossky in the context of this particular piece of intellectual history. To set him thus against his immediate historical background will, I believe, help towards an understanding of some of the curious imbalances and foreshortenings of perspective displayed in his studies of dogmatic history.

PART II

CH. VII

THE DEFINITION OF AN ETHOS.(KIREEVSKY TO SOLOVIEV)

The fact that Russia on her conversion to Christianity adopted a vernacular liturgy (and was, indeed, encouraged to do so by the Byzantine Church) proved a mixed blessing. Despite all the unquestionable advantages in the fusion of worship with popular culture, it confirmed the radical isolation of Russia from classical culture and thought, an isolation of which persisted, in varying degrees, until about 1800.¹ The notion of any kind of intellectual activity not dominated by the interests of ecclesiastical life (moral, spiritual and 'ideological') was wholly foreign to the ethos both of Kievan Rus and of the Moscow Tsardom, and there is in the latter especially a powerful streak of pure anti-intellectualism; classically expressed by Iosif of Volokolamsk and his disciples.² The humanism of the "Josephites" opponent, Maksim Grek, took no root in Russian soil. Translations of patristic works had been made in Russia throughout the

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1. V. N. Zernov, 'Three Russian Prophets' (London, 1944), pp. 20-1; Berdyaev, 'The Russian Idea' (London, 1947), p.4; Zenkovsky, I, pp. 19-22; G.P. Fedotov, 'The Russian Religious Mind' (Harvard, 1946, and New York, 1969), vol. I, pp. 39-40.
 2. On Iosif, v. Zernov, 'The Russians and their Church' (London, SPCK, 1945), pp. 53-4; I Kologriev, 'Essai sur la sainteté en Russie' (Bruges, 1953) pp. 214-57.

Middle Ages; ¹ but the doctrinal and speculative side of patristic thought was ignored in favour of the moral and ascetical (Fedotov ² has drawn attention in particular to the immense impact of Chrysostom and Ephrem Syrus as religious moralists upon the Russian consciousness). Even in the 18th century, the opening-up of Russia to some of the influences of the Enlightenment produced only slight results: Kant made practically no impression, and 'enlightened' ideas were mediated chiefly through a vague diffusion of the ideas of the Encyclopaedists, and, later, the spreading of Freemasonry. ³ Intellectually, Russia remained a desert.

The sudden upsurge of speculative activity in the early decades of the 19th century is attributable to two, or perhaps three, factors. In 1793, Paissy Velichkovsky's Slavonic translation of the patristic anthology known as the 'Philokalia' ⁴ was published in Petersburg (under the title of 'Dobrotolyubie'); it was to have a very great influence throughout the century, constantly stimulating interest in the historical roots of Orthodox life and prayer, and achieving an astonishingly wide dissemination. ⁵ And, almost simultaneously, German Idealist thought began to be known in Russia: the Western-oriented academies of the Ukraine (Kiev and Kharkov) were the first to take note of Hegel, Schelling, Fichte and Schiller, but interest was soon aroused in Moscow and elsewhere, and, by the 1830's and '40's, Hegelianism was common coin in the Russian intellectual world. The third possibly significant factor is the revival of national feeling in the early 19th century, the alienation of the intelligentsia from the artificially Westernised atmosphere of the Petersburg

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1. On Russian translations of the Fathers, from the conversion to the Revolution, v. K. Kern, 'Traductions russes des textes patristiques', 'Izvestiya', 28, 1955, pp. 57-70.
 2. Op. cit. I, pp. 46-7. [N.O. Lossky, 'History', p. 10.]
 3. V. Zenkovsky, I, pp. 81-91.
 4. Compiled chiefly by Nicodemus the Hagiorite, and first published (in Greek) at Venice in 1782.
 5. As is illustrated in the well-known work translated by R.M. French as 'The Way of a Pilgrim' (London, 1954).

Empire and their growing interest in traditional Slavonic culture.¹

These three developments were significant, and cross-fertilized each other so extensively, because they all posed essentially the same question, a question about the total historical self-understanding of the Russian people. Hegelianism took root (as Kantianism never did) because it was a metaphysic which demanded (as Kantianism did not) critical analysis of historical processes, especially the processes of conflict; and in a country beginning to realise the seriousness of its imposed estrangement from its own past,² this demand struck home. It is this, I believe, which accounts for the popularity of Hegelianism in Russia, rather than (as Chizhevsky would have it)³ any supposed compatibility between the Neoplatonism of Orthodox theology (especially in the Dionysian tradition) and that of German Romanticism; the Russian Church was not sufficiently intellectually self-aware to appreciate such a point of contact.⁴

Hegelianism, the piety of the 'Dobrotolyubie', and Slavophilism are all stimulants in the Russian quest for historical and spiritual identity; the history of Russian thought over the next century is a history of attempts to find this identity with the help, sometimes of one or two, sometimes of all of these stimulants.

Masaryk has pointed out⁵ that the development of the historical consciousness in post-Enlightenment thought raises in an acute form the problem of the tension between the individual and the collective, since it generates an awareness of national or global processes in which the role of the particular person's free choice and action is obscure.

1. On the early manifestations of this, v.P. Christoff, 'The Third Heart' (The Hague, 1970).
2. Arguably, the Napoleonic invasion was partly responsible for this realisation; it certainly did much to revive a sense of the peculiar, almost sacred, significance of the old capital.
3. Op., cit., pp. 10-11.
4. Though Chizhevsky is right to note the significant fact that Idealism was received in Russia as very much part of a German religious and mystical tradition; behind Hegel & Fichte stand Eckhart, Silesius & Böhme.
5. 'The Spirit of Russia', I, p. 212.

Thus, to say that 19th century Russian thought is a quest for historical identity is also to say that it is a quest for a reconciliation between an identity shaped by collective historical processes, and a history shaped by particular, free, 'Identities'. The tension between these two poles is reflected in the division within Russian radicalism between the Marxist and the anarchist; and, at the imaginative level, it appears in the unresolved conflict in Tolstoy's 'War and Peace' between a determinist and a highly individualist perspective.¹ The characteristic resolution of this tension in Russian religious philosophy is 'personalism', considered as a via media between anarchic or solipsistic individualism and totalitarian collectivism. Berdyaev defines the term² thus: 'Personalism transfers the centre of gravity of personality from the value of objective communities - society, nation, state, to the value of personality. But it understands personality in a sense which is profoundly antithetic to egoism'. Personalism distinguishes the person from the individual,³ insisting that man is radically social, is only properly himself in community and communion with others, and yet equally of irreducible value in himself: man does not derive value from the social or cosmic totality, and so cannot ever be sacrificed in the name of the greater good of this totality. The influential radical, Mikhailovsky, expressed this with great clarity: 'Moral, just, rational, and useful, are those things alone which lessen the diversity of society while thereby increasing the diversity of the individual members of society'.⁴ It is on this basis that the theology of 'sobornost' rests, the expression of a polity neither oppressively collectivist, like Papalism, nor rampantly

1. V. on this question in Tolstoy, the superb essay by Sir Isaiah Berlin, 'The Hedgehog and the Fox' (London, 1953).
2. 'Slavery and Freedom' (London, 1943), p. 42.
3. Ib., pp. 35-7; c.f. Berdyaev, 'The Destiny of Man' (London, 1937), pp. 71-73; C.S. Calian, 'Berdyaev's Philosophy of Hope' (Leiden, 1968), pp. 81, ff.; P. Evdokimov, 'La connaissance de Dieu selon la tradition orientale' (Lyon 1967), pp. 87-9, 92-3.
4. Quoted by Masaryk, op. cit., II, p. 151; on Mikhailovsky, v. also N.O. Lossky's 'History', pp. 66-8. Berdyaev's first published work was a critique of Mikhailovsky's subjectivism and positivism; but Mikhailovsky certainly seems to have influenced the general direction of Berdyaev's thought, & it seems misleading to overemphasise the former's individualism.

individualist, like Protestantism, but 'conciliar', 'soborny', an organic and symphonic whole. More than any other single word or concept, 'sobornost' is 'the definition of an ethos', representing the struggle to discover a point of 'personalist' equilibrium in Russian thought. However, other themes enter the history of this struggle, and part of the purpose of this chapter and those that follow will be to explain the way in which the desired equilibrium was threatened and disturbed by these other themes; until, finally, theologians like Lossky and Florovsky felt that 'personalism' could be salvaged only by abandoning almost all the conceptual machinery of the philosophical tradition.

S. Levitsky has said ¹ that 'Russian religious philosophy is not to be confused with theology. Theology is based on certain dogmatic conceptions which are then interpreted. As distinct from this, religious philosophy is based on ultimate personal intuitions and their rational clarification'. Ideally, this is so; but it is by no means clear that such a distinction was acknowledged or observed in 19th century Russian thought. Revelation and intuition are almost identified. Evdokimov writes ² that 'L'Orient n'a jamais accepté le principe de la raison naturelle, lumen naturale rationis,' quoting in support of this Vysheslavtsev's remark, 'Nous pensons toujours en relation à l'Absolu'; and such an attitude can readily become a belief that man's intuitions of the Absolute are given, in much the same sense as are the data of dogmatics, though given within the human subject's experience of himself, rather than in an objective history. The quest for identity sometimes leads to an absolutisation of what is given in individual self-awareness. However, the resultant threat of pure subjectivism in turn produces an

1. In an article 'On Some Characteristic Traits of Russian Philosophic Thought' (SVTQ, 13, 3, 1969, p. 150)
 2. Op. cit., p. 84.

epistemology which emphasises the real relation of Intuition to its object, knowledge as participation.¹ This implies, for most Russian philosophers, a substantial unity among all objects of cognition, in virtue of their participation of the Absolute, and the notion appears of the 'concrete universal' - Sophia - in which exist the paradigms of all objects, and which is the direct expression of the Absolute. So, by a very circuitous route, we return to 'sobornost'; cosmic 'sobornost' this time; but what was originally intended as a model for the human world takes on a different and far more problematic colouring as a cosmological principle. As we have observed in discussing Bulgakov, 'Sophiology' is a potentially determinist metaphysics; and, if 'sobornost' is seen as a function of Sophianic 'pan-unity' ('vseedinstvo'), it is depersonalised and its current value debased.

Intuitivism, in this sense, leads directly to alogism: the intuition, unchallengeably given, is not accessible to the arid abstractions of logic, it is not irrational but supra-rational. On the one hand, this issues in an emotional aestheticism, the kind of chaotic religiosity characteristic of Petersburg at the turn of the century.² On the other, it denies the uniquely 'supra-rational' quality of revealed dogma. If all knowledge is ultimately non-rational intuition, the knowledge of the dogmas of the Trinity and the Incarnation is not different in kind from the knowledge of any truth about the world. A corollary of this (developed by Soloviev and some of his disciples) is that the knowledge of such dogmas may be deducible from knowledge of the world, from the 'rational clarification' of ordinary intuition. Thus the whole idea of an historical revelation is imperilled, and it becomes impossible to defend the real autonomy of theology as a discipline with historically specified criteria. Against

1. This is worked out particularly systematically by N.O. Lossky, as we shall see in the next chapter, but is presupposed by practically all 19th century Russian metaphysics.

2. V. Supra, ch. 1.

this background of an apparent Gnostic flight from history into cosmic impersonalism, the passionate concern of Florovsky and Lossky to establish historical roots for their theology should be more comprehensible. And in this concern, they stand closer to the earliest of the great 19th century thinkers, Kireevsky, than to many of those nearer to them in time.

Ivan Vasilievich Kireevsky (1806-56) began as a devoted disciple of Schelling¹ and Hegel, both of whom he met during his stay in Germany: their works were for him texts of almost religious significance. His conversion was, according to his friend Koshelev, largely attributable to the insistence of his wife that every thing which he found attractive in Schelling was better and more fully expressed by the Fathers of the Church.² It would, however, be wrong to imagine that Kireevsky simply identified patristic theology with romantic idealism tout court. He saw Schelling and the Fathers witnessing in different ways to a single vision of man, a vision of man as more than merely rational, an ideal of an integrated human consciousness, 'the mind in the heart', a reconciliation between 'reason' and 'understanding'.³ Idealism is the final stage of rationalism, the ultimate clarification of the powers of the reason;⁴ but it does not and cannot claim to provide an exhaustive analysis of all the capacities of the 'spiritual subject'. It admits its limits, and it is in virtue of this admission that Idealism marks so decisive an advance in Western philosophy.⁵ The way is now left clear for the construction of Russian Christian philosophy, rooted in the Russian and Christian situation - a kind of 'meta-philosophy', transcending

1. Whose pupil, Pavlov, was his teacher at Moscow.

2. Chizhevsky, op. cit., p. 15; N.O. Lossky, op. cit., p. 16.

3. I.V. Kireevsky, 'Polnoe sobranie sochinenii' ('Complete Collected Works'), ed. M. Gershenzon, Moscow, 1911; Vol. II, pp. 285-6.

4. *Ib.*, Vol. I, pp. 225, 237, 249-52, 257-8; v. Maaryk, *Ipp.* 246-7; Chizhevsky, op. cit., pp. 21 ff.

5. Kireevsky, op. cit., I, pp. 257-8, ff; Chizhevsky, op. cit., pp. 19, 21-2, 25.

6. Kireevsky, op. cit., I, pp. 257, 259.

rationalism and abstraction. ¹ Kireevsky's sympathy with Pascal and Fénelon ² is significant: like Pascal (and like Lossky), he is insistent that the God who may be apprehended by rational investigation is not and cannot be the living God for Christian faith. Even if rational philosophy could deduce all His attributes, could even deduce His tripersonality (presumably per impossibile), the knowledge of this could never be religious knowledge: it is not 'knowledge of a living Divine person and of His living relations with the personal being of man... Knowledge of the relation between the living Divine person and the living human person serves as the basis for faith, or, more correctly, faith is this knowledge itself'. ³ The foundations of such a scientia cordis must be sought in the ages before the great betrayal of Western Christendom, its capitulation to Aristotelean syllogistic reasoning: ⁴ 'Aristotle's system destroyed the wholeness of spiritual self-understanding, and transferred the roots of internal conviction in man outside of the ethical and aesthetic sense, to the abstract knowledge of discursive reason'. ⁵ We must look to the Fathers, who effected a genuine 'transfiguration' of the highest insights of pagan philosophy, and so provided a total and integral context for all 'natural' truths, supported and unified by Christian revelation. ⁶ Not that the Fathers present a closed system, with final answers for every question: they answered the questions of their time, not ours. A philosophy true to the spirit of the Fathers will be concerned, as they were, with contemporary questions, while using patristic thought as 'a vivifying germ and a clear guide on the way'. ⁷ Our critical task is to discern what in patristic thought is relative and culturally conditioned. ⁸ Kireevsky's discussion of this ⁹

1. Chizhevsky, op. cit., pp. 21, 25.

2. V. Kireevsky, op. cit., I, p. 231.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 274-5.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 112-14, 237, 240.

5. *Ib.*, p. 237.

6. *Ib.*, pp. 239-40 (and c.f. pp. 270-3).

7. *Ib.*, p. 254 (c.f. Florovsky, PRB, p. 258).

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ib.*, pp. 255-7.

is original and interesting: he suggests that, since, throughout Christian history, the monastery has been the real centre of Christian growth, we have in the monasteries a Christian culture which, by its very nature, is very little conditioned by contemporary secular culture. If, then, we look to the monasteries for our inspiration, the process of stripping away historical relativities is not too arduous a job. For Kireevsky, even Byzantine culture is, at heart, monastic: eventually, in Byzantium, the non-monastic (even if superficially Christian) culture of the State had, in 1453, to die for the sake of integral Orthodoxy, the real life of the community.¹ Thus, the patristic style of thinking is something essentially free from the conditioning of secular culture. Its external forms develop from age to age, but its internal purity and wholeness do not change.²

It is this monastic culture which Kireevsky sees as the basis of Kievan civilisation,³ and it is easy to see how significant for him was the contemporary revival of classical Byzantine monastic spirituality in the Russian context. He was in close contact with the elders of the famous Optina Pustyn community,⁴ and his wife was under the spiritual direction of Serafim of Sarov, probably the greatest 'starets' of the age.⁵ This interest in monasticism meant that, for all his Slavophil sympathies, Kireevsky is really less inclined than, say, Khomyakov, to idealise Russian peasant culture and communal life as such: he regards Russian civilisation as of unique value insofar as it is dependent on and permeated by monastic culture. It also meant a marked political

1. *Ib.*, p. 256.

2. *Ib.*, p. 257.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 118-19, 202

4. His letters to Starets Makary are printed in Vol. II of the collected works (pp. 258-64, 282-4): they are chiefly concerned with problems in the translation into Russian of various patristic works (a labour undertaken by some of the Optina monks), especially those of Isaac of Nineveh and Maximus.

5. V. Zenkovsky, I, p. 209.

quietism, a lack of interest in 'world-historical' patterns, and (as Masaryk observes) ¹ a concentration on the life of the will, the sphere of heroic asceticism, as the true theatre of human growth. He is careful to say ² that the West's failure in the 16th century to recover an authentic Christian Hellenism is a failure of the rebellious wills of particular persons: the West does not repent, because Western Christians do not repent. Any kind of historical determinism is alien to his thought. Yet this does not lead him to individualism; the struggles of the particular will are shared by the whole Church, and the 'ethical victory' of the Christian is the victory of the Church. ³ In the Church we know that we cannot live for ourselves alone, and that we are saved only insofar as we are in the Church; and this resolves the constant tension between the tendency towards greater harmony and the temptation to individual and encapsulated living. 'All that is essential in man's soul grows in him socially'. ⁴ Organic or biological metaphors are unhelpful in speaking of the Church, since, in the biological world, creatures live at each others expense, whereas 'in the spiritual world the building-up of each persons builds up all, and the life of all animates each one'. ⁵ Florovsky rightly speaks ⁶ of a victory over romanticism in Kireevsky's thought.

Kireevsky's solution to the problem of historical identity is to restrict what is allowed to count as 'significant history' to the history of the spiritual development of the Christian community: the historical identity of the Christian is always immune to and set over against the

1. Op. cit., I, pp. 253-4; on Kireevsky's attitude to history, c.f. Zenkovsky, I, pp. 223-5.

2. Op. cit., I, p. 244.

3. Ib., p. 278.

4. Ib., p. 254 (v. Zenkovsky, I, p. 218).

5. Ib., p. 278.

6. PRB, p. 259.

history of the 'world', although it may be constantly in dialogue with this history. The views of Khomyakov on this matter are rather more complicated. Alexei Stepanovich Khomyakov (1804-60) was almost an exact contemporary of Kireevsky, and is often regarded as following closely and extending Kireevsky's skeleton system,¹ a Plato to Kireevsky's Socrates. Zenkovsky, however, points out² that 'Khomyakov's world-view had actually taken shape before Kireevsky experienced his religious conversion'; and Khomyakov exhibits an interest in the philosophy of universal history very far removed from Kireevsky's world. The theory of racial and religious 'types' ('Iranian' and 'Cushite'), on which his projected universal history was to have been based,³ has a deterministic ring which Kireevsky would not have approved: Zenkovsky's attempt⁴ to defend the compatibility of Khomyakov's 'historical providentialism' with a thoroughgoing rejection of historical determinism is not entirely convincing. The two men share a conviction of the significance of the filioque as a cardinal sign of the West's falling away; but for Kireevsky it is essentially a capitulation to rationalism, a denial of the 'wisdom of the heart',⁵ while for Khomyakov it crystallises an (already existing?) opposition between groups or types of religious awareness, it is a sign of the 'pride' of the schismatic West, 'of the separate Churches which dared to change the symbol of the whole Church without the consent of their brethren.'⁶ Khomyakov sees it as almost a single catastrophic breach of

1. Thus N.O. Lossky, 'History', p. 29.

2. Op. cit., I, p. 180.

3. The notes for this work occupy three volumes of his collected works. On the theory of 'types', v. his 'L'Eglise latine et le protestantisme au point de vue de l'Eglise d'Orient' (Lausanne, 1872), pp. 355-62; N.O. Lossky, 'History', p. 39; Bolshakoff, 'The Unity of the Church...' pp. 51ff., Berdyaev, 'The Russian Idea' (London, 1947), pp. 44-5.

4. Op. cit., I, pp. 201 ff.

5. Kireevsky, op. cit., I, pp. 112, 240.

6. Khomyakov, 'The Church is One' (... Birkbeck's translation, repr. with some revisions and an introduction by N. Zernov, London, 1968), p. 27; c.f. 'L'Eglise latine', pp. 33 ff. 97, etc.

charity by Western group-consciousness, Kireevsky as a slower and subtler process in the development towards rationalism of many particular consciousnesses. For all his expressed concern with freedom, the free symphony of separate wills, Khomyakov is more closely concerned with the general than the particular (Chizhevsky¹ remarks on his near-obsession with monumental, global oppositions and syntheses). More overtly critical than Kireevsky of Hegel and Schelling,² he is far more Hegelian in style and method.

'Sobornost'', as 'the organic union of freedom and love'³ is usually considered to be the basic principle of Khomyakov's system; but it should be noted that the word itself does not appear in the greater part of his work.⁴ The adjective 'soborny' is however, discussed in a 'Lettre au redacteur de l'Union Chrétienne', à l'occasion d'un discours du Père Gagarine, Jesuite',⁵ which provides valuable evidence for Khomyakov's understanding of the Church's catholicity. Gagarin had claimed, apparently, that 'soborny' in the Slavonic Creed weakened the sense of the Greek *καθολικός*, reducing its meaning to 'synodal', and bearing no connotations of ecumenicity or universality. Khomyakov replies that catholicity is not a matter of 'counting heads', that the Church was catholic even in its earliest days when its universality was still a thing of the future;⁶ and reminds Gagarin that there are two perfectly good Slavonic words which might render 'universal' ('vsemirny' and vse-lensky', the latter as in 'vselensky sobor', 'ecumenical council'), and that Cyril and Methodius presumably knew what they were doing in pre-

1. Op. cit., p. 188.

2. Ib., pp. 186, ff; c.f. Masaryk, I, pp. 259-61.

3. The phrase is Berdyaev's ('The Russian Idea', p. 162).

4. Very little was published in his lifetime; most of his major pamphlets appeared in French, in the form of long letters, issued anonymously by French Protestant publishers (v. Bolshakoff, op. cit., pp. 318-19, notes), and later collected and printed under his own name as 'L'Eglise latine....'

5. 'L'Eglise latine', pp. 389-400.

