THE PATRISTIC CONCEPT OF THE DEIFICATION OF MAN EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF CONTEMPORARY NOTIONS OF THE TRANSCENDENCE OF MAN

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D.Phil. Thesis
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the proposition that there is a correspondence between the concept of human self-transcendence and the concept of the deification of man in that both are concerned with the bringing of human nature to its fulfilment by a process of 'redemption'.

The first issue addressed is what it means to speak of man participating in divinity, and this notion is then traced through the religion and philosophy of the ancient classical world and the later Graeco-Roman world as the background against which early Christian doctrine emerged. Some modern interpretations of the notion of transcendence as it relates to the human existent are then reviewed, with particular attention being given to the suggestion that it is legitimate to speak of man rather than God as the 'locus' of transcendence by virtue of the inherent openness of human nature to the transcendence of being that meets it in its ex-sisting in being.

The second, third and fourth chapters examine the development of the concept of deification as a way of speaking of humanity being brought to a resemblance to God, partaking of the divine nature, and thereby being enabled to realize the image of God in which man was originally created.

The fifth chapter investigates the contributions of a selection of contemporary thinkers on the notion of man's quest for fulfilment by the process of self-transcendence, that process of overcoming the aspects of being human which compromise and threaten actual human existence.

The final chapter shows how the insights of contemporary thought on the concept of self-transcendence can illuminate for us the patristic concept of deification as a way of speaking about the nature and destiny of human existence and the thesis concludes with a suggestion of three areas of contemporary investigation to which this study might be related.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to consider the quest for human fulfilment as it is presented in the concept of the deification of man illuminated for us by what contemporary thinkers refer to as the concept of human self-transcendence. Our investigation is a theological enterprise within the Christian tradition and therefore the basic premise from which we begin is a 'theocentric' understanding of human nature, that is, the belief that man was originally created in the image and likeness of God, and that human life if it is to be truly human must be lived in relationship with God, the source of all being.

There is however a 'problem' in being human, and that problem has to do with our awareness of being estranged or cut off from God, our awareness of the finitude and contingency of our existence. But human beings also have the capacity to reflect upon their experience of being in existence, of being aware of and open to being itself, that which is external to oneself, and that is to be aware of transcendence, as an experience of transcending oneself and being transcended.

It is the contention of this study that the process of overcoming the alienation inherent in the human condition, a process which we describe in the terminology of contemporary thinkers as self-transcendence, is in fact a process of 'redemption' in which there are many parallels with that process of restoration to the divine similitude and participation in the divine nature which the fathers of the early church termed deification.

The course and scope of our examination is outlined in the first chapter in which we examine what it means to talk of relationship between humanity and divinity and, in particular, of humanity participating in divinity. This notion is then traced through in the religion and philosophy of the ancient classical world and the later Graeco-Roman world, in which such participation was understood as man becoming a divine being and being accorded divine honours. We have described this process as divinization, of a very different order from the doctrine that emerges in the teaching of the early fathers, for which we reserve the term 'deification' - the process in which human beings realize, in a deepening relationship of communion with God, that image of God in which they were made. We then take up our examination of some modern interpretations of the concept of transcendence as it relates to the human existent and we give particular attention to the idea that by virtue of his openness to the transcendence of being itself, man becomes the locus of transcendence, and that by examining the human experience of existence we discover that human self-transcendence reveals for us the meaning of transcendence itself, and opens up a richer understanding of the way in which we relate to God and he relates to us.

In the second, third and fourth chapters the development of the concept of deification is analysed from its roots in the Old and New Testaments through to its full flowering in the classic formulations of the fathers of the fourth century. The earliest insights into what emerged as a doctrine of deification appear in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers and the Apologists where various forms of union with God possible for the faithful to enjoy in this life are explored. But it is in Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and in Origen that the concept begins to take shape as an actual participation in the divine life made available through the incarnation of the Logos and the continuing working of the Holy Spirit. Where God is at work in the life of man, there is fully human life to be found as a continuing process of salvific recreation, for man when found in God will always go on towards God in whom he finds true being.

By the acquiring of divine knowledge and the exercise of that knowledge in educating and training his free-will and his capacity for self-determination, man, created in the image of God, is enabled by the grace

of God to progress and grow towards that communion with divinity that actually deifies human nature.

The third and fourth chapters are devoted to an analysis of the concept of deification in the fourth century. Chapter three considers the writings of the major witnesses, Athanasius and the three Cappadocian Fathers. It is in the works of these fathers particularly that we find the classic formulations of deification as a doctrine, formulations which are as careful to define what deification is not as they are to explain exactly what it is. In the fourth chapter we examine a number of other fourth century witnesses in whose works deification appears, not as a central doctrine or issue in debate, but as a concept to which reference is made more casually, indicating its wide acceptance as a means of illuminating other doctrines, particularly the doctrines of man, incarnation and salvation. By way of contrast, reference is made to the writings of the Antiochenes John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia who prefer the terminology of divine sonship to that of deification, although they both witness to a real and intimate union of the faithful with God, particularly by participation in the sacraments. This survey concludes with a consideration of the writings of Cyril of Alexandria, for whom deification was a significant element in his theology and spirituality. In Cyril's teaching deification involved a physical inhabitation, effecting a transformation of the creature by a process of participation in the life of God, overcoming the forces of alienation which had overtaken man since the fall.