6. Ib., pp. 394-5.

ferring 'soborny'.¹ 'La définition géographique ou ethnographique ne leur est pas entrée en tête';² the apostles of the Slavs chose 'soborny' to translate καθολικός because it corresponds more closely to the theological heart of the latter word, which derives not from καθ' ὅλον (which might suggest mere universality) but from καθ' ὅλον. 'L'Eglise catholique c'est l'Eglise qui est selon tous, ou selon l'Unité de tous, l'Eglise de l'unanimité libre, de l'unanimité parfaite, l'Eglise où il n'y a plus de nationalités'.³ Catholicity is the communion, the shared life, of every local church with every other, the absence from the Church of local or individual privilege and divisive particularism. 'The Church is called One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic; because she is one, and holy; because she belongs to the whole world and not to any particular locality; because by her all mankind and all the earth, and not any particular nation or country, are sanctified; because her very essence consists in the agreement and unity of the Spirit and life of all the members who acknowledge her, throughout the world; Lastly, because in the writings and doctrine of the Apostles is contained all thefulness of her faith, her hope, and her love'.⁴

Such a conception of the Church Orthodoxy alone preserves: for Protestants, the Church is καθ' ἑκάστον, for Roman Catholics it is κατὰ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον τῆς Ῥώμης, for neither is it καθ' ὅλον.⁵ The opposition between the Western churches is only notional, Protestant and Papalist alike stand for a theological ethos unknown to Orthodoxy. Protestantism is simply the logical working-out of the principles embodied in the adoption of the filioque, the principles of exalting the rights of the local and particular,⁶ and of looking for checks and guarantees of right

1. *Ib.*, p. 397.

2. *Ib.*, p. 398.

3. *Ibid.*

4. 'The Church is One', p. 21.

5. 'L'Eglise latine', p. 399.

6. *Ib.*, pp. 35-6, etc.

belief in the operations of human reason. ¹ Papal authoritarianism is only a disguised rationalism, a mechanism for canonising the logical deduction of new dogmas (Purgatory, the treasury of merit, and so on) from old - or, more exactly, from the practice of the Church. ² The Reformers respond in the same key: the Papacy claims that it is useless to pray for the dead unless there exists an 'intermediate state', and so deduces the existence of Purgatory; the Reformers grant the premiss and deny the conclusion, finding no evidence for purgatory in Scripture or primitive tradition, and so concluding that prayer for the dead is unacceptable. ³ And so on; there is a fundamental and pervasive wrongness in Western theological method, because the life of the Church and the mind of the Church are divorced. The life and practice of Christians become problematic, needing radical clarification and even defence. Intellectual uncertainty has invaded a sphere beyond that of the intellect: 'Celui qui veut pour l'esprit d'amour des garanties autres que la foi et l'espérance est déjà un rationaliste'. ⁴

'Ni Dieu, ni le Christ, ni son Eglise ne sont l'autorité, qui est chose extérieure. Ils sont la vérité: ils sont la vie du chrétien, sa vie intérieure'. ⁵ The attempt to objectify this interior truth in a system of authority - whether hierarchical, scriptural, or rational - is doomed because it is a denial of faith, faith in the continuing life of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Faith is not 'un acte de la raison seule, mais un acte de toutes les puissances de l'intelligence, saisie et subjuguée dans ses plus intimes profondeurs par la vivante vérité du fait révélé. Elle n'est pas seulement pensée ou sentie, mais pensée et sentie à la fois. En un mot, elle n'est pas la connaissance seule, mais la connaissance et la vie en même temps.' ⁶ Reflection or investigation in this sphere must ~~not~~

1. *Ib.*, pp. 38-44.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 38-9.

3. *Ib.*, p. 42.

4. *Ib.*, p. 46.

5. *Ib.*, p. 40.

6. *Ib.*, p. 51.

content with fundamentally given truths which are not matter for intellectual doubt. ¹ Khomyakov's epistemology, ² as we might expect, lays great emphasis on knowledge as ontological participation. A thing is known by man when he goes beyond the limits of his own ego in an effort to 'transfer himself into the object', ³ and it is this basic relationship of quasi-identification which underlies everything we normally designate as the activity of the reason: it is non-mediate knowledge, in which the distinction between subject and object disappears. Subsequent analysis of this relation is, of course, necessary; ⁴ but the original sin of the mind is to exalt this secondary activity to a position of exclusive and prescriptive authority and priority. Religious faith, known and lived in one act, is properly paradigmatic for all cases of cognition; and so the corruption of religious faith leads naturally to the rise of secularism and scepticism. ⁵ Religious rationalism is the suicide of religion, ⁶ and issues in Hegelian 'panlogism', the ultimate separation of knowledge from life, the nemesis of Western culture. ⁷

We should not be misled by the superficial similarity of this to Kireevsky's thought. Kireevsky certainly sees Hegelianism as the end of a line in Western philosophy, but hardly as a 'nemesis': Idealism is the 'end' of philosophy insofar as it is an exhaustive account of what the reason can achieve, and, as such, it must be contained within the Christian framework. It, in fact, demands such a framework to reconcile its own inconsistencies, and supplement its inadequacies as a total world-view. ⁸ In fact, some kind of autonomy is being allowed to secular know-

1. Ibid.

2. Discussed at length in Zenkovsky, I, pp. 191-9.

3. N.O. Lossky, op. cit., p. 32.

4. And Zenkovsky (op. cit., I, pp. 197-9) complains at Khomyakov's inconsistency in allowing the rationalist, 'transcendentalist' method to take over again completely at this stage, re-establishing the subject-object division with all its attendant problems.

5. V. 'L'Eglise latine', pp. 73-82, 158 ff., 306 f..

6. Ibid., p. 160.

7. N.O. Lossky, op. cit., p. 32.

8. Kireevsky, op. cit., I, p. 259

ledge,¹ so long as it recognises its limited scope: if it does so, it can provide a genuine pedagogy for faith, 'a conductor of thought between [the sciences] and faith'.² In contrast, Khomyakov is proposing something far more like a Christian metaphysic. For him the rejection of rationalism as a satisfactory world-view necessitates a complete reworking of epistemology, a thorough 'derationalising' (though, as we have seen,³ this is not carried through with absolute consistency). There is a parallel contrast in the attitude of the two thinkers to the Christian State: Kireevsky can envisage the spiritual community existing independently of (or even, as in the case of Byzantium, at the expense of) the Christian State;⁴ while Khomyakov is sharply critical of Christianity's withdrawal in the Byzantine world from the socio-political realm.⁵ For him, the translation of Christian principle into political reality was clearly a possibility: historically, the Russians, highly socialised, but only embryonically politicised, had provided an ideal laboratory for this essay, and had evolved a polity based, not on external coercive authority, but on 'a philosophy of life accessible to the learned and the simple, since it was expressed, not in text books, but in customs and rites daily observed by men, women and children alike'.⁶ Between Kireevsky and Khomyakov there is the shift of concern from ecclesiastical or monastic culture to Christianised folk culture: we may recall Florovsky's dictum⁷ that 'in the social philosophy of the Slavophil the Church was replaced by the "parish" ["obshchina", the village commune or commonwealth]'. Khomyakov has a deep concern with the faith and practice of a

1. Kireevsky was, it should be noted, enthusiastic for scientific and critical scholarly methods as used in the West; v. N.O. Lossky, op. cit., p. 25.

2. Kireevsky, op. cit., I, p. 252.

3. Supra, p. 205, n. 4.

4. Though he also believed that only a notionally Christian State could fully safeguard the dignity of man; v. N.O. Lossky, op. cit., pp. 26-7.

5. Zernov ('Three Russian Prophets', p. 71) gives some relevant quotations from Khomyakov's collected works.

6. *Ib.*, p. 74.

7. PRB, p. 251.

living community; but he has less sense than Kireevsky that such a community has a history, that the simple, organic consensus of a Russian congregation depends upon a long and complex process of dogmatic debates and clarification. He seems to regard this sort of process as an exclusively Western phenomenon, and is, accordingly, critical of Newman's view of doctrinal developments; ¹ his desire to avoid what he regards as irrelevant and irresponsible deductive methods in theology leads him sometimes to speak as if Christian thought had no history at all. From this point of view, it would be wrong to think of Khomyakov as advocating a return to the Fathers in the same sense as Kireevsky: ² the writings of the Fathers and the conciliar definitions are, after all, no more than an expression of a basic faith which has not altered between their day and ours, a determinative expression, indeed but still only the surface of the immutable faith of the Christian people. ³ In Khomyakov's thought, we are nearer (despite his repeated insistence on the need for the witness of the Holy Spirit in the Church) ⁴ to that erosion of objective, historical points of reference in theology which we have already remarked in Russian religious thought, to the blurring of the frontiers between revelation and intuition.

Khomyakov and Kireevsky together show us not only the origins of so much that was to become axiomatic in Russian religious philosophy (the rejection of any kind of individualism, the supra-rational character of religious knowledge, the condemnation of the filioque as symptomatic of the West's degeneration, and so on), but also the beginnings of a muted

1. 'L'Eglise latine', p. 216.
2. Although Khomyakov had obviously studied a wide variety of patristic texts; v. Bolshakoff, op. cit., pp. 134-5, and the same author's 'The Patristic Foundations of Khomyakov's Theology' (E.C.Q., X, 1953-4, pp. 233-237).
3. Khomyakov's characteristic stress on the whole Christian body as guardian of orthodoxy is very important, especially since he was able to appeal for support to the 1848 Encyclical of the Eastern Patriarchs, which stated that all the people of the Church, not the hierarchy alone, collectively possessed the charism of infallibility, v. 'L'Eglise latine', pp. 48-9, 99.
4. V., e.g. 'The Church is One', pp. 19, 22-4, 25, 29, 34.

conflict between two distinct approaches to the religious question, two approaches which may be loosely designated as 'historical' and 'metaphysical'. One looks for a recovery and a creative adaptation of a historically defined tradition, the other looks for a new and philosophically normative statement of a rather vaguely conceived religious sense. Of course, the former has metaphysical implications, and the latter looks to historical sources; by they remain different kinds of solution to the problem of the restatement of Christian faith. Both are equally antipathetic to the theology of the Russian 'spiritual academies' of the day. Kireevsky ² and Khomyakov ³ alike express their dislike of the 'Dogmatic Theology' of Bishop Makary Bulgakov, one of the standard textbooks of the 19th century, and typical, in its scholastic method, of the ethos of the academies. Florovsky ⁴ emphasises the lack of contact between Makary and the circles in which the 'Dobrotolyubie' was translated and studied, and accuses him ⁵ of having 'no historical perspective at all'. However, the influence of Khomyakov in particular penetrated to the academies in the 1860's, ⁶ and the generation which passed through them in the next two decades - men like M. Gribanovsky ⁷ and Antony Khrapovitsky ⁸ is clearly marked by this influence. Makary's style of theologising gradually ceases to be a live option, even in the academies: serious religious thought on Russia looks to Kireevsky and Khomyakov as the fountain-heads.

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1. For various remarks of Khomyakov on this subject, v. Zernov, op. cit., pp. 58-9.
 2. Op. cit., II, p. 258.
 3. V. Bolshakoff, 'The Unity of the Church', p.130.
 4. PRB, pp. 218 ff.
 5. Ib., p. 366.
 6. Ib., p. 285.
 7. Ib., pp. 426-7.
 8. Ib., pp. 427-39.

Yet neither was a systematic thinker, neither evolved a complete and consistent world-view. This was left to Soloviev, a thinker far more on the fringe of the official Church than Kireevsky and Khomyakov, yet exerting an influence at least as extensive as theirs: one might adapt Whitehead's dictum, and say that all subsequent Russian metaphysics is a series of footnotes to Soloviev. He is the first to develop extensively the notion of 'vseedinstvo', 'pan-unity', and the related doctrine - or, perhaps, 'myth' - of Sophia, as the grounding for a thoroughly participatory epistemology; yet he is aware of the latent determinism in this picture and repeatedly emphasises the unconditional value of the human personality. There is in Soloviev precisely the same concern as in his predecessors to reconcile the warring interests of the particular and the collective, to avoid subjectivism on the one hand and determinism on the other. Although he is prepared to say ¹ that 'The primacy of existence does not belong to parts in isolation but to the whole,' he modifies this by stressing that this 'primacy' does not mean a mere suppression of the individual, its subordination to the interest of the whole, as in the biological world. ² The individual must, in some sense, be the whole: his interest, his destiny, and his value cannot be abstracted from his fundamental quality as capable of infinite self-transcendence in community, his freedom from the lifeless bondage of individual interest. ³ Man cannot rest content with an individual and relative destiny; he seeks absolute life. And this absolute existence is life in communion with God, the 'Absolute that is' as opposed to the 'Absolute that is becoming', the

11 'God, Man and the Church (The Spiritual Foundation of Life)', tr. D. Attwater, London, 1938, p. 98.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 99-100; c.f. 'Lectures on Godmanhood' (tr. P. Zouboff, Poughkeepsie, 1944), p. 92: 'As the higher principle, the principle of the general, Catholicism demands subjection to itself on the part of the particular and individual, the subjection of the human personality. By becoming an external power, however, it ceases to be the higher principle and loses its right of dominion over the human personality'.

3. 'God, Man and the Church', pp. 33-4, 141, 171; 'Lectures on Godmanhood', p. 93 ff.

creation. ¹ Personality fulfils its absolute potential by transcending the barriers of egotistic self-assertion which cut men off from each other, from the world, and from God; these barriers, reified in the mutual exclusiveness of impenetrability of bodies, are the consequence of man's primordial self-assertion when Adam fell, ² and the overcoming of them is not within the power of unaided man. It is life in Christ, in the Church, which realises the 'universal' potential of each personality. Christ, God and man, surrenders His divine glory, 'and by so doing acquires as man the ability to become a sharer in that glory! ³ because as man He perfectly renounces self-assertion and individualism. He is thus more than an individual, He is redeemed mankind 'the spiritual centre of a universal organism in the realm of eternal divine existence'.⁴ In the Church, the only holiness is Christ's holiness, not that of individual churchmen. ⁵ Life in the Church, activated by ~~s~~power which draws men out of their enclosed egos, is the paradigm for the cosmos, prefiguring the absolute or divine destiny of all things, that ideal unity of the creation in relation to God which Soloviev calls 'Sophia'. Christ, the Word and Wisdom of God, is the eternal ground or principle of Sophia; and the Word Incarnate is thus the supreme expression in creation of Sophia. ⁶

This is not the place to embark upon a detailed discussion of Soloviev's highly complex and problematical speculations about Sophia; but it is important to note that he sees a close connexion between Sophia, the Incarnation, and the Church. Zouboff's complaint ⁷ that, for Soloviev, conflict in the world is resolved not by the cross of Christ but by Sophia is unjust: the Cross is the culmination of the kenosis of Christ, and it is

1. V. N.O. Lossky 'History', p. 99.

2. Ibid.; 'Lectures', 3, passim.

3. 'God, Man and the Church', p. 123.

4. Ib., p. 115 (c.f. p. xv).

5. Ib., pp. 140, 143; c.f. N.O. Lossky, 'History', p. 123.

6. LachūrešA, 7, passim; for a summary, v. N.O. Lossky, op. cit., pp. 101-4.

7. In his introduction to 'Lectures on Godmanhood', p. 59.

this 'double sacrifice of divine and human surrender' ¹ which makes possible the realisation of 'sophianic' harmony first in the human world, and ultimately in the whole cosmos. And Lossky's criticism of sophiology for its confusion of the Church with the cosmos ² is perhaps not quite fair to Soloviev; Lossky does not allow for Soloviev's recognition that sophianic existence is, from the first, a vocation rather than a datum. However, Soloviev is not really consistent about this: his speculations about the 'fall' of Sophia suggest something closer to a primeval concrete reality, and his extensive use of Gnostic or semi-Gnostic sources (the Cabbala, Böhme, and so on) ³ tends to confirm this model. When it is linked to Christology and ecclesiology, Sophia is a concept which makes some sense in a Christian world-view; when used as a cosmological mechanism, it is far more ambiguous. Soloviev's doctrine of the Church is very far from any kind of naturalistic or pantheistic mysticism. He defines it ⁴ with great precision as ' (1) The collection of human individuals of whom she is composed, (2) the organic form which unifies them into one whole, and (3) the action of the Holy Spirit whereby this whole lives and moves in common use of all God's gifts and sanctified activities'. Here again, he clearly does not understand personal community in terms of biological and organic collectivity; though the expression (organic form) is a little dubious, There is a thoroughly orthodox stress upon the centrality of the Holy Spirit in the Church: tradition is holy and authoritative because it is the expression of the mind not of any individual or group of individuals, but of the Spirit. Dogmatic definitions are made by churchmen 'not for themselves but for the whole Church', and are thereby recognisable as deriving from the Spirit and

1. 'God, Man and the Church', p. 121.

2. M.T.? p. 112.

3. V. Florovsky, PRB, pp. 316 ff. on these aspects of Soloviev's system.

4. 'God, Man and the Church', pp. 138-9.

universally binding.¹ 'Everything in the Church which is universal or catholic is divine, and that is universal or catholic which is free from self-esteem and particularism, whether personal, local, national or any other sort'.² This is close to Khomyakov; but Soloviev does not seem to distinguish universality from catholicity as Khomyakov does. Further, although Soloviev obviously saw the Slavs as having a religious mission of immense importance, the Slavophil idealisation of Russia's past was wholly alien to his thinking; he viewed such a myth as egotism or individualism on a national scale, deeply inimical to the good of the Church (and so to the good of mankind).³ He was also critical of Byzantinism: thanks to its immunity from rationalism and materialism, the Christian East preserves a sense of cosmic harmony and the deification of man; but Byzantium alone does not represent the full Christian synthesis. It is dialectically necessary for the West to 'work through' humanism and liberalism, to protest in the name of human freedom, before being reconciled with its true spiritual roots, as preserved in the East, so as 'to give birth to the spiritual mankind'⁴ - a position reminiscent of Kireevsky's in its comparatively positive valuation of Western intellectual culture (within its - self-confessed - limits).

Soloviev's critique of rationalism, however, takes a rather different form from that of the Slavophiles. Unlike Kireevsky, Soloviev does not mark off the religious sphere as characterised by its own epistemic patterns, while allowing secular reason a relative freedom outside this sphere; and unlike Khomyakov, he does not begin from participation and the obscuring of the subject object distinction. Knowledge, for Soloviev, is a relation at once empirical, rational, and intuitive or participatory,⁵ a threefold relation to the transcendent logical struc-

1. *Ib.*, p. 158.

2. *Ib.*, p. 159.

3. 'Lectures', introduction, p. 29; N.O. Lossky, 'History', pp. 117-20.

4. 'Lectures', pp. 225-6.

5. On Soloviev's epistemology, v. N.O. Lossky, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-8; Zenkovsky, II, pp. 518-22. Zenkovsky points out the influence of Spinoza in the formulation of this 'epistemological trichotomy' (*ib.*, p. 474).

ture of the world as it exists in the mind of God. It is this structure, the divine Idea of the world, which undergirds the coherence and rationality of things, and so the coherence and rationality of thought. ¹ All reality is grasped in this threefold way - including, it seems, the life of the Godhead Itself. Every active being is understood, on the analogy of the human spirit's self-awareness, as relating to itself by knowledge and will; ² and this 'general logical form which defines every actual being' ³ reveals to us the triadic life of God. Our empirical-rational-intuitive knowledge of finite and relative being uncovers a general structure in being which, since the structures of the world are 'in' God, may be predicated of God's own life. The trinitarian dogma is thus 'as much a truth of contemplative reason as of revelation'. ⁴ Of contemplative reason, notice, not of abstract ratiocination: I take it that the phrase should be understood to mean the threefold cognitive relation in its entirety, not merely the rational, or merely the intuitive aspect. However, it is clear that the trinitarian dogma, seen very much from the view-point of the Augustinian analogies, ⁵ is being presented as wholly accessible to the human mind, 'inconceivable' only in the sense that every finite thing is so (as we have no direct rational knowledge of the 'inner life' of a finite entity). 'Thus Divinity in Heaven and a blade of grass on earth are equally inconceivable and equally conceivable by reason'; ⁶ it is not a matter of reason being weak or inadequate, simply that certain aspects of reality are outside its province. ⁷

This is markedly different from the views of Kireevsky and Khomyakov, but in Soloviev's terms, given the very close relation supposed to subsist

1. N.O. Lossky, op. cit., p. 97.

2. 'Lectures', p. 147.

3. *Ib.*, p. 155.

4. *Ib.*, p. 152.

5. For Soloviev's use of the esse, scire and velle triad, v. 'Lectures', p. 157.

6. 'Lectures', p. 155.

7. *Ibid.*

between God and the world, it is a comprehensible, perhaps an inevitable, part of his system. The model of the Trinity as the absolute ground and form of finite actuality (and therefore deducible from the latter) is, with some modification, repeated by most of Soloviev's followers, including Florensky and Bulgakov. Soloviev also insists that the Trinity is a perfect 'moral harmony' of three subjects (as well as being intellectual and aesthetic harmony), so that it is 'the realised ideal of consubstantiality on the basis of perfect love';¹ but it is very hard to see how the transition is made from the single subject, relating in three 'modes' to itself, to a triad of subjects which may form a model for mutual love between Christians. Soloviev is obviously eager to stress that the Trinity is the paradigm of love and of communal life in the Church² (again, a theme faithfully reproduced by his disciples). There is in Soloviev a rather uneasy existence of near-panteism with a very strong Biblical and Hebraic personalism,³ and the tension between the two seems to be reflected in his trinitarian doctrine: the self-differentiation of the one Absolute Subject and the loving relation of three subjects are models of questionable compatibility. Soloviev is torn between the purely 'sophianic' vision of the unity of the cosmos with God in the 'vseedinstvo' of Holy Wisdom, a vision leading itself readily to expression in the rather impersonal language of Hegelian dialectic, with occasional excursions into Gnosticism; and a vision far closer to that of traditional Christianity, voluntarist and personalist. Even a generally sympathetic critic like Nikolai Lossky recognises the 'pantheistic current' in Soloviev, and insists that the Christian God cannot be 'vseedinstvo', since He is radically other than the universe which He creates ex nihilo.⁴ Further,

1. N.O. Lossky, 'History', p. 101; c.f. 'Lectures', 7.

2. N.O. Lossky, *ib.*, pp. 100-1; his remark (p. 100) on the revelation of the trinitarian dogma ignores Soloviev's ambiguities on this issue.

3. We should note Soloviev's great sympathy with Judaism: v. 'God, Man and the Church', pp. 109-12; N.O. Lossky, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-1.

4. N.O. Lossky, *ib.*, pp. 127-8.

Lossky remarks,¹ Soloviev sometimes speaks as if 'the multiplicity of individual human egos', were a result of the Fall: the substantiality of the ego is - at least implicitly - denied. Yet, as we have seen, this coexists with a very high doctrine of the uniqueness, indefinability and irreducibility of the person.² Again, in Soloviev's historical and social philosophy,³ we may note a similar tension. A strong sense of purposive historical process, of the Kingdom of God realised in the social form of 'free theocracy', stands side by side with a profound awareness of the need for absolute freedom of conscience - the latter implying a social pluralism which the former would seem to rule out. Ultimately, as the haunting 'Tale of Antichrist'⁴ shows, the possibility of the 'failure of history', of eschatological rebellion and war, the diabolic manifestation of freedom, overcame the theocratic hope in Soloviev's thought. 'Antichrist', as Masaryk comments,⁵ 'displays the inner cleavage of Soloviev's personal experience'; voluntarism and personalism triumph, but only in a deeply tragic vision.

In this survey of the beginnings of Russian religious philosophy, several characteristic features have emerged which we have also remarked to be present in Lossky's work. There is, first of all, an uncompromising rejection of 'rationalism' in theological method, the rejection of unregenerate reason which regards the data of faith as objects of the same order as things in the finite world, accessible to detached, discursive intellectual enquiry. In his sympathy with Pascal and his emphasis on the 'heart' as organ of religious knowledge, Lossky is perhaps closest to Kireevsky:⁶ both clearly refuse to separate ascetical, mystical, and dogmatic theology from one another, both see the foundation of theology

1. *Ib.*, pp. 128-9.

2. *V.*, e.g., 'Lectures', p. 126.

3. *V. N.O. Lossky*, pp. 112-124.

4. *Ex: A Soloviev Anthology*, ed. S.L. Frank (London, 1930), pp. 229-248.

5. *II*, p. 280; and c.f. Zouboff's introduction to the 'Lectures', p. 77.

6. *V. esp. M.T.*, pp. 200 ff.

(in the widest sense of the word) in an act of self-transcending commitment to God. Further: it is plain that Lossky's conception of personality rests upon a consistent development in Russian philosophy of the idea of the person as radically social, fulfilled in community, transcending individualism or egotism, and seen at its highest in self-renunciation; and Soloviev seems to suggest that this can be connected with the *kenosis* of Christ, and with the ideal of personal existence seen in the life of the Trinity. Accordingly, we also find a doctrine of the Church as the sphere in which man is liberated from egotism in his life in the Holy Spirit, and a conception of dogma as the expression of the 'symphonic' consciousness of the Church, neither individualistic nor totalitarian; hence, also, a vision of Orthodoxy as preserving a correct model of ecclesial existence over against the distortions of Papalism and protestantism. The general theories of Religionsgeschichte proposed by Khomyakov and Soloviev have little in common with Lossky's thesis about the 'Two Monotheisms' (although Soloviev's idea of Judaic-Christian faith as a 'royal road' between Oriental impersonalism and Graeco-Roman anthropomorphism¹ is not totally dissimilar); but it becomes possible to see Lossky's scheme as corresponding in type, at least, to those of Khomyakov and Soloviev.

Granted these areas of correspondence, what points of interest for the study of Lossky's thought emerge? The main thing is, I believe, the recognition that the questions which Lossky discusses are, for the most part, historically bound up with an essentially post-Enlightenment complex of philosophical issues - the nature and scope of the discursive reason, the tension in the idea of personality between its relativity (as socially located and conditioned) and its potential absoluteness (as self-transcending), and the related problems of the role of the individual in the collective. All these are questions posed in the Orthodox world for the first

1. V. N.O. Lossky, 'History', p. 120.

time in the 19th century, in response to the comprehensive re-examination of metaphysics by the Idealists in the West; they are questions belonging to a world very different from that of the Fathers (as Kireevsky seems to have recognised). And Lossky, is, in fact, confronting a set of post-patristic issues with largely post-patristic resources, the resources of his native philosophical tradition, which first 'domesticated' these issues in the Orthodox theological world. Lossky's ostensible rejection of this tradition must not blind us to his real continuity with it. As to the causes of this rejection - already touched upon in chapters 1 and 2 of the present work,¹ - we have seen that the Russian religio-philosophical ethos is, from the first, disturbed by a conflict between the impulse towards total metaphysical explanation and, to borrow a word beloved of Zenkovsky, 'historiosophical' systematisation, which inevitably points towards pantheism and determinism, and the impulse towards radical voluntarism, looking to Biblical and ecclesiastical (including ascetical) sources, strongly conscious of the categories of the historical and the personal, and entailing the autonomy of theology vis-a-vis metaphysical systems. The idea - or myth - of the 'concrete universal' militates against authentic personalism, yet it is seen as an epistemological and, ultimately, a cosmological necessity. Soloviev's successors struggled to reconcile this with a perfectly genuine concern to defend the freedom and uniqueness of the personality (Dostoyevsky's influence is very evident in this); but no satisfactory resolution was to emerge. Lossky and Florovsky represent the final revolt of the revelationist and voluntarist tradition against the tyranny (as they saw it) of Idealist determinism and cosmic myth, the refusal to believe that a satisfactory resolution was possible. Before returning to this 'revolt' and its antecedents, however, we shall, in the next chapter, examine briefly the various attempts by religious thinkers after Soloviev to present a synthetic statement accordant with both Idealism and historical Orthodoxy.

1. And v. supra, pp. 196-7.

CH. VIII.

ESSAYS IN SYNTHESIS

Among Soloviev's many followers at the turn of the century, two hold a particular interest for our investigations: Prince Sergei Nikolaievich Trubetskoi (1862-1905),¹ and his brother Evgeny are both concerned to correct certain of the imbalances in Soloviev's thought and to bring it into a closer relation with historical Orthodoxy. The most cursory reading of their works reveals the extent of their dependence on Soloviev: Sergei reproduces Soloviev's analysis of the threefold structure of cognition,² Evgeny considers the intuition of 'vseedinstvo' to be prior to the knowledge of particulars,³ both profess sophiological theories of a sort, though Sergei's is never fully developed.⁴ However, their modifications of Soloviev are substantial and significant. Although Evgeny devotes much labour to stating a sophiological cosmology, he is sharply critical of the notion of Sophia as it appears in Soloviev (and in such as Bulgakov, who follow him more closely), on the grounds that, in failing to distinguish the divine Ideas from the substance of created things, it makes God directly responsible for evil.⁵ For Evgeny, Sophia is the

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1. At whose house Soloviev died in 1900; Trubetskoi's account of this appears in Vol. I of his 'Sobranie sochinenii ('Collected Works'), Moscow, 1907, pp. 344-52.
 2. On Sergei's epistemology, v. Zenkovsky, II, pp. 800-3.
 3. 'Smysl zhizni' ('The Meaning of Life'), Berlin, 1922, p. 85.
 4. Zenkovsky, II, pp. 799, 809-10; 'Smysl zhizni', ch. 3, pp. 125-55, *passim*.
 5. 'Smysl zhizni', p. 128; Zenkovsky, II, pp. 808-10.

basis of the world's distinctness from God, because it is that by which God creates ex nihilo, the paradigm to which the creation in its independence answers.¹ The 'ideas' of things are not their inmost substances, but God's purposes for them; without the divine paradigms, indeed, no creature has 'samost'', 'selfhood', and life, but every creature has the freedom to accord or not with its sophianic model.² The divine ideas are inseparable from God, not merely His 'purposes', but His 'powers' ('sily');³ and although the World exists only insofar as it answers to Sophia and participates in God's creative purposes, it is free not to 'be', to distort and parody its sophianic self by attempting to exercise its freedom independently of any relation to God.⁴ In all this, there is a marked similarity to Palamism, though Evgeny does not seem consciously to have relied on Palamas; Zenkovsky's comment⁵ that there seems 'no place for the Church's doctrine of the "energies" of God in the metaphysics ... sketched out by Trubetskoï' is puzzling. Evgeny's defence of the freedom of created being over against God combines with a strong sense of the potential of the whole cosmos for 'spiritualisation'; he insists on the salvation of the whole man, soul and body,⁶ and looks to the Transfiguration of Christ as a foreshadowing of the transfiguration of all matter.⁷ God is very definitely the focus and the meaning of the cosmic process, but in no sense whatsoever is He its 'subject'.⁸ The Hebraic personalism of Soloviev's more orthodox moods comes to the fore: the patristic and Palamite emphasis on what Lossky terms the 'dynamic' character of the

1. 'Smysl zhizni', p. 132.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 133-4;

3. *Ib.*, p. 137.

4. *Ib.*, p. 139-40.

5. *Op. cit.*, p. 810, n. 1.

6. 'Smysl zhizni', p. 67.

7. *Ib.*, pp. 72-3; c.f. pp. 156-84, esp. pp. 156-63, 179.

8. E.g., *ib.*, p. 101.

divine ideas replaces the more static and Platonic picture suggested by sophiology in its Solovievan form. And such evidence as we have for Sergei's idea of Sophia ¹ suggests that it would have followed similar lines, envisaging Sophia as 'the aggregate of creative prototypes or ideas'. ²

Both the Trubetskoi's have a fairly developed notion of 'cosmic subjectivity', the collective consciousness of humanity. The problem of the universal validity of knowledge suggests to both a solution in terms of consciousness as a supra-individual, 'trans-psychic' ³ principle. It is not, and cannot be, merely empirical, as this would imply that it is individual, and so would lead to subjectivism, on the other hand, it cannot be an impersonal, 'transcendental' ground, in which the distinctness of all particular subjects is obliterated. ⁴ It must be co-operative, collective, 'catholic', 'soborny'. ⁵ Sergei does not make it entirely clear whether this is a merely 'social' fact or an organic datum of human existence. ⁶ As Zenkovsky remarks, ⁷ it is not easy to reconcile Sergei's emphasis on personality as an end in itself with some of his statements about the 'universal sensitivity' upon which consciousness is grounded ('a psycho-physical entity which is as universal as space and time'). ⁸ However (pace Zenkovsky), it seems reasonably plain that this 'World-Soul' is conceived as that which responds to the absolute logical principles given in concrete reality, mediated through sensibilia, the 'categories of authentic being', ⁹

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1. Fragments of his projected work on the subject appear in 'Put''8, no. 47, 1935, pp. 3-14; v. also Zenkovsky, II, pp. 799-800.
 2. Zenkovsky, II, pp. 799.
 3. The expression is Evgeny's (op. cit., p. 12).
 4. V. Zenkovsky, II, pp. 795-9, for references to Sergei's writings on this question.
 5. Ibid.; c.f. 'Smysl zhizni', pp. 125-6.
 6. For various formulations, v. Zenkovsky, II, pp. 797-8.
 7. Ib., pp. 798, 802.
 8. Quoted, ib., p. 799.
 9. Ib., p. 800; and c.f. Sergei's 'Sobranie sochinenii', I, p. 155.

that is, it is not Sophia, not itself the Absolute, it is other than the revelation of God in Sophia.¹ Consciousness at its highest looks for the unity of thought and being, subject and object, spirit and nature, the realisation of 'vseedinstvo'.² Evgeny likewise insists upon the 'form of unconditionally'³ in thought, and the character of knowledge as con-scientia ('so - znanie' in Russian);⁴ but he connects this more clearly than does his brother with the consciousness of the Church (again, an echo of Soloviev). Sergei had affirmed the necessity of an 'ecclesiastical divine-human organism'⁵ in order to realise the fulness of collective consciousness: Evgeny, reiterating Soloviev's emphasis on the inclusiveness of Christ's humanity,⁶ sees the life of the Church in Christ as actualising our vocation to 'vseedinstvo', most particularly and manifestly in the Eucharist.⁷ ' "Sobornost" is the revelation of Christ Himself in the collective life of the Church'.⁸ The realisation of 'vseedinstvo' is, in patristic terms, the *θέωσις*, the divinisation of the world,⁹ the final destiny which unites eternal and temporal, absolute and relative: 'The Lord's Prayer stands as a witness to this,

1. Zenkovsky's criticisms of Sergei's sophiology (op. cit., pp. 799 ff.) rest on the assumption that the World-Soul is the Absolute-as-Sophia, and that Sophia as a logical Absolute (the sum of the divine ideas) is God, simpliciter; an assumption for which I find very little support in Sergei's work.
2. Zenkovsky, II. p.802.
3. *Ib.*, p. 806; 'Smysl zhizni', pp. 18-19, 22-3.
4. 'Smysl zhizni', p. 12; c.f. pp. 174-5 on this unconditionally and harmony in human thinking as reflecting the freedom of the Creator.
5. Quoted, Zenkovsky, II, p. 798. It should be noted that Sergei was not guilty of confusing the divine & the human aspects of the Church; He was, in fact, critical of the Slavophil inability to distinguish the 'heavenly' from the 'earthly' Church (v. 'O sv. Sofii, 'Put', no. 47, pp. 8-9), a complaint reminiscent of Lossky's condemnation of ecclesiological 'Monophysism' & of the confusion of Church and cosmos.
6. 'Smysl zhizni', pp. 201, 231 ff.
7. *Ib.*, p. 239.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ib.*, p. 231.

asking the Heavenly Father, both for the presence of the Kingdom of God, and for the gift of daily bread'.¹

This eschatological union of absolute and relative is the theme which provides the basis for Sergei's great interest in history. If 'The more concretely and authentically we know the "other" in its full distinctness from the Absolute, its full self-assertion and the full individuality of its elements, the more concrete will be our idea of the Absolute in which it is grounded',² then metaphysics cannot survive without rigorous attention to the empirical and historical. The Absolute, though not an empirical fact among others, is not known independently of our knowledge of empirical fact.³ Florovsky has well said of Sergei Trubetskoi⁴ that he 'became a historian because he was a philosopher'. Thus, Sergei is profoundly concerned with the historical humanity of Jesus; and, at the same time, classes as docetic all attempts to isolate Christian faith from 'natural religion'.⁵ The historicity of Jesus means on the one hand that His uniqueness can never be evacuated by an assimilation of His person to general, impersonal historical processes, or patterns of 'Religionsgeschichte', and, on the other, that we have to respect the continuity of Christian revelation with its historical context, pagan and Jewish, with the revelation given to the classical sages and prophets.⁶ Classical thought is (in Florovsky's apt phrase)⁷ 'a kind of natural prophecy'; but this does not mean that, for instance, the trinitarian dogma can be

1. *Ib.*, p. 282.

2. 'Sobranie sochinenii', II, p. 274; quoted, Zenkovsky, II, p. 802.

3. V., e.g., 'Sobranie sochinenii', p. 155. A. Polyakov, writing on Trubetskoi in the Soviet Philosophical Encyclopaedia (Moscow, 1970, vol. 5, p. 261), lays particular stress on this 'concrete idealism' in his thought, which differentiates him from the more 'abstract' Hegelians; and c.f. Chizhevsky, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

4. 'Knyaz S.N. Trubetskoi, 1862-1905' ('Put', no. 26, 1931, pp. 119-22), p. 119; an extremely valuable appraisal.

5. 'Sobranie sochinenii', I, pp. 172-3.

6. *Ib.*, pp. 157, 159-60.

7. *Ib.*, pp. 157-8.

explained without remainder in terms of the divine triads of ancient religion, or the sacraments in terms of the 'mysteries'.¹ The Logos doctrine of the Apologists and the Alexandrians was very close to Sergei's heart;² but he never obscures the radical newness of what was done first-century Palestine. Hellenism, ultimately, lacks any conception of freedom, it is bound to 'naturalism': on the philosophical level this leads to dualism, the inability to see matter as the vehicle of free spirit, on the religious level to polytheism, the deification of various natural processes, and on the cultic level to the mysteries.³ It is unable to conceive a unity which includes, but is independent of, all the determinate systems of the world: the mysteries are a re-union with natural, sub-personal, forces, not a liberation into communion with the person of the Saviour.⁴ A similar point is made by Evgeny:⁵ Greek religion is unbalanced naturalism, submersion in the world, while Oriental religion is unbalanced supernaturalism, a total flight from the world. For both the Trubetskois, Christianity stands for the transfiguration and spiritualisation of the whole creation. Naturalism must be redeemed and rectified by incarnationism: Sergei, writing of the anthropomorphism of Greek paganism,⁶ allows that it represents a sound instinct, but sees it as inevitably misdirected without the revelation in Jesus of that divinised humanity which is 'absolutely' the image of God, the 'absolute' form of man. Naturalism ceases to be possible once nature is transformed in Christ.

Sergei's emphasis on the freedom of God from determinate natural systems implies, strictly, the independence of theology from secular intellectual endeavour. In an unfinished essay on apologetics,⁷ he

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1. 'Sobranie sochinenii', I, pp. 163, 165-6.
 2. His doctoral thesis (presented at Moscow in 1900) was a study of the Logos doctrine in Hellenic philosophy in general.
 3. 'Sobranie sochinenii', I, pp. 159-60.
 4. *Ib.*, pp. 165-6.
 5. 'Smysl zhizni', pp. 53 ff.
 6. 'Sobranie sochinenii', I, pp. 168 ff.
 7. *Ib.*, pp. 446-51.

suggests that Christian apologetic should admit the private, 'incommunicable' character of experience of Christ. Because God is more than a controlling concept in a system, because He is felt to be 'more real' than the world of everyday experience, there is no point in attacking science or philosophy, or in trying to insert God into their systems.¹ Christ communicates His experience of the Father to His followers through His own person; and so only through those persons who have experience of Him can this experience be communicated, by the witness of what they are, 'the only way of preaching'.² The 'public' language of religion is dogma; as with the Gospel, the unbeliever can, in some sense, comprehend what is being said, even though it answers to nothing in his experience.³ Dogma preserves, 'with historical fidelity, the basic fact of Christian self-understanding';⁴ theological definition can be recognised as historically or psychologically, faithful to its data, independently of the question of its absolute truth.⁵ This 'historical fidelity' Sergei seems to regard as an indispensable condition for the growth of fundamental religious experience: it cannot generate religious experience, but the experience cannot be communicated apart from it, since it is (as a witness to 'Christian self-understanding') bound up with who or what the Christian person is. Thus 'the positive development of truth of a purely religious order',⁶ a task both 'scientific' and religious, is an essential Christian activity. Preaching or witnessing depends upon a conscientious study, appropriation, and development of the dogmatic tradition.

Evgeny takes up this theme of coherence and fidelity in a slightly different way: in opposition to the irrationalism so popular in Russian

1. *Ib.*, pp. 448, 449-50.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 450-1.

3. *Ib.*, p. 450.

4. *Ib.*, p. 451.

5. *Ib.*, pp. 449, 451.

6. *Ib.*, p. 448.

religious circles at the turn of the century, he insists ¹ that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the God of the philosophers, in the sense that the laws of thought which hold for philosophy are not suspended when we come to theology, Logic is one because truth is one, ² it is, we might say, a function of 'vseedinstvo'. ³ Clearly, Evgeny is not suggesting that God is merely an object of logical analysis (we have already noted his insistence on the connexion between knowledge of God and the sacramental, 'soborny' life of the Church); but he is maintaining that to deny the place of logic in dogmatic discourse is intellectual and, finally, spiritual suicide. Heresy expresses itself in logical form, and the Church has no option but to reply in the same vocabulary of logical precision (classically in the homocousion); ⁴ dogma is 'the logical form of universal revelation'. ⁵ If 'revelation is not a divine monologue', ⁶ human thought, human logic, has a part to play; knowledge of God cannot claim a privileged position in order to prescind from an analysis of its formal coherence. Religious language is special only in virtue of the 'significance' (for personal attitudes or behaviour, presumably) of what is known in religious knowledge. ⁷

Lossky wrote of Evgeny Trubetskoi ⁸ that he 'alone of theosophical school remained perfectly orthodox in his theological thought'. It is his only reference to either of the brothers; but, considering that Lossky rarely makes direct reference to any Russian writers, it is of some interest, and importance. The fundamental concerns of the Trubetskoi's are the same as Lossky's own - the autonomy of theology, the centrality of the Incarnation,

1. 'Smysl zhizni', pp. 209 ff., 214-15.

2. *Ib.*, p. 242.

3. *Ib.*, p. 218-22.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 242-4.

5. *Ib.*, p. 244.

6. *Ib.*, p. 236.

7. *Ib.*, pp. 236-7. Note that Evgeny (following Soloviev) regards all knowledge as revealed - and -rational, so that religious knowledge is not unique in its structure.

8. *M.F.* p. 133, n. (the phrase of Evgeny's which he quotes comes from 'Smysl zhizni', p. 171).

the hope for glorification of matter (with the Transfiguration seen as the paradigm for this), the refusal to erect artificial barriers between the orders of grace and nature, the anti-theses between Christianity and pagan impersonalism (Greek or Oriental), the distinction between personality and individuality;¹ above all, perhaps, an overriding sense of the sovereign freedom of God. And Sergei's exposition of the need to defend the historical consistency of dogmatic tradition would serve very well as a statement of Lossky's approach to 'Dogmengeschichte' as we have set it out in earlier chapters. Yet it is precisely because of this basically historical and personalist approach that the Trubetskois illustrate with rare clarity the impasse towards which Russian religious philosophy was moving. That in their thought which is clear, consistent, and philosophically and theologically interesting owes very little to Soloviev; but Soloviev is their acknowledged master, and exerts what seems to be an almost hypnotic influence. Their personalism is - like that of Soloviev himself - constantly qualified by the seductive idea of 'vseedinstvo', in various forms'. Sergei's speculations on the world-soul, and Evgeny's notion of collective consciousness revive the model of the world as a single subject which we noted in Soloviev, though here it is distinguished, as it is not by Soloviev, from the 'Absolute Subject' in the primary sense, God. The created and the uncreated 'absolutes' confront each other as distinct, so that the last trace of Soloviev's near-panteism disappears; but the idea even of created 'vseedinstvo' remains ambiguous, threatening the coherence of the voluntarist metaphysic. We have seen² that Evgeny in particular tries to avoid the objectification of 'vseedinstvo' into a basic cosmic fact: 'Truth', he writes,³ is totally-one consciousness, not totally - one being', the concrete universal is a myth. Yet even as an

1. This theme is very well presented by Zenkovsky (II, pp. 795-7), in connexion with Sergei's thought.

2. Supra, pp. 219-20, 225.

3. Quoted by Zenkovsky, II, p. 806.

epistemological tactic, the introduction of 'vseedinstvo' is problematic. To read off the unity of consciousnesses from the unity of things known¹ cannot but suggest that consciousnesses are one as things are one; and it is hard to avoid a model of supra-conscious or sub-conscious objective organic unity, of which particular personal subjects in their uniqueness are only the superficial manifestation. 'Vseedinstvo', with all it implies, is an unnecessary and confusing element in the Trubetskoi's 'systems; pietas towards Soloviev prevents the total rupture which would appear to be the only feasible solution. Evgeny's critique of Soloviev, for all its astringency, is not radical enough.

Father Pavel Florensky (1882 -? 1952), the other major sophiological thinker of the period immediately after Soloviev, exhibits some of the same tensions as the Trubetskoi's, but seems even further away from any satisfactory resolution. He stresses, with Kierkegaardian vehemence, the primacy of paradox or 'antinomy' in theological discourse (and is, accordingly, criticised by Evgeny Trubetskoi),² the utter difference between the God of Abraham and Isaac and the God of the philosophers.³ Florensky's epistemology begins from a point of view of extreme scepticism, a conviction that 'the basic norms of rationality are mutually incompatible'.⁴ Reason is undermined by our state of sin,⁵ there are no guarantees against complete mental dissolution, the hell of solipsism. Logic, resting on the law of identity, is an absolutisation of the fallen, atomistic state of entities cut off from each other and from God.⁶ The threat of absolute doubt, total uncertainty, was clearly an acute personal torment to

1. V., e.g., 'Smysl zhizni', p. 22.

2. 'Smysl zhizni', pp. 209-11, 214-15, 218-22.

3. V. P.A. Florensky, 'Stolp i utverzhdenie istiny' ('The Pillar and Ground of Truth', Moscow, 1911), p. 489; on Pascal's 'amulet', at greater length, pp. 577-81.

4. *Ib.*, p. 487 (and c.f. pp. 147, 485); on Florensky's epistemology in general, V. Zenkovsky, II, pp. 880-3.

5. 'Stolp....' p. 159; Zenkovsky, II, pp. 881-2.

6. 'Stolp....' pp. 25-8; c.f. N.O. Lossky, 'History', pp. 179-80, 185-6.

Florensky (as it was to Pascal); Florovsky, whose assessment of Florensky¹ is exceptionally hostile and severe, fails to understand the personal seriousness of this threat and the evident mental anguish it produced in Florensky. Salvation from epistemological solipsism comes, for Father Pavel, through the revelation of the trinitarian dogma,² in which 'truth', the fundamental structure of being, appears as trine: 'the essence of Truth is an infinite act of Three-in-Unity'.³ Truth is; it manifests itself as objective; and it cognises this objectivity. 'Truth reveals itself in itself'.⁴ Thus, truth comprises all things in a perfect relation of 'consubstantiality': being actualises itself in its 'other', in becoming an object, and reunites itself in a perfect participatory identity with this object.⁵ All subject-object relations are potentially consubstantial and trinitarian; interpersonal relations are so in a more special sense,⁶ since they may be grounded in mutual love, which Florensky regards as 'not an attribute of God', but His nature.⁷ How this trinitarian structure can exist, we cannot know: it is impenetrable to our fallen individualist reasoning, and can be known only in the union of reason with faith. Faith is essentially a 'podvig', an ascetic exploit,⁸ 'a living moral communion of personalities', and 'a real entry into the bosom of the divine Trinity, not merely an ideal contact with Its external form'.⁹

As we might expect from all this, Florensky very definitely conceives of 'vseedinstvo' as the concrete foundation of all particular existents.

1. PRB pp. 493-8; also 'Tomlenie dukha' ('Vexation of Spirit'), 'Put'', no. 20, 1929-30, pp. 102-7.
2. 'Stolp....', chs. 3 and 4, passim, esp. pp. 63 ff, 66-9.
3. *Ib.*, p. 49.
4. *Ib.*, p. 48.
5. *Ib.*, pp. 73 ff (c.f. N.O. Lossky, op. cit., p. 181).
6. *Ib.*, ch. 12 (pp. 393-463), passim (and N.O. Lossky, op. cit., pp. 181-2).
7. *Ib.*, p. 71.
8. *Ib.*, pp. 147-8 (on the concept of 'podvig', v. supra, pp. 26-7, 40).
9. *Ib.*, p. 74.

The concrete universal, because it is concrete, can embrace contradictories, as a 'logical universal' (such as Evgeny Trubetskoï proposes) cannot. Knowledge as participation in this objective structure goes beyond the threatening uncertainties and polarities of conceptual and logical dialectic.¹ Florensky appeals to some very curious and unconventional sources in support of his 'concrete universal', to the world of fable and even occultism: the Slavophil mystique of the 'soul of the people' is revived (as Zenkovsky remarks)² in a style very close to that of the 'new religious consciousness' of the Russian 'Decadents' of the period. His argumentation is often highly emotional and 'pathetic' in tone ('Stolp i utverzhdenie istiny' is actually cast in the form of twelve letters to a friend), and his expression is accordingly individualistic in the extreme. Even the notion of 'sobornost'' is (as we have observed)³ thoroughly individualised. Florensky repeats what is by this time a commonplace, that man is unfulfilled as an 'individual' and is truly himself only as a 'social' being, a person; but he sees man's transcendence of atomistic existence in terms less of community than of 'friendship'.⁴ Knowledge is, indeed, not an individual activity; but it is achieved not through corporate, ecclesial existence, the ascetical and liturgical enlightenment in faith, which Kireevsky looks for, but through the shared intuitions of two intimate friends.⁵ Florensky's book, as critics noted,⁶ has no chapter on Christology or on the Church: the section devoted to the Paraclete does not develop (though it does at least mention) the idea of the Spirit as giver of knowledge of God within the Christian community. It is not clear,

1. Zenkovsky, II, p. 881.

2. *Ib.*, p. 880; Zenkovsky notes Florensky's connexion with the eccentric religious and literary essayist, Rozanov, in this context. Cf. also S. Tyszkiewicz, S.J., 'Gregorianum' XV, pp. 255-261. ('Réflexions du théologien russe moderniste Paul Florensky sur l'Eglise'.)

3. *Supra*, p. 88.

4. 'Stolp....' Ch. 12 (pp. 393-464), *passim*.

5. Zenkovsky, II, pp. 882-3.

6. V. Florovsky, *PRB*, p. 495; Tyszkiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

either, whether Florensky had any consistent doctrine of revelation at all. As Florovsky has noted,¹ the trinitarian dogma comes into Florensky's system not as a truth revealed in the Incarnation, but as a postulate designed to salvage some kind of epistemological security from the wreckage caused by a fundamental Pyrrhonism. It is a guarantor of intuition rather than a gift of revelation.

Zenkovsky² aptly compares Florensky's metaphysic to Stoic vitalism, or even animism (it is possible, too, that Evgeny Trubetskoi's strictures on 'naturalism' are in part aimed at Florensky): knowledge is conceived on the analogy of organic assimilation into the life of things. Yet this threatens an absorption of the subject in the world, a submergence of consciousness in the vast body of corporate consciousness and concrete 'truth' and life; and Florensky takes refuge from so unacceptable a consequence in an emphasis on that level of relationship at which shared or corporate consciousness can actually be felt - not the unity of the group, but the intimacy of friendship. The danger of an extreme impersonalism pushes him towards an equally extreme subjectivism; the problems inherent in the idea of a 'universal subject', a supra-personal consciousness are certainly not solved by this. The myth of Sophia, the world's 'ideal personality', atain militates against real personalism. Sophia, for Florensky, is a very complex symbol,³ and it would be wrong to take any one sense of the symbol and treat it as normative for his system; however, pace Bulgakov,⁴ Florensky's sophiology has all the ambiguities and tensions of Soloviev's, on any analysis. Florensky may insist⁵ on the importance of the doctrine of creatio ex nihilo, yet again Sophia intrudes to obscure the clarity of his position: the image of Sophia as a 'fourth

1. PRB, p. 495; c.f. Tyszkiewicz, op. cit., p. 260.

2. II, p. 886.

3. V. supra, p. 28, on Florensky's sophiology; N.O. Lossky (op. cit., pp. 182-3) gives a useful list of the senses in which Florensky uses the term. C.f. also Tyszkiewicz, op. cit., pp. 256-7.

4. V. 'The Wisdom of God', pp. 23-5.

5. 'Stolp....', pp. 288-9; v. Zenkovsky, II, pp. 884-5.

hypostatic element' beside the persons of the Trinity¹ is very unhelpful in illuminating the relation between God and the world, which sophiology is intended to explain.

In spite of all his eccentricities, however, there is much in Florensky which shows a genuine indebtedness to traditional Orthodoxy. Florovsky's judgment² that 'Stolp....' is essentially Western, alien to the Orthodox world is obviously exaggerated. Florensky is, for example, much concerned with the idea of the transfiguration of the body, the manifestation of grace in fleshly life, and refers to Symeon the New Theologian (a favourite authority)³ and Serafim's conversation with Motovilov.⁴ His notion of the body as more than a mere material organism, as man's total 'Gestalt',⁵ is a striking adumbration of Merleau-Ponty, anticipating some recent essays by Orthodox theologians⁶ in synthesising patristic theology and phenomenological thought. Lossky twice refers to Florensky in M.T.,⁷ and, in some respects, their concerns are similar. Florensky speaks of the person as non-conceptualisable, expressible in symbols rather than concepts;⁸ as essentially constituted by love, *ἐκείνου*, *εναν κένωσις*, the positing of the 'other' in the voiding of the self⁹; and as thus reflecting the *κένωσις* of God's own creative thought and act.¹⁰ Sin is, consequently, egotism, the root of all schism and sectarianism,¹¹ what Lossky calls 'samost'. The closest verbal parallel between them, however, is in Lossky's repeated use of the word 'antinomy' in discussing doctrine:¹² while it is very doubtful how far he would have sympathised

1. 'Stolp....', pp. 323-4, 349 ff.

2. PRB, p. 497.

3. 'Stolp....', pp. 292-3, 297 ff.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 102-5.

5. *Ib.*, pp. 264-6.

6. V. esp. Ch. Yannaras, *Τὸ ὀντολόγικόν περιεχόμενον τῆς Θεολογικῆς ἐννοίας τοῦ προσώπου*, Athens, 1970.

7. Pp. 65 and 106.

8. 'Stolp....', pp. 78 ff., 82-3.

9. *Ib.*, pp. 90-2.

10. *Ib.*, pp. 163, 323. (On Sophia as 'kenotic' in Florensky's work, v. Graves, 'The Holy Spirit in the Theology of Sergius Bulgakov' p. 171).

11. *Ib.*, pp. 161, 177 f.

12. V., e.g., M.T., pp. 43, 49, 65-6, 87-8, etc.

with Florensky's epistemology in general, he clearly shares the latter's conviction (an important departure from Soloviev) that reason is totally incompetent to pronounce on the coherence of dogmatic statements), that a good deal of strain on human language and logic is inevitable in religious discourse. And both regard the trinitarian dogma as the primary instance of such 'strain'. Florensky's abandonment of Soloviev's epistemological optimism (an optimism still evident in much of the Trubetskoi's work) is, in fact, a significant step away from Idealism: Florensky remains a metaphysician, but a very strange one, with small confidence in tidy conceptual patterns. We are nearer than before to Lossky's personalist apophaticism. What is lacking in Florensky, however, effectively cutting him off from Lossky (and the Trubetskoi) is a sense of history, as Florovsky points out.¹ The difficult synthesis between Father Pavel's apophaticism and the Trubetskoi's historical concern remains to be achieved; and the whole field of Russian religious thought remains overcast by the myth of Sophia, a metaphysical albatross, weighing down one system after another towards pantheism and determinism.

3. The one Russian Christian philosopher of stature who totally avoids the pitfalls of sophibology is Berdyaev. Like the other members of the 'Vekhi' group, his background was insocial and political philosophy rather than theology or metaphysics; and even in this group, he is the only one who is radically anti-metaphysical. The attitudes of 'Vekhi' towards the institutional Church were anything but uncritical:² and again Berdyaev

1. PRB, pp. 493-4; 'Tomlenie dukha', p. 103.

2. When that arch-reactionary, Metropolitan Antony Khrapovitsky, welcomed 'Vekhi' (in an open letter to the writers, reprinted in his collected works: 'Sobranie sochinenii', St Petersburg 1911, vol. III, pp. 552-4) as a sign that the intelligentsia were returning to a proper obedience to the Church, Struve, and later, Berdyaev, replied with a firm rejection of the implications of this, sharply criticising the Church's negative attitude to social and political reform, V. Masaryk, II, pp. 435-6.

exemplifies this in an exceptional degree. Often regarded as a kind of spokesman for 'Russian Orthodoxy', Berdyaev in fact stands on the frontiers of Orthodox, and, indeed, Christian thought, as he admits himself.¹ He considers that 'the concept of historic revelation is contradictory and is the product of a religious materialism; it belongs to a stage of revelation which is already past. There exists only spiritual revelation, revelation in the Spirit'.² Revelation as historically defined is not enough, there must be further revelation to take us beyond historic Christianity.³ Berdyaev obviously needed historic Christianity as a context for his own speculations, but he quite explicitly sets it 'in antithesis' to his 'eschatological' Christianity.⁴ Historical Christianity is rationalist, affirmative, definitive; and so it is the enemy of freedom, creativity, spirit, or personality. Orthodoxy, however, is more wary of rational definition than Western Christendom, and so more tolerable.⁵ For Berdyaev, the great enemy is 'objectivisation': if God is treated as object, He becomes no more than the externalisation of man's slavery. He stands over against man as a despot who demands servile obedience, He is alienated from man, and He is man's enemy.⁶ He is an idol to be overthrown and forgotten if man is to live, 'God has not made a slave of man. God is the liberator. Theology has made a slave of him... and the slavish social relations of man have been transferred to the relation of man to God'.⁷ Berdyaev's revulsion against the objectivist materialism of Marxism⁸ is mirrored in his revulsion against the objectivist dogmatism and moralism of the Church. It is useless to set up historical

1. V., e.g., 'Dream and Reality', chs. 7 and 9, *passim*.

2. 'Christian Existentialism: a Berdyaev Anthology', ed. D.A. Lowrie (London, 1965), p. 256 (from 'The Divine and the Human', 1947).

3. V. *ib.*, pp. 53, 234-40, 253-6.

4. 'The Russian Idea', p. 243.

5. *Ibid.*; c.f. C.S. Calian, 'Berdyaev's Philosophy of Hope' (Leiden 1968), pp. 31-2.

6. 'Slavery and Freedom' (London, 1943), pp. 82-6. On objectivisation, Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-6, and c.f. pp. 41, 44 ff.

7. 'Slavery and Freedom', p. 83.

8. Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 289-98.

Christianity as an alternative to Marxism: neither is sufficiently radical or spiritual. Berdyaev, incidentally, did not regard monastic Christianity as any more genuinely spiritual than the Church at large: he looked on traditional forms of asceticism as, for the most part, bloodless legalism,¹ and was unimpressed by Optina.²

Personality is the central category of Berdyaev's thinking, and like most of his philosophical compatriots, he is eager to distinguish it from individuality. 'Personalism does not mean, as individualism does, an egocentric isolation'.³ The distinction of the person from the individual is even sharper in Berdyaev than in the Trubetskois or Florensky: the two categories are strictly incommensurable, they belong to utterly different orders. 'The individual is a category of naturalism, biology and sociology', while 'Personality is not a naturalist~~ic~~ but a spiritual category'.⁴ Berdyaev, then, is not saying that personality is 'social' and individuality is not: it is the individual that is the social reality, bound to and determined by its 'nature', its environment, while personality is a stranger to 'socialisation'.⁵ The social realm is the realm of slavery and objectivisation: personality is the indefinable wholeness of spirit that is totally unconditioned by nature, free not only from external determinations, but from slavery to self as well. 'Slavery to self and slavery to the objective world are one and the same slavery'.⁶ Individualism sets up the ego in opposition to the world, effecting a cosmic polarisation of ego and non-ego; personalism transcends the ego altogether by 'including' the world in the 'existentiality of the person, which acts as the source of creative valuation'.⁷ 'Personality is an axiological category, a category

1. *Ib.*, pp. 84-8.

2. 'Dream and Reality', pp. 188-190.

3. 'Slavery and Freedom', p. 36.

4. *Ib.*, p. 35; c.f. Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

5. Lowrie, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

6. 'Slavery and Freedom', p. 135.

7. *Ib.*, pp. 135-6; Lowrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 70 ff.

of value', ¹ the pivot of the free non-natural world of creativity whereby man imparts meaning to his existence. It is 'universal' because it creates unconditional value or meaning. As such, 'A person is never a completed datum: it is the task, the ideal of man', ² 'not being nor a part of being'. ³ And because it is free, dynamic, creative, beyond 'being', it is the image of God in man. ⁴ The work of Christ is redemptive because it reveals authentic humanity, that free creativity in humanity which is God's image: 'Man is fully revealed only in God-manhood'. ⁵ Christ liberates man from his slavery to nature, and so brings him decisively into the realm of spirit: 'After Christ man and the cosmos no longer belong to the natural order'. ⁶ Berdyaev never elaborates his soteriology in detail, and it is hard to see how he might have done so. He is prepared to say that the events we regard as revelatory are symbols of the authentic revelation in the noumenal world, the timeless encounter of the Spirit of God with the Spirit of man, ⁷ and his attitude to the historical Jesus is comparable to Bultmann's: the 'Christ-event' is simply God's calling of man out of inauthenticity into freedom, a call more or less independent of any particular fact about the life of Jesus. 'The life of Jesus Christ can never be subjected to historical objectivisation: it remains in the sphere of Christian experience, not only personal, but communal, "soborny" experience'. ⁸ The life of Jesus is thus primarily a fact in the experience of the Church (as in the thought of Professor John Knox), not on historical fact in the usual sense: it is the vehicle for the

1. 'Slavery and Freedom', p. 23.

2. Ibid..

3. Ib., p. 51.

4. Ibid., pp. 45-52; Lowrie, op. cit., p. 70 (c.f. pp. 57-8).

5. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 52 (from 'Freedom and the Spirit', 1927-8)

6. Ib., p. 51 (from 'Freedom and the Spirit').

7. Ib., p. 256 (from 'The Divine and the Human'); c.f. N.O. Lossky, 'History', pp. 234-5.

8. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 52 (from 'Truth and Revelation', 1953).

eternal liberating act of Christ, and, as such, its roots in the phenomenal world are not very important.

The experience of the Church is described here as 'soborny'; but it would be wrong to assume that Berdyaev's understanding of ecclesial experience is at all close to that of others who use the term. He defines 'sobornost'' as 'the inner concrete universalism of personality, and not the alienation of conscience in any kind of exterior collective body whatever'.¹ The communal is never to be identified with the collective: 'communal' experience is, it seems, the opening - out of the subject to the supra-individual reality of the realm of spirit, not a passivity towards an external, objectified consensus.² 'Ecclesiastical sobornost has in history often assumed forms of human slavery and of the denial of freedom; it has often been a fiction, but the actual principle of Christian sobornost cannot but be personalist'.³ This is very different from Khomyakov's quasi-biological idea of 'sobornost'; but the problem here is precisely how the notion is to be at all related to the historical institution of the Church and its pronouncements.

Berdyaev cuts the Gordian knot of the Russian tradition by dismissing the problem of historical Christian identity as a misconceived question, and rejecting totally any form of determinist cosmic mythology. By doing so, however, he effects an absolute separation between the personal and the natural; and it is this which, for all his closeness to him on many points, separates him from Lossky. As we have seen, their personal relations were far from cordial,⁴ though Lossky, at least, recognised Berdyaev's genius. In a lecture on the doctrine of creation,⁵ Lossky complains at the tendency among non-Orthodox to treat Berdyaev as an

1. 'Slavery and Freedom', pp. 58-9.

2. *Ib.*, p. 68.

3. *Ib.*, p. 201.

4. *Supra*, p. 18; and v. esp. the exchange between the two men in 'Put', no. 50, 1936.

5. 7/12/56, pp. 10-13.

Orthodox theologian when he is, in fact, on his own commendably honest admission, 'un penseur libre', who, unlike Bulgakov, makes no attempt to integrate his speculations into patristic tradition.¹ Nevertheless, Lossky obviously feels that when Berdyaev ventures into theology, he must expect to be criticised by theologians; the fact that he is a 'penseur libre' does not give him any immunity. Lossky's chief objection is to Berdyaev's cosmology, his use of Böhme's concept of a primitive, pre-determinate 'Urgrund', prior to both God and the world, a 'principe de liberté première méonique',² out of which emerge the realm of spirit (God and personality) on the one hand, and 'nature' on the other. The 'Urgrund' is the nihil out of which God creates by positing Himself as God (spirit) over against determinate matter. Lossky points out that this leaves personality as uncreated, emerging 'au même titre que Dieu'³ (and this is certainly what Berdyaev means to say), and that, consequently, the doctrine of divine omnipotence ceases to mean anything: creation is a co-operative effort between God and man. For his own part, Lossky repeatedly insists, in this lecture and elsewhere,⁴ that the nihil from which God creates is simply and literally nothing, and that, if creation is to mean anything at all, it must mean God's positing of a real 'other', Lossky's strongly kenotic view of creation demands that created personality be both utterly dependent on and totally free of God, so that it may answer God's gracious 'sortie de soi-même' as a real subject. Lossky's variety of personalism, in fact, excludes Berdyaev, insofar as the latter depends on the indistinguishability of finite and infinite 'spirit', and the idea of 'meonic freedom'.

1. *Ib.*, p. 10.

2. *Ib.*, p. 12.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *M.T.*, p. 92; 24/11/55, pp. 17-18, 12/1/56, pp. 9, 14 ff.; 7/12/56, pp. 13-14 18 TD.

Berdyayev's solution of the Russian impasse is thus inadequate as far as Lossky is concerned; yet there remains a measure of real kinship between them, not merely on the terminological level, but more deeply. Berdyayev describes his faith as 'eschatological', and - like Bulgakov¹ - thought of ethics in close connexion with eschatology; his acute sense of the tragic impels him to the demand for an eschatological resolution of the problem of evil. Now Lossky's eschatology² is more closely tied to the life of the Church and the $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ of the Spirit; and he has a far greater sense than Berdyayev of the body's eschatological destiny (as witness his use of Serafim's conversation with Motovilov). However, there is one essay, 'Domination et règne (étude eschatologique)',³ in which Lossky explores more deeply the tragic element in the world, and, like Berdyayev, demands an eschatological resolution; and such a resolution, he argues, is possibly only if we refuse to think of God as impersonal, Necessity, if we follow the New Testament and speak of His $\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha$, not His $\kappa\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\theta\eta\varsigma$,⁴ His victory in Christ over the 'powers' which enslave man, a victory consummated only at the end of time.⁵ The Book of Job is the first great eschatological protest in religious history,⁶ the paradigm of the groaning and travailing of creation; the possibility of resolution appears only when, in Christ, the will of the Father is fully manifested, and man is made capable of co-operation with it.⁷ Obviously, this is not quite the same as Berdyayev's concern with the enslavement or frustration of man's creativity in the present order, and its liberation in the eschatological hope;⁸ but there is a significant similarity. Both Lossky and Berdyayev object passionately to the 'Dieu des philosophes

1. Supra, p. 38.

2. V., e.g., M.T., chs. 11 and 12.

3. 'A l'image,' pp. 209-25; written about 1952-3.

4. Ib., pp. 218-19.

5. Ib., pp. 219-25.

6. Ib., p. 218.

7. Ib., pp. 221-2.

8. V. Calian, op. cit., ch. viii ('Eschatology and Ethics'), passim.

et savants', to the tyranny of an impersonal cosmic power, and refuse to conceptualise or objectify God. The question of whether or not Berdyaev 'influenced' Lossky is virtually irrelevant; what matters is that both, in their different ways, stand for a radical rejection of all the determinist elements in the Russian religious tradition. ¹

Among the Russian philosophers criticized by Berdyaev for deterministic leanings is Lossky's father, Nikolai, with his neo-Leibnizian theory of 'hierarchical personalism', which regards the world as built up of various levels of personal existence, members of each level playing a role as subordinate organs of the members of the level next above. Berdyaev objects ² that, if collective units can be treated as 'personal' in this way, human personality as such is deprived of any intrinsic value, any 'ultimacy' or irreducibility, since it derives value from the whole of which it is a part. Collective units are 'objectivised' realities, non-personal, and therefore anti-personal: collective personality is a contradictory notion. 'In a sense, a dog and a cat are more truly personalities, more truly heirs of eternal life, than a nation, or society, or the state, or the whole world'. ³ Berdyaev's critique is interesting because of its closeness to Vladimir's critique of Khomyakov, ⁴ his assertion that Khomyakov posits a pseudo-personal single consciousness in the Church. And this prompts the question of how far Vladimir's thought was developed in reaction to his father's system; and of whether what he condemns in Khomyakov was something which he first identified in Nikolai's 'hierarchi-

1. In this respect, both may be compared with Lev Shestov (1866-1938; v. N.O. Lossky, 'History', pp. 325-6), a thoroughgoing Kierkegaardian irrationalist, concerned with the distinction of theology from philosophy, and the problem of tragedy (Job, and the dereliction of Christ). He seems to have influenced Berdyaev directly (v. Calian, op. cit., p. 29), and although Lossky never refers to him, 'Domination et règne' is full of his characteristic emphases. Shestov was, significantly, of Jewish extraction.
2. 'Slavery and Freedom', p. 41.
3. *Ib.*, p. 42.
4. *Supra*, pp. 100-101.

cal personalism'.

Nikolai Lossky begins (following Bergson) from a view of the world as an organic whole. This is the foundation for his intuitivist or 'co-ordinational' theory of perception,¹ which, as opposed to 'causal' theories of perception, posits a real pre-cognitive (pre-reflective) contact between the subject (supertemporal) and superspatial) and the external world. Since this apprehension is a real encounter of two entities organically connected, and is prior to the intentional mental activity of knowledge, it is an unshakably objective apprehension of things as they are in themselves.² Nevertheless, despite this organic model of the world, Nikolai insists upon the 'creative independence' of each agent in the world: while greatly indebted to Leibniz's monadology, he is critical of Leibniz's idea that monads are strictly mutually exclusive.³ 'As bearers of creative powers substantial agents are distinct and independent, but as bearers of basic abstractly ideal forms they are identical and form one being'.⁴ That is to say: each personal unit (monad, substantial agent) is concretely expressive of certain fundamental abstract categories (spatio-temporal structures, for instance), it realises in its existence various universal laws of thought; but conformity to these abstract principles does not exhaust any particular concrete agent's being. As instantiations of universal principles, all 'monads'

1. V. N.O. Lossky, 'Intuitivizm i sovremennyi realizm' ('Intuitivism and Contemporary Realism') in 'Sbornik state posvyashchennykh P.B. Struve', p. 395; 'The World as an organic Whole' (London, 1928), ch. III passim.
2. N.O. Lossky, 'History', p. 252. The logical incoherence of regarding the subject as supertemporal and superspatial and, at the same time, commensurable with physical objects and 'organically' united to them seems to have escaped Lossky's notice. His distinction (v. infra) between the 'universal' and 'individual' aspects of the subject only creates further confusion.
3. *Ib.*, p. 255; 'The World as an Organic Whole', pp. 57-8.
4. 'History', *ibid.*; c.f. 'The World....' ch. IV, and pp. 187 ff.

are 'consubstantial': the processes they effect 'are not merely qualitatively but numerically identical'.¹ There is, however, a depth of density to the agent which is irreducibly unique, the source of its agency and creativity. Real complementarity in the cosmos is realised only in the integration of every single, unique agent: each 'must make his individual, i.e., unique, unrepeatable and unreplaceable contribution to the communal creativeness'.² No agent is dispensable: organic wholeness does not imply a 'whole' existing at the expense of any of its parts.

This, of course, embodies the principle which lies at the heart of Russian personalism, and which is so fundamental to Vladimir's soteriology and ecclesiology: and there are other aspects of Nikolai's thought³ which are obviously grounded in Orthodox tradition, and are very close to Vladimir's theology. However, the organic model from which Nikolai begins inevitably suggests that the role played by the particular person in the collective is comparable to that of the atom in the formation of the molecule⁴ - a view not at all clarified by the statement that the atom 'gives up' its 'egóism' to join in the molecule. Either this is pure mythologising; or else man's victory over self is being reduced to a process of evolutionary naturalism. It is not wholly surprising that Nikolai defends Leibniz's doctrine of 'metamorphosis' or reincarnation. Each substantial agent must freely work its way towards a 'higher', less egocentric, form

1. 'History', *ibid.*; c.f. 'Value and Existence' (London, 193) p. 68.

2. 'History', p. 259; c.f. 'The World....' ch. VI.

3. His defence of creation *ex nihilo* ('History', pl 265), his insistence on deification as the end of Christian life, attained through participation in Christ's deified humanity (*ib.*, pp. 259, 265), his conception of evil as rooted in self-love, the isolation of an agent from other agents (*ib.*, pp. 261-3; 'The World....', pp. 195-7, 190-2; 'Value and Existence' pp. 115-16), and his view of non-empirical personal being as the image of God in man ('Value and Existence', pp. 171-4; note the distinction between empirical individuality - φύσις; - and the 'super-essential', ideal personality).

4. 'History', pp. 263-4.

of existence by a process of reincarnation in higher types of organic life, a process effected by a divine act of 'transcreation'; and the identity of each agent is preserved in the successive forms of its ascent by an 'individual normative idea' of its final state of perfection in the Kingdom of God.¹ This incidentally, supposes a very thoroughgoing dualism: no particular physical complex is, in the Aristotelean sense, 'formally' related to the agent or soul. Each successive incarnation or materialisation, while it contributes to the soul's deposit of innate knowledge, is connected to it in a purely accidental manner. In the Kingdom of God, the highest level of integration is reached, and the whole world will be the 'body' of each separate agent:² that is, the gradual evolutionary convergence of the 'materialisations' of agents, in systems of ever-increasing harmony and complexity, culminates in all sharing one material body, the whole physical cosmos. At the same time, however, each agent also has a transfigured 'spatial' but non-material body³ - a very puzzling idea. This extraordinary system, which Zenkovsky bluntly describes⁴ as 'fantastic', raises serious problems, logical, moral and metaphysical, about what might be held to constitute a human person; Berdyaev's strictures are quite comprehensible. The person, in the usual sense of the term, becomes no more than a state in the evolution of a transcendent 'substantial agent', and the ultimate value of the conscious, free human subject is called into question: 'hierarchical personalism' is finally, it seems, only a kind of transcendental biology.

Nikolai's method raises no less serious questions. Zenkovsky, in a perceptive critique of Nikolai's concept of intuition,⁵ points out that he rarely, if ever, argues a position, preferring to criticise other points of view, and to appeal to the superior 'consistency' of his own

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1. *Ib.*, pp. 264-5. This is not, it would be noted, a doctrine of human reincarnation (one human soul in successive human bodies).
 2. *Ib.*, p. 260.
 3. *Ib.*, pp. 259-60; c.f. 'Value and Existence', p. 78.
 4. *II*, p. 663.
 5. *Ib.*, pp.

account. Intuition as a basis for philosophising means, for Nikolai, not so much the sort of direct, quasi-mystical impulse underlying, say, Soloviev's work, as the projection of an inspired hypothesis, a metaphysical picture. Despite a deep personal loyalty to the Orthodox Church,¹ he is not an Orthodox thinker; yet neither is he a 'penseur libre'. He is clearly concerned to establish connexions between his system and Orthodoxy, and his thought is, in many ways, dominated by a 'religious' interest; but, on certain matters, traditional theological positions are sacrificed to the exigencies of the 'metaphysical picture'. This is especially apparent in his extreme dualism: like some other Russian philosophers, he is inclined to regard matter as a result of the Fall - the mutual egotistic 'repulsion' of agents crystallising, as it were, into material impenetrability.² Vladimir's critical discussion³ of Gregory of Nyssa's theory about the relation of the Fall to 'biological' life acquires an added interest in the light of this view of his father's) Nikolai's system, in short, exhibits very closely the difficulties inherent in the project of a religious metaphysic neither wholly bound to nor wholly free of the dogmatic tradition of the Church, but based on intuition in the broadest sense, a kind of metaphysical imagination tending towards mythology. Sophia does not play a very prominent part in Nikolai's thought, and its role is fairly clearly defined as that of a created World-Soul;⁴ but the absence of sophiology is compensated for in the convolutions of the neo-Leibnizian theory of monads and their metamorphosis. Once again, the pull of organic and determinist thinking triumphs: Levitsky's opinion that,⁵ 'From the religious standpoint, Lossky's system is the most consistent system of pure theism carried out in Russian philosophy' is hardly

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1. And an insistence on the revealed character of certain dogmas, especially the trinitarian; v. 'History', pp. 257-8.
 2. 'History', p. 262; 'The World'..... ch. VII, esp. pp. 105-7.
 3. V. supra, p. 112.
 4. 'History', p. 266.
 5. Op. cit., p. 157.

tenable.

An adequate examination of Russian religious thought in this century would demand an extended treatment of the philosophy of Semyon Ludvigovich Frank (1877-1950), a convert from Judaism, a contributor to 'Vekki', and a close associate of Berdyaev.¹ However, this would require far more space than we can allow in the present thesis, and a very brief discussion must suffice. The main point of interest for our study is that Frank, like Berdyaev, is determined to distinguish the knowledge of God and of personality from the knowledge of objects and concepts, and is thus a profoundly apophatic thinker. Negative theology is not a conceptual discovery of God 'through the logical function of negation', but the positive apprehending of the supra-rational ground of all things, which itself has no determinate content:² it is the reason acknowledging its limits and yielding to the direct and self-authenticating meeting of the heart with the divine abyss from which its life derives. Neither of the two poles of the religious experience are 'objectifiable', both are 'beyond being'; and it is in virtue of this that we speak of personality as the image of God in man.³ Frank is critical of Hegel's objectifying of the supra-individual form of reality into a 'spirit' with a life of its own which dominates individuals as an external force.⁴ He is, in fact, far more Kantian than most Russian philosophers: the phenomenology of the knowing subject (not merely, as in Kant, the moral subject) demands the postulation of an absolute principle, 'immanent and constitutive' in the cognitive subject (to borrow Kant's own expression in the Second Critique), encountered as necessarily real by the subject,

1. For biographical information, v. Zernov, 'The Russian Religious Renaissance', pp. 158-163.

2. Frank, 'Reality and Man' (London, 1965), pp. 38-9, 41.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 105, 170, 219-20; c.f. 'God With Us' (London, 1946), pp. 140 ff., 151-4.

4. 'Reality and Man', p. 63; c.f. 'Ya "i" "my" (' "I" and "we")', 'Sbornik..P.B. Struve', pp. 446-7.

but not analysable according to any determinate conceptual content.¹

The reason is impotent, and yields to the 'heart' (an echo-conscious or not - of Kireevsky). All knowledge is encounter with the supra-rational cosmic whole ('vseedinstvo' again); it is recognised as such in introspection, which leads us beyond the realm of 'reality', both empirical and ideal, to the unfathomable ('nepostizhimo')² depth of personal being, where the two poles of God and the self, in eternal conjunction, are given.³

The 'natural' (reason, reality, being) passes into the 'supernatural', the metalogical and personal, without the radical cleavage which religious thought (especially in the West) has tended to postulate,⁴ 'metaphysical experience' becomes religious experience.

Once again, with Frank as with Berdyaev, the question of 'influence' on Lossky is not of primary importance. Frank's interest for us lies in his illustrating another form of that personalist reaction to abstract and determinist metaphysics that we have seen in Berdyaev, a more eirenic essay than Berdyaev's which does attempt to do justice to the necessary balance between the personal and the natural. The great difference between Frank and Lossky is in method: Frank is still attempting a solution very much within the terms of the Russian philosophical tradition (though, significantly, he seems uninterested in Sophia). His development of the distinction between the reason and the 'heart' is, in its way, a modification of the epistemological optimism of Soloviev, and makes possible a genuinely radical and personal apophaticism; yet it is still expressed in terms of what might be called revelation through introspection. He insists⁵ that we look to the God-man as described by Chalcedon for our

1. L. Ganchikov in the 'Enciclopedia Filosofica' (Florence, 1967), vol. 2, col. 1508-9, provides an excellent summary of Frank's epistemology and the deduction of the Absolute from the structures of conceptual and introspective thinking.
2. The title of Frank's major philosophical work (Paris, 1939).
3. 'Reality and Man', pp. 23-33, 38-41, ch. 3, passim, esp. pp. 88 ff., 94-5. 104; 'God With Us', pp. 74, ff.
4. 'Reality and Man', pp. 84 ff., 38 ff.
5. *Ib.*, pp. 139-40; 'God With Us', pp. 159-62.

paradigm of humanity, but it is clear that the person of Christ is, for him, rather a supreme instance of the general reality of 'Godmanhood' than an independent norm according to which the union of divinity and humanity, in man and the Church, is to be conceived. ¹ Again, his refusal to erect an impenetrable barrier between natural and supernatural is in danger of blurring the distinction between created and uncreated: Frank is prepared to emply Eckhart's language about the 'divine spark' in man, ² even to affirm that 'In its inmost depth, human spirit is not God's "creation" but His "emanation".' ³ He questions the religious and philosophical inadequacy of the doctrine of creation ex nihilo, allowing it only a 'negative' correctness (as excluding any notion of primary matter distinct from God), ⁴ criticises Aquinas for holding that God could have created a better world, ⁵ and proposes that the world is better regarded as the 'immanent expression' of divine creativity than as its 'result'. ⁶ There is clearly a current in Frank's thought which could be called pantheistic, ⁷ though, like Berdyaev and Bulgakov, he insists that there is a difference between pantheism and 'panentheism'. ⁸ Further, in 'Reality and Man', ⁹ he compares his 'Panentheism' to Palamism: the God we meet through 'reason' as 'immanent ground of universal life', through the 'heart' in Christian prayer and practice, and in history through the Incarnate Word is always - obviously - 'God-in-Relation'; yet given in these encounters is a sense of total transcendence, of which we can say, understand, and experience nothing directly. ¹⁰ God's being 'four us', 'God-and-the-world', does not exhaust 'Deity', the inaccessible inner 'fulness and harmony' of God, above and

1. Zenkovsky (II, p. 865) is critical of the way in which Frank, like Soloviev, 'converts the concept of Godmanhood, which has meaning in Christianity only on the foundation of the Incarnation, into a general metaphysical concept'.
2. 'Reality and Man', pp. 148 ff.
3. *Ib.*, p. 149.
4. *Ib.*, pp. 212 ff.
5. *Ib.*, p. 214
6. *Ib.*, p. 216.
7. And is so regarded by Zenkovsky, N.O. Lossky, and E. Barabanov (in the Soviet Philosophical Encyclopaedia, vol. 5, pp. 398-9.
8. V., e.g., 'God With Us', pp. 76 ff. 175.
9. P. 210, n.l.
10. *Ib.*, pp. 209-10.

beyond His involvement in creation; ¹ Frank is no 'process' theologian. This does indeed have ^a Palamite ring (and Lossky's comparison of Palamas with Eckhart is worth recalling here), and any judgement on Frank's 'pantheism' should take this aspect of his thinking into account.

Pantheist or not, Frank is never impersonalist. He clearly distinguishes personality from individuality, ² stresses that personal realisation is only achieved through self-sacrifice, ³ envisages catholicity as consisting in the perfect complementarity of diverse and unique particulars, ⁴ and considers Christianity as, par excellence, 'the religion of personality', introducing into human thought a dimension foreign to classical and oriental religion and philosophy. ⁵ Following from this, Frank criticises all models for divine omnipotence which are crudely 'political' or crudely philosophical, models which do not allow for God's kenosis in creation and redemption, ⁶ and all automatist and determinist views of salvation, insisting on the need for personal appropriation of redemption, 'synergy'. ⁷ And, in accord with his kenoticism, he regards the Church as most true to itself when it is 'a despised and persecuted minority'. ⁸ The Russian religio-philosophical tradition undergoes a sort of *perestroika* in Frank: cosmic mythology, Slavophil triumphalism, pseudo-mystical rationalism, all are transformed. And the result is not at all far from Lossky's theology: Frank's metaphysic is perhaps the nearest thing within the tradition to a resolution of its tensions, a reformist rather than a radical solution, and so still fraught with ambiguities. As Zenkovsky repeatedly remarks, it is very hard for a Christian thinker to do much with the idea of God as

1. *Ib.*, p. 226; note here a somewhat medalist idea of the Trinity, despite his rejection of Sabellianism.
2. *V. esp.* 'Reality and Man', pp. 23-4, 60-2; 'God With Us', pp. 48, 244-5.
3. 'God With Us', pp. 161-3, 184-5, 194, 205-9; "Ya" i "my", pp. 447-8.
4. 'God with Us', pp. 170-1, 250; c.f. "Ya" i "my", pp. 448-9.
5. 'Reality and Man', pp. 188-200; (God With Us), pp. 139-40. Note the importance given to Augustine in both these places, as the first great personalist thinker, and c.f. *supra*, ch. 4.
6. 'God With Us', pp. 196-7, 208-9.
7. *Ib.*, pp. 205-7, 209, 220.
8. *Ib.*, p. 280.

'vseedinstvo' without approximating to determinism and pantheism: Frank avoids it more successfully than most, but even he is, to some extent, the prisoner of an unsatisfactory method, and a confused and confusing terminology. Again, the historical dimension is sidestepped: unlike Sergei Trubetskoi, Frank does not consistently explore the corollaries of his personalism by looking to history and Christian tradition for help in the articulation of his religious thought. Yet it must be allowed that the tone of 'God With Us' is, throughout, that of a genuinely 'ecclesial' piety: Frank is like the Trubetskoi in this, at least, that his is a very deeply Orthodox mind, characterised always by a lucidity, a rationality, and a humility rare among Russian philosophers.

Frank serves to remind us of the interest taken by a small group of Russians in Neo-Kantianism at the beginning of this century. Frank's interest in Husserl,¹ whose methodology bears some comparison with his own, was shared by others, notably A.F. Losev (1892 - ?), whose major systematic work, 'Filosofiya imeni' ('A Philosophy of the Name'),² combines some highly traditional theological language, deriving from Denys, and Palamos, with a partly Neo-Kantian metaphysical framework which is not explicitly theistic.³ Losev demands a 'concrete dialectic' dealing in names, which are, as it were, bodily realities,⁴ rather than concepts. Dialectic is neither formal logic nor metaphysic (in the traditional sense), because it deals in antinomies (Losev has read Florensky), and so can provide the foundation for a new style of metaphysic treating of 'life', not abstract structures.⁵ Names are the tangible 'energemata' or 'energies' of the substances of things, externalising the inner 'logos'

1. V. Zenkovsky, II, p. 858.

2. Moscow, privately, 1927.

3. The exigencies of censorship in Moscow at the time may well account for the lack of direct theistic reference, and also, perhaps, for the unusual compression and obscurity of the book's style. N.O. Lossky ('History', pp. 294-5) provides a useful summary; and c.f. Zenkovsky, II, pp. 835-9.

4. Op. cit., pp. 13-14.

5. Ib., pp. 8-9, 15-17.

or 'eidos' of a substance, and, as such, 'identical with the substance'.¹ The name provides a symbol, a 'logical myth', enabling us to speak obliquely or 'apophatically' about the substance:² 'Symbolism is apophatism and apophatism is symbolism',³ neither agnosticism nor rationalism.⁴ The idea is then canvassed that the world as a whole is a 'name', 'word' or 'energem',⁵ that there must be in all things an 'eidos', a sophianic dimension analogous to artistic form, and that religious language is the most purely sophianic construction or interpretation of the world.⁶ However, since Losev has already characterised personalist interpretations of the world (presumably including religion) as 'mythical',⁷ the question of the truth of religious assertions is neatly avoided. Husserl, Florensky, and Pseudo-Denys are all referred to as sources;⁸ Palamas is never mentioned, but the terminological correspondence can hardly be coincidental.⁹ Losev is admittedly, something of a curiosity; I mention him because his use of Neo-Kantianism suggests (in conjunction with Frank's work) a direction in which Russian religious philosophy might have developed, profitably and interestingly, away from its bondage to Hegel, had more favourable conditions prevailed in Russia and the Diaspora. It is worth noting also that Lossky was not unfamiliar with Neo-Kantianism and the phenomenological school: he certainly read Husserl's 'Logic', and it is highly probable that, later on, he encountered some of Merleau-Ponty's early work;¹⁰ though I am not sure that we should be justified in concluding on such

1. *Ib.*, pp. 132-3.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 115-16.

3. *Ib.*, p. 121.

4. *Ib.*, p. 165.

5. *Ib.*, p. 166.

6. *Ib.*, p. 242.

7. *Ib.*, p. 218.

8. *V.*, e.g. notes, pp. 251-3.

9. Though whether Losev had studied Palamas directly, or knew him only through works like Bulgakov's 'Svet nevechernii' it is impossible to ascertain.

10. I owe this information to M. Oliver Clément.

slight evidence that this constituted a significant formative influence.

Lossky was, after all, an historian by training; and if we examine the thought of his teacher at Petersburg, Karsavin (1882 - ? 1952), we find that, while Karsavin's metaphysics seem to have made no noticeable impression, his concern with the patterns of religious history in Europe is very clearly reflected in his pupil's work. Karsavin's metaphysic is a fairly typical essay in the Russian tradition, in some respects close to Nikolai Lossky's system: he is another 'hierarchical personalist', seeing each man as a potential cosmos or Church, developing towards the realisation of 'vseedinstvo' in ever higher forms of organic unity.¹ Ultimately, individual corporeality, which is the sign of plurality and determinateness, merges with the 'external' body of man, the material world which we make part of us through the senses, and the whole is spiritualised.² All creation is 'theophanic', but, for Karsavin, 'the word "theophany" means... the manifestation of God in the creature in the sense that all the positive content of the creature is the content of the divine being: the creature in so far as it is something is ontologically identical with God'.³ God is 'vseedinstvo', and Karsavin does not qualify this with Frank's careful apophaticism: the pantheist - determinist element is very much to the fore. As Nikolai Lossky says,⁴ 'he has no conception of true and eternal individual uniqueness as an absolute value'; all development is a return - in Origenist fashion - towards the primitive unity of God. His trinitarian doctrine⁵ is stated in terms of the three stages of developing subjectivity, and is very similar to the views of Soloviev, Florensky, and Bulgakov. It provides a basis for what he has to say about the indefinable nature of 'the principle of personality'; but this 'principle'

1. Karsavin, 'Der Geist des Russischen Christentums' (von Buboff and Ehrenburg, I, pp. 307-77), p. 335; N.O. Lossky, 'History', pp. 306-9; Zenkovsky, II, pp. 848-9.

2. 'Der Geist...', pp. 328 ff.; N.O. Lossky, pp. 305-6.

3. N.O. Lossky, *ib.*, p. 313; c.f. Zenkovsky, II, p. 847.

4. *Ibid.*

5. V. N.O. Lossky, 'History', p. 302.

is envisaged as an 'essential' substratum (*ousía*) rather than the person as such.¹ There is no sense here of the particular person as a mystery, a 'surd', a unique reality; only a metaphysical thesis about what personality is, in the abstract, the mysteriousness of the laws by which it exists and acts.

Karsavin's is a system which combines many of the least intelligible and attractive aspects of the Russian tradition, and it is not surprising that it left no positive mark on Lossky. However, if we turn to the other aspect of Karsavin's work, his historical writings, we find far more of interest for our study. His book on the Fathers² is not a particularly reliable or scholarly essay, but it is of no small importance as adumbrating the patristic revival in 20th century Orthodox theology. Karsavin sees the significance of the Fathers in the fact that they do not develop private speculations (as did the heresiarchs), but speak for the consciousness of the whole Church;³ as might be expected, he takes a very Khomyakovian position on the question of authority and dogma, speaking in terms of the 'symphonic' union of individuals in the Church, denying that dogmatic definition is ever the voice of a mere numerical majority in the Church, and regarding dogma as the verbal expression of the 'fellowship of the Holy Spirit'.⁴ Khomyakov's insistence on the unity of knowledge and life in Christian faith is a keynote of Karsavin's exposition: 'Christian truth is the union of the believer with God Who is the total plenitude of Living Truth'.⁵ He sees the definition of personality as one of the fundamental questions at issue in the Arian controversy, suggesting that Arianism was operating with a limited and anthropomorphic view of personality and refusing to correct this view in the light of the orthodox teaching that 'absolute personality' is the foundation and norm for all

1. *Ib.*, pp. 302-4.

2. 'Svyati ottsy i uchiteli tserkvi' ('The Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church', Paris, 1925).

3. *Ib.*, pp. 6-7.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 126-7.

5. *Ib.*, p. 253.

created personal being.¹ The importance of the body's role in salvation is stressed; Karsavin devotes a chapter to Irenaeus, showing great concern with that writer's positive evaluation of the body,² and criticises Origen for failing to reconcile his metaphysics with Incarnational theology.³ Methodius of Olympus⁴ and Gregory of Nyssa⁵ are praised for correcting the Origenist imbalance; and the ideas of Gregory and Maximus on man as agent of the transfiguration of the cosmos are noted with approval.⁶ The importance of apophysis, especially in Irenaeus and Gregory of Nyssa, is stressed;⁷ Aristotle and Aristotelean logic are regarded as the root of heresy.⁸ Finally, the filioque (here fathered on Tertullian as well as Augustine) is condemned as confusing the hypostatic with the essential level of the life of the Trinity.⁹ Elsewhere,¹⁰ Karsavin enlarges on this, claiming that the filioque postulates a unity between Father and Son not shared by the Spirit, a suprapersonal bond between two of the persons which, in excluding the third, implicitly detracts from the dignity of the third; and thus the possibility of the deification of the world through the work of the Spirit disappears, since the Spirit is only derivatively divine. Creation being thus cut off from direct contact with God, man demands the security of an infallible hierarchical Church on earth; and, if this comes to be overthrown, all ecclesial forms and religious structures (including the use of Scripture as authoritative) vanish, sooner or later, and there is an irresistible descent into secularism and individualism. And this is precisely the fate of Western Christendom.¹¹

This argument is, in unmistakable outline, Lossky's polemic against

1. *Ib.*, pp. 154-6 (c.f. 'Der Geist...', pp. 352-3, where he suggests that *ὁμοῦς* is a more useful theological term than *ὁμοῦς*, as it is less anthropomorphic).
2. *Ib.*, ch. 4, summarised on p. 257.
3. *Ib.*, ch. 6, summarised on p. 259.
4. *Ibid.* (and p. 260).
5. *Ib.*, pp. 189-92 (and 266).
6. *Ib.*, pp. 192 ff. (and 266), 241 ff. (and 270).
7. *Ib.*, pp. 257, 265.
8. *Ib.*, p. 123.
9. *Ib.*, pp. 177-8, n.
10. 'Der Geist...', pp. 355 ff.; v. N.O. Lossky, 'History', pp. 310-11.
11. 'Der Geist...', pp. 360?3; v. N.O. Lossky, *ib.*, p. 311.

the filioque. So close are the correspondences that we may be practically certain that Lossky knew the pamphlet in which Karsavin advances these ideas; and a reference in M.T. ¹ establishes his familiarity with Karsa'vin's book on the Fathers. Again, although Karsavin considered that creative thought in Eastern Christendom was more or less over by the 6th century, and that Maximus is the last name worth considering, ² his views on the evolution of patristic thought and on the salient points in the theology of particular writers are very close to Lossky's; and patristic history persuades him, as it did both Bulgakov and Lossky, that catholicity is not coterminous with the voice of a majority. It is striking that Karsavin's patristic interests and the ideas provoked by his studies of the Fathers seem so oddly at variance with his metaphysics, the former suggesting, for instance, a higher valuation of personality, based on trinitarian presuppositions, and a higher valuation of the body than the latter appears to allow; and his patristic studies do not seem to have influenced his metaphysics at all. Here, yet again, we may see very clearly illustrated the radical tension whose development has been traced in the last two chapters; but what is strange in Karsavin's case is his failure to attempt any kind of integration of the two conflicting elements in his thought. Soloviev, the Trubetskois, Florensky, Bulgakov, Nikolai Lossky, and Frank all make some effort to balance the personalist and the determinist of pantheist impulses in their systems: Karsavin seems to despair of any synthesis.

If he did so despair, he was not alone; but others who felt such an irreconcilable polarisation were prepared to go further than Karsavin, and by-pass the whole metaphysical ethos that had evolved since Khomyakov.

1. P. 108, n.l.

2. 'Svyati ottsy'...', p. 270.

For men like Florovsky and Lossky it had become clear that all the essays in synthesis had failed, that the Hegelian - sophiological approach could no longer be accommodated in any way within an Orthodox framework. Their protest is, in many respects close to Berdyaev's repudiation of the Russian philosophical 'consensus', but, unlike Berdyaev, they seek a deeper integration into historical Christianity. They are very consciously the heirs of a tradition, looking back to Kireevsky and beyond, an alternative path in Russian theology. They regard themselves, in fact, as speaking for an 'ecclesiastical tradition', never quite stifled by 19th - century speculation; their appeal is not purely and simply to the patristic age or to Byzantium, but to the living voice of the Fathers in the ecclesiastical life of more recent times. Our final chapter is concerned with this 'alternative', theology.

CH. IX

THE ECCLESIASTICAL TRADITION

By the expression 'ecclesiastical tradition', I intend to designate that style of religious thinking in Russia which, on the whole, does not depend upon or regularly utilise the metaphysical vocabulary of Soloviev and his followers, but is developed with closer reference to Scripture, the Fathers, and the ascetical tradition. While not unconscious of the need for some kind of dialogue with Idealist and post-Idealist philosophy, it is fundamentally non-philosophical, and far nearer to what a Western divine would recognise as dogmatic and moral theology. It is very much a monastic theology, conscious, to a greater or lesser extent, of its roots in the liturgical and contemplative life; and as such, it is to be distinguished from the scholasticism of the 18th century academies,¹ the type of theology surviving in the works of Makary Bulgakov. Its earliest practitioners, the first generation to be brought up on the spirituality of the 'Dobrotolyubie', clearly influenced the thought of Kireevsky and Khomyakov; and, by the 60's and 70's, as we have already remarked,² the influence of these thinkers was being felt reciprocally in monastic and academic circles. It is an experiential theology, speaking often in terms

1. On this subject, in extenso, v. PRB, ch. IV, *passim*. On theological education in the academies in general, v. K. Kevā, 'L'enseignement théologique supérieur dans la Russie du XIXe siècle', 'Istina', 1956, pp. 249-286.

2. *Supra*, pp. 266-8.

of the 'knowledge of the heart', and a pastoral theology, with a great concern not to isolate itself from the needs of the whole people of God. And, not surprisingly, perhaps, it very rarely receives a systematic treatment, but tends to be expressed in 'occasional' and fragmentary forms—sermons, catechetical works, and brief essays. I do not propose, in the present chapter, to offer a comprehensive account of the various manifestations of this style of theologising in the 19th century; we shall concentrate our attention upon two prominent divines, one (Philaret of Moscow) in the earlier part of the century, the other (Antony Khrapovitsky) in the last decades of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, whose work most clearly exemplifies the characteristics we have outlined; and proceed to a consideration of the revival and systematisation of this theology by Fr. Florovsky, and its relation to and influence upon Lossky.

Vasilii Mikhailovich Drozdov (1782-1867), in religion Philaret, is one of the best known ecclesiastical figures of 19th century Russia. Even before his elevation to the episcopate in 1817,¹ he had gained a considerable reputation as a theologian and administrator; but it was chiefly as a preacher that he was remembered. His sermons are remarkable, full of Scriptural quotation and allusion, eloquent and often emotionally charged, yet always direct and lucid, never florid or pretentiously rhetorical. 'As a theologian and teacher, Philaret was above all a biblicist':² he was closely associated with the translation of the Bible into the vernacular, and his first published works were Scriptural studies.³ As a preacher, he is first and foremost an exegete, and appears to model himself upon the great preachers of the patristic age, notable Chrysostom and

1. As episcopal vicar in the eparchy of Petersburg; he came Archbishop of Tver in 1819, was transferred to Yaroslavl in 1820, and to Moscow in 1821. V. DTC, vol. 12, pt. I, cols. 1376 - 9, on his career.

2. PRB, p. 176.

3. Ib., p. 159.

Nazianzen; ¹ and his theology, like theirs, accordingly has an 'occasional' character. ² We can only pick out themes: it is pointless to attempt the construction or reconstruction of any system. Philaret had no taste for philosophy. ³ Insofar as he considers the question at all, he seems to side with Tertullian in separating Athens very firmly from Jerusalem: in a sermon on the Ascension, ⁴ he commends the example of those who, like Basil and Arsenius, forsake the wisdom of the world's academies for the true wisdom of the Gospel. Kireevsky was undoubtedly influenced by him, ⁵ and, in particular, his distinction between the proper spheres of competence of rational philosophy and theology may be indebted to Philaret. Philaret, however, is no irrationalist. He came to maturity in an age when romantic subjectivism was the fashion in matters religious; but, although he was familiar with the highly individualist devotional works popular at this time, ⁶ his Scriptural studies provided him with the necessary pole of unquestionable objectivity in religious living. We do not rely simply on the interior experience of prayer, for our prayer, must always be directed by Scripture; ⁷ if Scripture is properly regarded, it saves us from the chaos of individualism.

The watchword of Philaret's theology is, as Florovsky put it, ⁸ 'Scripture in Tradition', Scripture in the life of the Church, not Scripture as an isolated and oracular document. The creeds of the early Church are acceptable because the Fathers of the Councils spoke 'not in their own words and expressions' but in conscious dependence upon the language of Scripture. ⁹ And Scripture is itself 'the recording of Tradition....

1. *Ib.*, p. 168. In his published sermons, Chrysostom is quoted more frequently than any other Father.

2. *PRB*, p. 182.

3. *DTC*, vol. cit., col. 1376.

4. 'Slova i rechi.... Filareta', vol. I pp. 586-59a.

5. *PRB*, p. 255.

6. *Ib.*, p. 168.

7. 'Slova i rechi', vol. II, p.22a.

8. *PRB*, p. 178.

9. 'Slova i rechi', II, p. 54b.

the consecrated recollection of the Divine Word.... consolidated in writing'¹
 Scripture and Tradition are not two authorities, but the one voice of the
 Holy Spirit in the life of the Church. 'The Church continues Pentecost',²
 it lives by the Holy Spirit: Philaret emphasises the role of the Spirit
 in prayer, quoting Rom.8, 15. 3 and connects this with the Transfiguration.⁴
 Jesus is transfigured while He is at prayer, transfigured, therefore,
 in the power of the Spirit which fulfils and perfects the glory of His own
 (human) spirit; so we, following Christ and incorporated into Him, can
 open ourselves to the Spirit and so allow the light of Tabor to be
 revealed in us.⁵ By the Incarnation, the eternal glory of the Trinity
 is communicated to human nature in the 'hope of glory' which Christians
 possess in their life in Christ and in the Spirit: 6 God gives His own
 'image of glory' to man when He takes upon Himself the 'form of a servant'.⁷

Philaret very frequently refers to the 'kenotic' passage in Phil 2,
 and as Mme Gorodetzky has demonstrated at length,⁸ the theme of kenosis
 is fundamental to his thinking. The humility, self-sacrifice and obedience
 of the Son of God are constantly presented as the paradigms for Christian
 living; and the Mother of God is described as the perfect model of sacri-
 ficial obedience among redeemed humanity.⁹ This, however, does not
 imply any sort of question: rather should it be taken to direct us towards
 'activity through the will of God and the Spirit of God',¹⁰ 'Podvig' is
 an important concept for Philaret, understood as the expression of our
 'thirst' for God¹¹ in the daily taking-up of the Cross, the interior
 sacrifice of our entire being to God.¹² Christ's absolute self-sacrifice
 is manifested externally on Golgotha: but we also see Him 'anticipating

1. PRB, p. 178.

2. Ib., p. 180.

3. 'Slova i rechi', I, p. 306a.

4. Ib., pp. 69b-71a.

5. Ib., p. 71b.

6. Ib., pp. 4a-6a; c.f. pp. 26b-27a.

7. Ib., pp. 9a-10b.

8. 'The Humiliated Christ in Modern Russian Thought', (London, 1938)
 pp. 108-114.

9. 'Slova i rechi', pp. 153a-160b (two sermons on the Annunciation).

10. Ib., p. 159, a-b.

11. Ib., p. 256, a-b. 12. Ib., pp. 124a-127a, 250b-253b.

the external cross internally in the struggle ('podvig') of Gethsemane'.¹ And not only is His Incarnate life characterised throughout by kenotic obedience: the historical crucifixion is 'an earthly image and shadow of the heavenly Cross of love',² the Cross inscribed in the very being of the Trinity. The sermon in which occurs Philaret's famous phrase about the crucifying love of the Father, the crucified love of the Son, and the creative power of the Cross in the love of the Spirit,³ has as its text John 3¹⁶ ('God so loved the world....'): Philaret seems to imply that the love of God is, as we might say, absolutely kenotic, not so merely relatively to the economy of salvation; that God's love for the world as revealed in the sacrifice of Christ is the same in character as the mutual love of Father, Son and Spirit within the Godhead. And since, in the same sermon, he goes on to speak⁴ of the Spirit planting love in the believer's heart, we may assume that this is to be understood as the same kenotic love.. The demand for sacrificial obedience is balanced by an insistence on the sacrificial love which must underlie such obedience,⁵ and by the assurance that this is met by and grounded in the sacrificial love of God. The kenosis of Christ is not merely an example for us; it is the offering of a love to which we are moved to respond with the same love.

Lossky quotes Philaret with some frequency - on the Trinity, on the contingency of creation, on the glory of God,⁶ on the necessity of 'living the Creed', making the Tradition one's own,⁷ and so forth - and it is plain that he regarded him as an authority of major significance. In a lecture,⁸ he goes so far as to say that Philaret is as truly a Father of the Church as any of the great names of the early centuries, because he is

1. *Ib.*, II, p. 26b.

2. Quoted by Florovsky, 'O smerti krestnoi' ('Death on a Cross', 'Pravoslav'naya mysl', no. 2, 1930, pp. 148-187), p. 153, from the 1873 edition of Philaret's collected works, vol. I, p. 94.

3. *V. supra*, p. 34; 'Sléva i rechi', I, p. 30b.

4. *Ib.*, p. 34 a.

5. *C.f. ib.*, pp. 153a - 157a.

6. *V. M.T.*, pp.

7. 12/4/56, p. 15, 18/10/56, pp. 6-7.

8. 17/11/55. p. 17.

pre-eminently a man who has earned the right to speak for the Church by living the Tradition; he is not an independent or a speculative thinker, but a witness to the work of the Holy Spirit in the mind of the Christian body. It should be clear from even a brief examination of Philaret's theology that Lossky was heavily influenced by it: while allowing, with Mme Gorodetzky, that the 'kenotic' theme, in one form or another, is deeply ingrained in the whole Russian religious tradition, Philaret is indubitably foremost among those who attempted to give it some sort of properly theological articulation, and we must, accordingly, see his work as bearing considerable significance for Lossky's handling of the same theme. Philaret, unlike others who wrote on kenosis in Russia at the time, does not stop with the figure of the humiliated Christ, the homeless, poor, obscure wanderer of Russian religious folklore; nor is he exclusively interested, like the kenotic theologians of the Protestant tradition, in the laying-aside by the Word of His divine powers and privileges in His incarnate life. Indeed, he extends the notion back in-to the innermost life of the Godhead, seeing the Trinity in terms of radical self-sacrifice; and it is precisely this extension and deepening of the idea of kenosis which, as we have seen, is at the heart of Lossky's exposition of the relations between God and man. Philaret makes no attempt at relating his kenotic doctrine explicitly to a doctrine of the image of God and of personality: he is content to draw out the practical demands implied in his understanding of the love of God. However, his importance as a formative influence upon Lossky is very great in this sphere; and Lossky seems to have regarded him as a confirmation of the possibility of continuing, in the modern age, to do theology in the experiential, contemplative and pastoral style of the Fathers. Philaret witnesses to the staying-power of 'patristic' theology in the Church, and so is bound to be a significant

figure for anyone essaying a 'neo-patristic' system.

One writer in the same tradition who did make some effort to systematise the idea of the connexion between the kenosis of the Word and the vocation of man to fully personal existence was Metropolitan Antony (Alexei) Khrapovitsky (1863 - 1936) - a strange figure, combining great theological ability and pastoral sensitivity with a wholehearted commitment to the cause of political reaction and repression.¹ This ambiguity becomes a little more intelligible when we recall that, as a student and a young monk, he was a member of Dostoyevsky's circle, and was very deeply marked by the great novelist's tragic vision of man and despairing adherence to the principle of autocracy in practical politics.² The absolute voluntarism of Dostoyevsky's anthropology is capable of generating both the anarchic libertarianism of Berdyaev and the uncompromising authoritarianism of Antony: as Masaryk remarks,³ with (presumably) conscious paradox, there is an 'indeterministic fatalism' in the Dostoyevskian world, since all action, divine and human, has a basically arbitrary character. Because this arbitrariness is the inviolable root of all action, it is free from and outside of any given social order; and since it is profoundly threatening, autocracy may be the best way of containing it - unless, like Berdyaev, one is prepared to face the threat directly in a free society. Antony presents the odd, but not incomprehensible, figure of a man who is a reactionary because he believes in liberty. His only long work of 'academic' theology is a dissertation on the freedom of the will,⁴ in which he engages in a critique of Kant, and shows a considerable dependence upon

1. There is practically nothing of value written on Antony: Bolshakoff's memoir ('Irenikon', 13, 1936, pp. 558-577), & the monumental Russian biography by Bishop Nikon Rklitsky (10 vols., New York, 1956-63) are mostly hagiography. Zenkovsky, however, has a useful survey (II, pp. 586-7), & Florovsky's account (PRB, pp. 427-39) is characteristically thorough & perceptive, though (equally characteristically) critical & sometimes rather unjust.
2. PRB, p. 427; Bolshakoff, op. cit., pp. 560-1, 575-6.
3. 'The Spirit of Russia', III, p. 78.
4. Archbishop Antony, 'Polnoe sobranie sochinenii' (St Petersburg), 1911. Vol. III, pp. 5-121.

Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer's conception of a single, supra-personal will in the world provides the Archbishop with a useful model for speaking of the unity of human nature and of the universal misdirection of human willing; though, as Florovsky notes,¹ it is never made very clear how this cosmic will relates to the particular personal will, Antony sees conscience as grounded in the universal will, but seems also to locate there the root of evil inclination,² which rather jeopardises any notion of absolute freedom of choice. Florovsky concludes³ that Antony has no real doctrine of man, that he treats the Atonement in exclusively moral terms and ignores its ontological dimension: the patristic concern with the unity of human nature is diluted into the vagueness of 'ethical psychology', and the notion of original sin is almost completely absent.

However, Antony's soteriology and anthropology cannot be so summarily dismissed. It must be granted that his primary concerns are ethical (for which, ironically enough, he is commended by Masaryk);⁴ but this does not mean that he lacks a doctrine of the Fall or that his conception of the Atonement is moralistic or exemplarist. The distinction between person and nature is of fundamental significance for him, and he strenuously denies that it is merely abstract:⁵ the primitive ontological unity of human nature is indispensable to his theology, and he sees this unity as expressed in the general subconscious will, not as identical with it.⁶ Unfallen man enjoys perfect union with his neighbour; their unity of nature is consciously actualised, and it is this actualisation which is rendered impossible by the Fall.⁷ The objective communality of will, thought and action among men is broken, and persons separate themselves

1. PRB, p.429.

2. Ibid.

3. Ib., pp. 435-8.

4. Op. cit., II, p. 502, n.1; Antony and several contemporary theologians of similar views tended to emphasise the ethical corollaries of dogma and the dogmatic roots of ethics largely in reaction to the polemics of Tolstoy. On Antony's attitude to Tolstoy - in many ways, extremely sympathetic, - v. Bolshakoff, op. cit., p. 564.

5. 'Polnoe sobranie sochinenii', II, p. 22.

6. Ib., pp. 22-3.

7. Ib., p.25; there is a reference to Basil here, but no source is given.

from each other in the opposition between 'I' and 'not-I'.¹ Thus man loses the capacity for realising the image of God: God is three persons in perfect unity, and man's destiny is to reflect this trinitarian life in a community in which there are no barriers between ego and non-ego. The Atonement restores the image of God to man, restores, that is, the possibility of authentically personal existence and of life in community.² Christ establishes the Church as the image on earth of the Trinity, a community in which the freedom of each person finds fulfilment in the rejection of self-love.³ However, this is possible only because the Atonement has recreated the objective unity of human nature: The Church is not merely a 'school of Christian law', the new creation is not only an 'unconscious beneficent energy', mysteriously communicating Christ into men's hearts', it is a real 'obshchestvo',⁴ a community that exists over and above the salvation of each individual.⁵

All this is systematically presented in a brief treatise on 'The Moral Idea of the Dogma of the Church';⁶ and the basic notion of personality involved is set out in more detail in a parallel essay on 'The Moral Idea of the Dogma of the Most Holy Trinity'.⁷ Here, Antony insists on the derivation of his conception of the human person from revealed dogma: 'A person in our immediate knowledge is something absolutely distinct from every other person',⁸ and this apprehension of distinctness 'permeates every sphere of our interior world'.⁹ We are unable to conceive a world or a kind of life in which personal being is not characterised by mutual exclusiveness; and, for this reason,

1. Ib., pp. 20 ff (c.f. PRB, p. 429).

2. Ib., pp. 16-18, 22.

3. Ib., pp. 17 ff., 21, 24. 4. Ib., p. 27. 5. Ib., p. 23.

6. 'Nravstvennaya idea dogmata Tserkvi', ib., pp. 57-76.

7. 'Nravstvennaya idea dogmata Presvyatci Troitsy', ib., pp. 57-76.

8. Ib., p. 63.

9. Ib. p. 67.

our natural rational powers are utterly remote from the trinitarian dogma.¹ As Antony says elsewhere,² the notion of any transcendence of the opposition between ego and non-ego is a scandal and an absurdity to 'natural reason', with its ingrained individualism, self-sufficiency and self-love. The trinitarian dogma reveals a 'we' that is beyond 'I' and 'not-I', a union of subject and object in a shared subjectivity;³ and it is this 'we' which is the basis of life in the Church.⁴ It is the expression of a radically new nature, a new 'substance' ('sushchestvo') shared fully by a multiplicity of persons, no less real than the divine substance shared by the persons of the Trinity.⁵ Humanity is recreated by the union of manhood with Godhead, a union which is not the submerging of human personality in God 'which would be pantheism', but an infusion into human nature of the life and power of the Trinity; so that the vivifying force by which the believer lives is, in St Paul's words, 'not I but Christ', as the Scriptural imagery of the Vine and the Body suggests.⁶ The freedom of the will does not imply 'ethical autonomism', as Antony proceeds to demonstrate in a general essay on the moral foundation of doctrine:⁷ Christianity postulates a deep cleavage between the old and the new natures in man,⁸ and very definitely envisages the 'new' nature as directed and informed by the Holy Spirit.⁹ The imperative to love remains an external, quasi-legal obligation unless it is illuminated by the trinitarian dogma, which sets out the 'metaphysical foundation' of love, the objective model for personal relation, and which proclaims the possibility of such love for men who share the life of the Trinity in the Church of Christ.¹⁰

1. *Ib.*, p. 64.

2. In the essay on the Church; *ib.*, p. 24.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 65-8.

4. *Ib.*, p. 75.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ib.*, pp. 69-70.

7. *Ib.*, pp. 76-96.

8. *Ib.*, p. 91.

9. This theme is explored, though rather sketchily, in an essay 'against L. Tolstoy', 'The Ethical Basis of the Dogma of the Holy Spirit' (*ib.*, pp. 110-18).

10. *Ib.*, pp. 71-3, 76; and c.f. *ib.*, vol. I, pp. 97-100.

In his account of the Atonement,¹ Antony gives to Gethsemane a significance almost equal to that of Golgotha. The agony in the garden reveals to us the extent to which Christ shares in our human anguish, the extent, that is, to which He unites His personality with those of all who suffer. Florovsky rightly draws attention in this context to Antony's pastoral theology,² his insistence that love involves a genuine spiritual participation by the pastor in the sufferings of his flock, a sacrifice of the pastor's individual inviolability, the disappearance of his ego in the 'we' of shared suffering.³ Pastoral care is the imitation of Christ's kenotic identification with the agony of all men. In Antony's terms, Christ, by exposing Himself absolutely to the experiences of all other persons, decisively breaks down the barriers between men, both creating and revealing the new possibility of total spiritual communion. It is, in fact, the emphasis on Gethsemane rather than Golgotha which finally sets Antony apart (pace Florovsky) from the exemplarists: Christ's mental and spiritual agony shows us the interior reality of the Cross as more than an heroic voluntary death. It reveals the death of Jesus as objectively comprising the sum of human suffering; and thus as objectively establishing a new dimension of personality, as capable of this total openness, self-giving, and identification with others. Which is neither a moralistic nor a subjective picture.

The only context in which Lossky discusses Antony⁴ is in relation to his soteriology; and of this he is very critical, describing it as a 'théorie purement psychologique et très pauvre', and comparing it with the views of Abelard. He seems to have accepted Florovsky's judgment that

1. V. 'L'idée morale des dogmes de la Très Sainte Trinité, de la divinité de Jésus-Christ, et de la Rédemption' (tr. A.M. du Chayla, Paris, 1910) pp. 33-end, passim; PRB, pp. 427-30, 435-9.
2. PRB, p. 428.
3. 'Polnoe sobranie sochinenii', II, pp. 230, 240, etc.
4. 21/3/57, pp. 6-7, 12.

Antony is fundamentally an exemplarist, and clearly does not consider his theory to be deserving of extended treatment; and he remarks on the Metropolitan's lack of grounding in patristic theology. A possible reason for Lossky's attitude is that Sergei Stragorodsky, whom Lossky, as we have seen, held in very high regard both as a theologian and as a Church leader, had criticised Antony's soteriology in his own study of 'The Orthodox Doctrine of the Atonement' (1895).¹ It is also worth recalling that some aspects of Bulgakov's soteriology (especially his stress on the significance of Gethsemane) attacked by Sergei and Lossky in the Sophia controversy derive directly from Antony: Bulgakov's support would hardly have commended Antony's soteriology to Lossky. However, the correspondences between the theology of Antony and that of Lossky are quite extraordinarily close; so much so that it cannot but appear that - as in his attacks on Bulgakov - Lossky exaggerated his disagreement with Antony over the Atonement. It is, of course, perfectly possible that Lossky had not studied Antony's writings on the subject at all closely, and was relying on the rather less than detached accounts of Sergei and Florovsky. Even on this question, both Lossky and the Metropolitan are concerned to establish that Christ definitively transcends individuality and reveals the perfection of self-sacrificial personal being; and, although Antony's approach is undeniably more 'psychological', it is not the less objectivist for that. On other matters, their unanimity is striking: most notable of all their agreements is the view which they share of the Church as imago Trinitatis, its nature restored in Christ, and perfected in the free development in grace of each particular person, liberated from his ego. Antony has no explicit doctrine of the comple-

1. V. PRB, pp. 438-9. Lossky refers, in the lecture quoted, to Sergei's criticisms of various juridical and exemplarist doctrines, (including Antony's) but shows no signs of being influenced by Sergei's own presentation. Florovsky commends the work for its attempt to link theology with spiritual life, but deplores its failure to assimilate patristic thought at any more than the most superficial level, and its excessive concern with ascetical rather than dogmatic theology, psychology rather than ontology.

mentary economies of Son and Spirit, but some such picture is implied in his concern with the role of the Spirit in the moral growth of believers. Again, both insist that the trinitarian dogma and the authentic personalism deriving therefrom can be apprehended only by the *μετένοια* of the human mind in response to revelation; that is, that anthropology and theology alike depend upon revelation rather than reason, and grow out of a life of conversion to Christ. In spite of the philosophical interest noted by Florovsky,¹ Antony belongs with Philaret as a spokesman for an essentially experiential and traditionalist style, an avowed opponent of determinist metaphysics and impersonalist theology, a thoroughgoing voluntarist and synergist, and, as such, one of Lossky's most significant and interesting precursors.

Lossky was personally acquainted with Metropolitan Antony, and apparently on quite cordial terms;² but we can only surmise as to the extent of his direct knowledge of Antony's writings, especially his pamphlets on the Church and the Trinity. On balance, it seems likely that his attention was directed to certain characteristic themes in Antony's theology through the use made of them by Father Georges Florovsky. In spite of his pronounced hostility to so much in the Metropolitan's work, Florovsky, makes quite extensive reference to him in his own presentation of the idea of the Church as imago Trinitatis; and interestingly enough, Florovsky uses precisely the same patristic authorities on this question as does Antony.³ In an article written in 1931,⁴ Florovsky describes the

1. P.R.B., p. 427.

2. I owe this information to Father Florovsky.

3. V. 'Polnoe sobranie sochinenii', II, pp. 76, n.1 ('L'idée morale des dogmes'..., p. 32, n.1.) for Antony's patristic references; he admits as well he might - that the work of providing a patristic grounding for his theses is far from completed.

4. 'Boglovskie otryvki' ('Theological Fragments'), 'Put', no. 31 (1931), pp. 3-29; c.f. 'Yevkharistiya i sobornost' ', ('Eucharist and Sobornost'), 'Put', no. 19 (1929), pp. 3-22, esp. pp. 8-10.

central mystery of the Church as its reflection of the Trinitarian unity, the unity which Christ promises to the Church in Jn.17²¹⁻²³: a unity which transcends the opposition between 'I' and not I', in which every person shares with every other the wholeness of a single life. This 'trinitarian analogy' for the Church is to be found in the Fathers, especially Hilary of Poitiers in the West and Cyril of Alexandria in the East; and its chief proponent in modern times is Metropolitan Antony.¹ Precisely the same assertion appears in one of Florovsky's better known essays, the paper on 'Sobornost: the Catholicity of the Church' in the Anglo-Russian symposium, 'The Church of God',² and here again no more precise patristic authority is given. If we look at Hilary's de Trinitate, there is very little indeed to suggest anything like Antony's or Florovsky's theory;³ and Cyril in Johannem⁴ only touches very briefly on the idea of the correspondence between Church and Trinity, and does not develop it at all. When Florovsky comes to discuss Cyril's ecclesiology in his work on the later Greek Fathers,⁵ he connects this passage of in Johannem with the general tenor of Cyril's sacramental theology, which stresses the 'concorporeality' with each other and with Christ which is bestowed in the Eucharist. It is an ingenious synthesis of Cyril's thinking; but it is unmistakably a development of it rather than a strictly accurate historical presentation. Florovsky, like Lossky, is in the awkward position of being profoundly committed to a theological thesis which has only the slenderest support in the Fathers, while at the same time insisting vehemently on the need for a theology based on the Fathers.

In a way, this is perhaps more difficult for Florovsky than for Lossky. Florovsky has repeatedly set out at some length his belief in the necessity of a return, not merely to the Fathers in a general sense,

1. *Ib.*, p. 21.

2. pp. 60-61.

3. *Though v. de Trinitate VIII, 7-17 (PL 10, 241B, ff., esp. 241B-244A).*

4. PG 74, 551C-561C (on Jn. 17²¹).

5. 'Vizantiiskie ottsy', p. 55.

but, quite explicitly, to Patristic Hellenism, to the Christianised Greek thought forms and vocabulary of the early centuries. In his paper on 'Patristics and Modern theology', presented to the Congress of Orthodox Theologians in Athens in 1936, as we have already noted, ¹ he outlined his programme for a 'neo-patristic synthesis', his ideal for contemporary theology, and pleaded for a 're-Hellenisation' of Christian doctrine, looking not only to the divines of the first five or six centuries but also to their heirs in Byzantium - Palamas, Cabasilas and others: 'Let us be more Greek to be truly Catholic, to be truly Orthodox'. ² Already, in his study of the 4th-century Greek Fathers, ³ he had asserted that 'only in and from [the Fathers] does a true and faithful path appear towards a new Christian synthesis, that synthesis for which the contemporary age thirsts'; and, in PRB, he develops, with immense erudition, the historical grounds for his plea. PRB is designed to show how Russian theology, divorced from its patristic and Byzantine roots, degenerated first into lifeless scholasticism, divorced from spiritual and liturgical life, then, by way of reaction, into romantic subjectivism of various kinds. In the concluding chapter, Florovsky again sets out in detail his programme for theological renewal; and his first point concerns the need to undo the disastrous results of theology's capitulation to the temptations of the 'Russian soul', the historical 'irresponsibility' of Russian culture, the fallacious Slavophil identification of Orthodoxy with the faith of the Russian people. ⁴ This demands a rediscovery of the authentic 'Byzantinism' upon which Russian religious culture was first founded; ⁵ but this

1. *Supra*, p. 21.

2. 'Procès - verbaux', p. 242.

3. 'Vostochnye ottsy', p. 5.

4. PRB, pp. 500-504 (a French translation of this concluding chapter may be found in 'Dieu Vivant', 13, 1949, pp. 39-62).

5. *ib.*, ch.1, *passim*.

must not be mere imitative archaism. Florovsky quotes with approval ¹ the dictum of Newman: 'The Fathers are our teachers, but not our confessors or casuists'. We do not look to the Fathers for the solution of every particular problem that may confront the contemporary theologian, we look rather to the patristic 'style' as providing a method whereby we may face the questions of the day. 'Truly to follow the Fathers can be only creativity, not imitation'. ² And this creative following of the Fathers is possible for us because we live in the same Church as they did and do, we are members of the same catholic body: our calling is 'to grow into the Church', to realise, as did the Fathers in their day, the 'catholic consciousness' of believers. In the 'sobornost'' of the Church, the distinction between 'I' and 'we' no longer holds, and if this is so, and known to be so, for the theologian, he cannot be an individualist: he thinks with the mind of the Church, of all believers, and so is at one with all the great minds of catholic Christianity. ³ This in turn requires the theologian to attend to Christian history: Western theology, especially after the Reformation, shows a 'lack of faith in history', no sense of the history of the Church as a 'theandric process'. ⁴ The theologian must learn to accept certain historically given categories of Christian thought and life as absolutely valid, because they are bound up with the structure of the 'theandric' Church and so divinely authenticated; and by 'Christian Hellenism', Florovsky understands the ensemble of these 'given' categories. ⁵ 'Hellenism' is a 'a permanent category of Christian existence': it is not a narrow Graecophilia, but a commitment to the Hellenic character of dogmatic language, of the liturgy, and of Orthodox iconography, 'ecclesialised Hellenism'. ⁶ Florovsky allows that there is an anti-

1. *Ib.*, p. 506.

2. *Ibid.*.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 506-7.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 507-8.

5. *Ib.*, pp. 508-9.

6. *Ib.*, p. 509.

Christian Hellenism (found in thinkers such as Nietzsche), but insists that Hellenism as transfigured by the gospel in patristic and Byzantine thought is of more ultimate significance than 'Hebraism': he is critical of Ritschl and his Protestant contemporaries for their Hebraism - a reactionary ideology, since "Hebraism" in its true reality is already included in the Hellenistic synthesis itself.¹ In short, 'Theology can only be catholic in Hellenism';² and this is what has been forgotten in Russia.

Florovsky's programme thus has four cardinal points, 'all united aspects of one undivided task'³ - the patristic style, the sense of 'sobornost'' ('catholic consciousness'), historicism, and Hellenism. He dismisses the proposal that dogma should be re-stated in contemporary philosophical language as based upon a fallacy, the same fallacy as that underlying the Slavophil demand for a re-statement of the gospel in Slavonic cultural terms.⁴ It is absurd to suppose that the Church can escape from its history, and the 'naive eagerness' of some to cut themselves off from the inheritance of Hellenism is destructive of serious theological investigation.⁵ However, Florovsky's own early training was largely philosophical,⁶ and his theological attitudes rest upon a complex and sophisticated philosophical foundation, evolved largely in reaction to the thought of contemporary philosophers. He is even more radical a voluntarist than Antony Khrapovitsky: logical deduction, he maintains, is valid only if the world is a fully determinate system, and, if there is real freedom, indeterminacy, in the world, knowledge of the world is inexhaustible and provisional, and logic has only relative validity.⁷ This is a rejection

1. *Ib.*, p. 510.

2. *Ib.*, p. 509.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ib.*, pp. 510-511.

5. *Ib.*, p. 51.2.

6. For biographical information on Florovsky, and an admirable introduction to his thought, v. G.H. Williams's long article, 'Georges Vasilievich Florovsky', in the 'Greek Orthodox Theological Review', vol. XI, no. 1, Summer 1965, pp. 7-107.

7. *Ib.*, pp. 23-24 (referring to an essay of Florovsky's on 'The Foundations of Logical Relativism' written in 1924).

not only of the strict Neo-Kantianism of the Marburg School (for which Florovsky had initially had some sympathy), but of all kinds of idealism and rationalism; almost certainly, it is aimed in directly at the whole Russian tradition of the metaphysics of 'vseedinstvo'. In an article 'On the Metaphysics of Judgment' (written about 1925),¹ Florovsky argues that 'the question of the objective structure of judgment, in the last analysis, turns out to be concerned with the basic metaphysical aporia over necessity and freedom'.² If Spinoza is right, and nature is unum individuum, 'knowledge of the whole is converted into an analytic system':³ 'An area of indefinability in the distinctiveness of an object can exist only in this case, if the world is not a totality, not an individuum'.⁴ And if we affirm that in every object of our knowledge there is an inaccessible core, a 'subject in itself, of which nothing can be either affirmed or denied',⁵ we must allow that in the external world there is a radical indeterminacy and unpredictability strictly analogous to human freedom of will, the power to allot this or that disposition'.⁶

In accordance with this, Florovsky's philosophy of history⁷ is thoroughly indeterministic. He rejects the misunderstanding of Ranke which would subject historical enquiry to the norms of impersonal scientific method, and appeals to Croce, Marrou and Collingwood in support of a conception of history as a 'rencontre d'autrui', as concerned with 'the intelligent and purposeful character of human life and action'.⁸ Historical knowledge is 'existential knowledge', knowledge of other persons, not

1. 'Sbornik.... P.B. Struve', pp. 425- 37.

2. *Ib.*, p. 437.

3. *Ib.*, p. 435.

4. *Ib.*, pl 436.

5. *Ib.*, p. 431 (these words are, in fact, a quotation from Mansel's 'Metaphysics').

6. *Ib.*, p. 436.

7. V. his celebrated article, 'The Predicament of the Christian Historian', in 'Religion and Culture: Essays in Honour of Paul Tillich' (ed. W. Leibrecht, N.Y., 1959), pp. 140 - 166.

8. *Ib.*, pp. 149-50.

'objective knowledge, more geometrico'; ¹ which means that a 'definitive' interpretation of history is impossible, since it would deny the "historicity" of history', the perennial flux of past and present human activity with all its unpredictable potentialities for the future. ² 'All modern "philosophies of history" have been crypto-theological, or probably pseudo-theological: Hegel, Comte, Marx, even Nietzsche': ³ the historian cannot avoid ultimate questions, but he is constantly tempted to give a premature answer, an answer that claims absolute validity, but which, inevitably, excludes what is intractable in the past and indeterminate in the future. Historical interpretation involves judgment, response, commitment ('A refusal to answer a certain question is also an answer'); ⁴ and since Christ and the Church are 'given' in history, the historian must answer the challenge they present. The Christian historian does not claim a 'definitive interpretation' of history; but what he does claim is that his response alone to this challenge is 'proportionate to its actual dimension'. He alone has a sufficient 'catholicity' of vision. ⁵ What is more, he is able to allow each event in history its full, unique particularity: if Christ is the focus of history, His historical existence 'validates' all that has gone before and all that will come after, establishing all events as part of one single story. 'In this perspective of a unique and universal history, all particular events are situated in an irreversible order. "Singularity" of the events is acknowledged and secured'. ⁶ The Christ-event is not the end of history, ⁷ it reveals the

1. *Ib.*, p. 150.

2. *Ib.*, p. 154.

3. *Ib.*, p. 155.

4. *Ib.*, p. 157.

5. *Ib.*, pp. 157-8.

6. *Ib.*, pp. 161-2.

7. As Masaryk (*op. cit.*, II, p. 488) alleges; Florovsky may well have had in mind Masaryk's argument that Orthodox Christianity is a historical and passivist by nature.

positive significance of previous history, which prepares for and leads towards it, and of subsequent history which completes it in moving towards the eschaton. The life of Christ is eschatological because it is historical: only because it stands in the historical series can it bear the significance of being the key and the centre of the whole series.¹ And this implies very clearly that no section of the historical process can be dismissed as insignificant, that no area of human activity can be ignored. A theology of 'realised eschatology' - whether realised in Jesus, in the preaching of the Word, or in the sacraments - or of 'Consequent-eschatologie', treating post-New Testament history as an 'interim' period, will devalue the 'sacredness' of history and human action: it rests upon the distorted theology which would see God as the only real agent in the universe, and restricts man's role to penitent submission - which is not the New Testament picture at all.² 'Heilsgeschichte' continues in the Church's history; and the Church's history develops within the history of the world. Florovsky deplores the 'hyper-eschatologism' of some modern Protestant thought, which fences off secular history as merely political, and restricts significance to the internal history of the believer; such an attitude fails to recognise that 'man is becoming - or, indeed, is failing to become - himself precisely in his historical struggle and endeavour'.³ The Church is a prophetic body, the 'leaven of history': and the vocation of the Christian historian is to share in this prophetic task. This does not mean that he should be eager to detect 'providential' details in history: the hand of God is always hidden, even in the history of the Church, and the historian's purpose is rather the comprehensive grasp of all human action as within the Lordship of Christ than the identification of particular patterns as

1. Florovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 163-4.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 164-5.

divinely ordained. ¹

Florovsky's philosophy is, in almost every respect, directly opposed to what we have called the 'consensus' of Russian metaphysics. There is no place here for Sophia: Florovsky, in PRB, is critical of the sophiological schemes of Soloviev, ² Florensky ³ and Bulgakov, ⁴ and, in a paper on 'Christ, the Wisdom of God, in Byzantine Theology and Art', ⁵ argues that Byzantine theology had consistently identified Sophia with christ, and that, therefore, any idea of Sophia as a separate principle has no foundation in genuinely Orthodox tradition. Indeed, his main complaint against Florensky is that the latter's magnum opus has no chapter on Christology. ⁶ Florovsky's own thought is nothing if not Christocentric: even his conception of the Church as imago Trinitatis rests primarily on the shared incorporation of believers into Christ, Whom he calls ⁷ the 'Person' of the Church. Lebouvier, in his study of Florovsky's ecclesiology, notes ⁸ Florovsky's fondness for quoting Augustine on this subject and his approving use of Karl Adam's dictum, 'Christ, le Seigneur, est le propre "Je" de l'Eglise'. Although the Spirit is seen by Florovsky as the ground of the objective union of Christians, ⁹ there is never any doubt that the Word is of first importance: the Spirit is the 'continuum', so to speak, in which the Church hears and interprets the Word, and realises its life in Christ. ¹⁰ Florovsky has a strong sense of the restoration of man's nature in the 'baptism of the Spirit' whereby men appropriate

1. Ib., p. 166.

2. PRB, pp. 314-17

3. Ib., pp. 497-8.

4. Ib., pp. 493.

5. In 'Résumés des rapports et communications du sixième congrès international des études byzantines' (Paris, 1940), pp. 255-60.

6. PRB, p. 495; 'Tomlenie dukha', p. 104.

7. 'Bogoslovskie otryvki', p. 26.

8. Yves-Noël Lebouvier, 'Perspectives russes sur l'Eglise. Un théologien contemporain: Georges Florovsky' (Paris, Centurion, 1968), pp. 75-6.

9. 'Bogoslovskie otryvki,' pp. 19-20; 'Sobornost....' pp. 58-9.

10. V. esp., 'The Work of the Holy Spirit in Revelation' ('The Christian East', vol. XIII, 1932, pp. 49-64). The distinctly Barthian tone and vocabulary of this article may be partly due to the effects of Florovsky's meeting with Barth in the summer of 1931 at Bonn.

the benefits of Christ's death: ¹ the objective newness of humanity in Christ and the Spirit is, for him, as the Greek Fathers, the strict corollary of a soteriology which emphasises the Atonement as the restoration to man of the hope of *ἀφθαρσία*, victory over death and corruption. And this almost biological model leads Florovsky to criticise Antony Khrapovitsky for his stress on the sufferings, rather than the actual physical death of Christ. ² It is the death of Christ which is the *ἡνίοχος σωτηρίας*: 'In the death of the Saviour, the impossibility of death for Him is revealed', ³ and the power of death is thus broken by its inability to 'hold' the Son of God. Thus, the Resurrection is the immediate fruit of Christ's death and descent to Hades, ⁴ and, in the Resurrection, *ἀφθαρσία* is finally and irreversibly secured for human nature.

However, although nature is thus healed by the 'compulsion of grace', the human will (contra Metropolitan Antony) is not redeemed by any kind of compulsion. 'Each one must be united to Christ personally and freely', each human will must purify itself by voluntary co-operation with the grace of God, by ascesis, self-renunciation, 'podvig'. ⁵ 'Podvig' is an important concept in Florovsky's system, expressing his fundamental conviction of man's capacity for free and creative action. ⁶ Although Florovsky is, as we have seen, profoundly concerned with the idea of 'sobornost' as the created 'image' of divine unity, ⁷ his primary interest in anthropology is man's creative and unpredictable freedom as the image of God. Christ restores the image of God to humanity above all because He is free from the determinations of fallen nature, free from 'passions', and so free from the necessity of death: He overcomes death because He dies voluntarily, and death has, therefore, no 'right' over Him. ⁸ His

1. 'O Smerti krestnoi', pp. 165-6.

2. *Ib.*, p. 155.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 169-70, 175.

3. *Ib.*, pp. 177-9.

4. *Ib.*, pp. 179-180.

5. V.G.H. Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25, 63-64, etc.

6. 'Yevkharistiya i sobornost'', pp. 8-9.

8. 'O smerti krestnoi', pp. 150-151.

whole life is 'podvig', a conscious, creative act of love, totally willed.¹ Incorporation into Christ does not determine our lives, but opens to us the way of freedom: we must avoid a 'naive objectivism' which leaves God as the sole worker of our personal salvation, and look, not for an annihilation of the self, but for its transfiguration, by a life of 'podvig', into its true, unique selfhood. The more clearly, fully and exactly man beholds the person (or 'face' - 'litse') of God, the more clear and living is his own particular personality', the more fully the image of God is revealed in him.² A recurring theme in Florovsky's works on the Fathers is the failure of the various heresies to do full justice to human freedom and creativity, whether in the Origenism of Arius and his followers,³ or in the 'passivism' implicit in the thought of the Monophysites and Monothelites;⁴ and, accordingly, he draws attention to the interest of various of the Fathers in freedom, as the image of God.⁵ In his discussion of the ascetical writers of the early Byzantine period,⁶ Florovsky stresses their extreme voluntarism and the 'dynamic' character of their conception of salvation: grace acts progressively, gradually actualising the freedom which is at first only a 'natural image', formal and potential,⁷ in an unending process, an eternal advance 'from glory to glory',⁸ Also significant is their insistence on the role of the body in the life of grace:⁹ the very realist and objective soteriology of the Eastern Fathers, with its focus on the resurrection, strictly implies a positive evaluation of the flesh, a view of man as a 'psycho-physical unity'. 'Flesh without spirit is a corpse and spirit without flesh is a phantom':¹⁰ physical death is an obscuring of God's image in man, since this image is, as Palamas affirmed, the whole man.¹¹ The transfiguration of the body and of the

1. *Ib.*, pp. 151-2.

2. 'Bogoslovskie otryvki', p. 8.

3. 'Vostochnye ottsy', pp. 9-12.

4. 'Vizantiiskie ottsy', pp. 7, 35-7.

5. 'Vostochnye ottsy', pp. 158 (on Gregory of Nyssa), 209-10 (on Chrysostom), 231-2 (on Ephrem Syrus) etc.

6. 'Vizantiiskie ottsy', ch. VII

7. *Ib.*, pp. 149-50, 154-6, 173.

8. *Ib.*, pp. 182-3. 10. 'O smerti krestnoi', p. 158. 11. *Ib.*, p. 161.

9. *Ib.*, pp. 158-9 (p. 159, n. 2., refers to Palamas's Capita 63, 66 and 67).

material world are necessary components of any orthodox doctrine of the Atonement. ¹

Florovsky's personalism is very much in evidence in his attitude to Scripture, Tradition and ecclesiastical authority. Scripture is the mediation to us of the voice of God through direct human response and witness: it records God's self-revelation to man and man's answer to God, an answer which 'God desires, expects and requires'. ² This answer, however, is itself not purely human, because it is given in the context of a real relation of 'intimacy' with God, in faith and contemplation; it is given from within the Church which God establishes by His Word and by the gift of the Spirit. ³ The Gospels - especially the Fourth - are more than merely historical recollection, they are 'the charismatic memory of faith': 'In this experience of living communion with Christ, historical recollections are themselves transfigured, - the heart recognises in Jesus from Nazareth the God-man and the Saviour'. ⁴ Tradition is no more than the extension of this 'charismatic memory', the life of the Spirit, in which the body of believers hears the Word and interprets its Scriptural expression: ⁵ Tradition is, in patristic and Orthodox thought, absolutely inseparable from Scripture, Basil's distinction between *δύγματα* and *κηρύγματα* sometimes used by Western apologists to defend the 'two-source' theory of revelation, is definitely not a distinction between Scriptural and 'Traditional' doctrines; ⁶ though we may legitimately speak of a distinction between dogma and the non-dogmatic expressions of faith in the life of the Church, especially liturgy and iconography. ⁷ Tradition belongs to all believers; but the hierarchy does have a potestas magisterii, the right to speak for the catholic wholeness of the Church. The episcopus in

1. V., e.g. 'Protivorechiya origenizma', passim; 'Yevkharistiaya i sobornost' pp. 5-6, 13-14, 19-20; 'Vizantiiskie otsy', p. 227 (on Maximus) etc.

2. 'Bogoslovskie otryvki', pp. 3-4. 3. Ib., pp. 5-6.

4. Ib., p. 11.

5. Ib., pp. 23-5; c.f. 'The Work of the Holy Spirit in Revelation', passim.

6. V. 'The Function of Tradition in the Ancient Church' (Greek Orthodox Theological Review', IX pp. 181-200).

7. 'Bogoslovskie otryvki', p. 12; 'The Work of the Holy Spirit...' pp. 61-2.

ecclesia is the focus of this wholeness, and it is his task to witness to Catholic Faith, never to propound personal opinion; his authority is not ex sese. Neither is it a consensu ecclesiae, however: it is from Christ. The 'reception' of dogma by the Church raises some problems, as dogmatic truth is never to be settled by a majority vote; but even when plurality of teaching appears, all is well so long as the fundamental unity of 'life in Tradition' continues. ¹ There can be no 'external authority' in the Church, no power whereby dogma may be imposed. 'Authority cannot be the source of spiritual life'. In the Church, the community of 'sobornost' the imago Trinitatis, the division in the 'natural consciousness' between the claims of freedom and of authority disappears in the 'concrete union' of love. ²

Florovsky's theological system is indisputably a major intellectual achievement, philosophically systematic and supported with a uniquely impressive display of historical scholarship. Its range is a good deal wider than Lossky's, and it is more 'programmatic' in character, more painstaking and explicit over questions of methodology. Lossky's debt to Florovsky is patently very great: the concept of the Church as imago Trinitatis, the rejection of 'sophiological determinism', and the stress on the world's contingency, the concern with Christ as the restorer of man's objective nature, and with the transfiguration of the material cosmos, the refusal to divide Scripture from Tradition, and the insistence on the foreignness of 'external' authority to the Church, all these are themes which Florovsky had developed before Lossky had begun to write on dogmatics, and there is a clear relation of dependence. Apart from these broader themes, correspondences appear also in points of detail, common reference and quotations, common assumptions. Lossky, in 'La Tradition et les

1. 'Bogoslovskie otryvki', pp. 25-27.

2. *Ib.*, pp. 27-8 (c.f. pp. 22-3).

traditions' follows Florovsky in discussing Basil's distinction of *δύματα* from *καρσύματα*; he follows him in alleging that Gregory of Nyssa (with others) considers it impossible to define the image of God as being found in any one human characteristic; ¹ in condemning the retrogressive Hebraism of much Protestant theology; ² and so on. Their understanding of catholicity is virtually the same, they show the same concern to defend a synergist model of grace and free will, and their Christologies (with their consistent denial that Christ possessed a human hypostasis) ³ shown an equal dependence upon Maximus and the neo-Chalcedonians in general. What is more, Florovsky states explicitly what we have seen to be at the foundation of Lossky's doctrine of man, the intimate connexion between Christology and anthropology. In the first chapter of 'Vizantiiskie ottsy', ⁴ Florovsky designates the end of the 4th century as the beginning of a new Christian epoch, in which the Christological question was to come to the fore; and adds that, since one of the problems now raised was that of the humanity of Christ, the whole anthropological question was raised at the same time. Christological heresy is based on either a 'maximalist' or a 'minimalist' view of the capacities of human nature, the former producing Nestorianism, the latter Monophysism; Christological orthodoxy demands, and, properly, implies a correct Christian anthropology, allowing human freedom its due, but not exaggerating its scope.

Florovsky, however, does not lay much stress on the significance of the term 'hypostasis' in this connexion. In 'Vostochnye ottsy', ⁵ he notes the supra-logical character of personal being, as expressed in the trinitarian hypostases, and elsewhere ⁶ remarks on the novelty of the idea

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1. V. 'Vostochnye ottsy', p. 159, and M.T., p. 116; supra, pp. 121-112.
 2. V., e.g., T.D.A.; 29/11/56, pp. 17ff.; & c.f. Florovsky, PRB, p. 510, etc..
 3. Florovsky ('Vizantiiskie ottsy', p. 26) speaks of an 'asymmetry' in Christ; v. G.H. Williams, op. cit., pp. 66-70.
 4. Pp. 5-6.
 5. P. 80.
 6. 'Bogoslovskie otryvki', p. 17.

of personality in the ancient world and its absence from classical Hellenism; but nowhere are these points as fully developed as they are by Lossky. Florovsky is unquestionably a 'personalist'; yet he does not use personality as an absolutely central and controlling notion in his system. He has written very little on trinitarian theology, so that we cannot look for a close link between this and his anthropology: in spite of his use of *imago Trinitatis* for the Church, there is really next to nothing on man as imago Trinitatis in Lossky's sense. Nor has Florovsky much to say about apophysis, though he does emphasise the need for receptivity to the Word of God in 'the silence of faith, the silence of contemplation'.¹ There is nothing which quite corresponds to Lossky's concern with apophysis as and the connexion of this with his whole doctrine of personality. It is a little paradoxical that Florovsky should criticise Lossky for overschematising his theology - for being, in effect, too cataphatic. Florovsky's extreme Christocentrism leads him² to question Lossky's theory of the 'two economies', and to accuse him of proposing a real separation between the work of the Son and the work of the Spirit; but I trust that enough has been said in earlier chapters to demonstrate the unfairness of such a charge.³ Florovsky, in fact, discusses Lossky's ecclesiology without any reference to its relation with the whole of his theology, and in particular neglects its context in Lossky's general doctrine of personality.

Florovsky's influence on Lossky was great,⁴ and Lossky goes so far as to call him 'le plus grand [théologien orthodoxe] peut être de cet époque';⁵ but we should not minimise the difference between the two men, nor should we regard Lossky as a disciple and imitator of Florovsky.

1. *Ib.*, p. 8.

2. In 'Christ and His Church'; c.f. Lelouvier, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-6, 65-6.

3. *Supra*, p. 99; etc.

4. M. Clement has emphasised to me the special importance for Lossky of Florovsky's two volumes on the Fathers.

5. 13/12/56, p. 10.

Florovsky's Christocentrism is, ultimately, at odds with Lossky's theology of the Spirit and the Church, at odds, too, with his understanding of personality in the Church: Florovsky's notion of Christ as the Person, the ego, of the Church is precisely the view which Lossky finds so uncongenial in Khomyakov. Christ becomes a Cronos devouring his children,¹ swallowing all particular human persons in His own person. Florovsky would certainly repudiate such an understanding of his ecclesiology, and it is clear enough that such a model would be repugnant to him; but his language must be admitted to be ambiguous and potentially misleading. As with Metropolitan Antony's 'general will', there seems to be here a faint trace of the traditional Russian temptation to undervalue the particular and subordinate it to the general. Florovsky stresses, again and again, the radically contingent nature of events, and the 'irreducibility' of human freedom: the 'surd' in his world is a formal category of action. For Lossky, however, what is 'irreducible' is the person itself; the 'surd' is the agent, the whole ensemble of his subjectivity. In a way, these two approaches are complementary: but Lossky has the securer grasp on the absolute value of the particular subject, the total impossibility of subordinating it to a 'higher' principle. And again, we see the curious similarity between Lossky and Berdyaev, recalling the latter's protest against 'hierarchical personalism'. Lossky has not quite Florovsky's philosophical expertise, but there is in his work an originality and a synoptic vision which we do not always find in Florovsky. Florovsky's theological system can be fairly characterised as a 'neopatristic synthesis'; Lossky's, finally, is that and more. Even allowing for the extensive metaphysical underpinning of Florovsky's theology, and bearing in mind his abjuration of a 'theology of repetition',² there are

1. 'A l'image', p.185 (by some slip of the pen, Lossky has 'Ouranos' for 'Cronos').

2. V., e.g., 'St Gregory Palamas and the Tradition of the Fathers' ('Sobornost', Series 4, no. 4, 1961), p. 172.

times when he can appear almost as an anthologist of patristic auctoritates. V.N. Ilyin, reviewing 'O smerti krestnoi' ¹ remarked: 'One might say that, like the Talmudists of old, the author erects around the evangelical theme a gigantic wall of patristic literature', and it is this utterly uncompromising adherence to the letter of patristic 'Mishnah', ratified by appeal to the sacredness of 'Hellenic' categories in theology, that sets Florovsky apart from Lossky more than anything else. Our final assessment of Lossky must allow considerable weight to Florovsky's influence: but nowhere does the essence of Lossky's independence and originality appear more clearly than in comparison with the massive and erudite synthesis of the older man. There is, even in M.T., a freedom from theological archaism not often to be met with in Florovsky.

1. 'Put', no. 30 (1931-2), p. 89.

Conclusion

Lossky's theological development was very heavily conditioned by his involvement in controversy. He first attracted attention in the Orthodox world as the opponent of Bulgakov; & it was in the role of a major spokesman of the 'neo-patristic' movement that he achieved recognition as a theologian of importance. However, the opposition between 'Idealists' & 'neo-traditionalists' seems, in the light of our investigations, to be far too facile a distinction. We have seen that even Florovsky, the most systematic of the neo-traditionalists, writes as a contributor to the same debate as that in which Khomyakov, Bulgakov and Frank are involved, the debate over the relation of the person to the community - church or nation - and the historical process. Neo-traditionalism is a reaction to the impasse of Russian religious metaphysics, to the insupportable tensions between voluntarism and determinism, personalism and organic collectivism, a reaction which takes the form of a total rejection of the categories accepted in 'classical' Russian philosophy; but this rejection is designed to open the way to a more satisfactory solution of the very same tensions.

Confronted by the problems of Russian metaphysics in the system of Bulgakov, Lossky appeals to the Greek patristic tradition for a theological language that avoids the conceptualism and determinism apparently endemic to much of Russian philosophy, while providing also an adequate conceptual tool for discussing the genuinely significant questions raised by Bulgakov and his precursors. Initially, his tendency is to claim that the patristic tradition provides an alternative set of answers more or less as it stands, that patristic 'personalism' is a relatively clear and fully worked-out theological option. However, as his thought matures and becomes increasingly unified, these early claims are - as we observed in Part I -

modified. There emerges the outline of a theological system which is centred upon a highly sophisticated and nuanced doctrine of personality whose relation to the patristic understanding of *ὑπόστασις* is admitted to be less straight forward than had previously been alleged. And it is at this point that Lossky's deep indebtedness to the tradition of Russian metaphysics becomes clear. The reiterated insistence of Khomyakov, Soloviev, the Trubetskois, Bulgakov, Karsavin, Nikolai Lossky and others that the personal and the collective are not to be seen as opposites but as complements, that the destiny of the particular and that of the general are not to be separated and assessed in mutual isolation, is at the root of Lossky's personalism. The instinct of Russian metaphysics to look for a 'catholic' synthesis receives in Lossky a properly & autonomously theological articulation, purged of that obsession with the model of cosmic organism which had irritated previous attempts at a balanced solution. Lossky's genius is most apparent in his linking of the sense of 'catholicity' to the theological basis of Orthodox asceticism, and, ultimately, to the evangelical demand for self-renunciation; and his grounding of this in the tradition of apophysis. The keynote of his theology is the vision of man as defined by his capacity to 'image' God's self-renunciation as shown in His Trinitarian life, His creation of the world, His life on earth, and His work in each particular human soul, to respond to this self-renunciation in the *ἐκστασις* of contemplation, and the *κοινωνία* of life in the Church. And this is a synthesis which knits together the historical Orthodox theology of asceticism, Cappodocian trinitarian theology, Dionysian apophysis, Maximian synergism, the incarnational and 'existential' thought of Palamas, and the positive achievements of Russian religious philosophy. Lossky's kenoticism reminds us of the peculiarly deep sensitivity in Russian Christianity to the 'humiliated Christ', and of the remarkable theological achievement of Philaret in expressing this; but Lossky provides far more than a statement of a devotional emphasis

in his understanding of kenosis. He is able to connect Philaret's practical and Scriptural exhortations to a genuinely systematic theory of the relations between God and man, without losing the personal immediacy of Philaret's essentially pastoral theology. In this respect, he stands very close indeed to Antony Khrapovitsky; but his work has an historical perspective which Antony's lacks. Again, Lossky's historical sense owes much to the influence of Florovsky; yet his commitment to the givenness of Christian history does not preclude a flexibility in his approach to it which is not always evident in Florovsky's work.

Lossky can only be fully understood against the background of Russian intellectual history. His turning to the Fathers is, at first, an almost self-conscious adoption of a novel and radical theological style, cutting through the gratuitous mystifications of Russian Hegelianism; yet he continues to read the Fathers with Russian eyes. This is not at all to deny his real independence of 'Slavophil' theology. It is a greater tribute to his originality and creativity to recognise the rich diversity of the elements which he incorporates into his theology than to exaggerate his distance from his immediate intellectual milieu. Even though Lossky himself, resolute controversialist to the last, would have been reluctant to admit such a diversity, the student of his work may, perhaps, legitimately attribute to him a greater openness than he knew he possessed. If we see in Lossky an unusually felicitous union of 'tradition and the individual talent', we should remember that his tradition is complex and manifold; and recognises, accordingly, the powerful comprehensiveness of his talent.

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