This analysis reveals that in their exposition of the notion of deification the fathers drew on other doctrines, namely creation and redemption and incarnation, focusing on the incarnation as the perfect relationship of participation and communion between God and man resulting in a unique union in which deity became enfleshed in human nature and humanity became deified. And by their incorporation into Christ by Christian initiation and participation in the sacraments of the church, and by their continuing life 'in Christ', Christians are enabled 'by grace' to participate in the divine life, to partake of the divine nature, and so come to that 'deiform' life which is human life at its most truly human - humanity deified.

Chapter five returns to the theme of human transcendence and traces the development of the notion of human self-transcendence in the writings of various modern philosophers and theologians from Karl Marx in the nineteenth century to the twentieth century theologians Bernard Lonergan and Karl Rahner. In these writers we find the same quest for truly human living being pursued in a variety of ways, all of which use the model of human self-transcendence as the means of bringing about the redemption of human nature from its alienated and de-humanized condition into a state of genuine human fulfilment. It is claimed that this quest for self-transcendence is of the very nature of being human and is related, according to the presuppositions of the particular thinker, to man's self-realization by his social, material and economic conditions, or in the more subjective analysis of the existentialists, to his emergence from all that inhibits and negates authentic human existence into an experience of truly human being, open to the transcendence of being itself, achieving a truly actualized self. For the theologians whom we have considered, self-transcendence is more specifically that process whereby man makes actual the mystery of salvation, and realizes the potential divineness that is inherent in the human being. In Lonergan's thesis human transcendence is related to the process of knowing, going beyond the domain of proportionate being to a new and higher integration of human activity, and in Rahner this knowing becomes the actualization of man's infinite potentiality and thus the unfolding of his own infinity. By his absolute openness for being man becomes the place of possible revelation, or rather, the event of God's absolute self-communication.

It is Rahner who brings us back to the incarnation as the focus of God's self-communication and as the point of reference for our understanding of transcendental human nature, in a manner that is parallel to the way in which the early fathers saw it as the definitive mode of deification. This highlights for us the parallel between the event of the incarnation of God on the one hand and the self-transcendence of man, understood as spirit with a desire for absolute being, and in fact the self-transcendence of the whole spiritual world into God through God's self-communication on the other. Since man is the being who is absolutely transcendent in respect of God, anthropocentricity and theocentricity are one and the

same thing but seen from different sides. Man's self-transcendence becomes identified with the self-communication of God, and God's immanent activity within man bringing about his deification becomes the event of man's humanization, the bringing to fulfilment by God of all that is given in the human condition.

The concluding chapter of the thesis shows how these insights from contemporary thinkers on the concept of self-transcendence can illuminate for us the patristic concept of deification as a way of speaking about the quest for human fulfilment in terms of a process of growth or emergence into a relationship of union with the transcendent divinity of God. By considering three parallel elements in the two concepts of deification and transcendence it is argued that there are reasonable grounds for describing the quest for human fulfilment as a process of deification, and that those grounds are illuminated for us by what we have discovered about contemporary notions of the self-transcendence of man. With these parallels and links between patristic theology and contemporary thinking established, the final section of the chapter suggests three areas of contemporary theological investigation - the doctrines of man, God, and Christ - to which the present study might be applied in the hope that the discussion opened up in the thesis might be taken up in those three areas which are so naturally drawn together in an enquiry considering the quest for human fulfilment as the work of God becoming man in Christ, in order that by his incorporation into Christ man might become god.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACO	Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum, ed. E.Schwartz, Strasbourg, 1914ff.
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers, ed. J.Quasten and J.C.Plumpe, London, and Westminster, Maryland, 1946ff.
ANCL	Ante-Nicene Christian Library, Edinburgh, 1864ff.
ANF	The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to AD 325, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, revised by A. Cleveland Coxe, Grand Rapids, 1981ff.
CCSG	Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca, Turnhout-Leuven, 1977ff.
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, Turnhout, 1953ff.
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Louvain, 1903ff.
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Vienna, 1866ff.
ET	English Translation
FC	The Fathers of the Church, ed. A.J.Deferrari, New York, 1947ff.
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte, Berlin, 1897-1941; Berlin and Leipzig, 1942-1953; Berlin, 1954ff.
GNO	Gregorii Nysseni Opera, ed. W.Jaeger, Berlin and Leiden, 1921ff.
GOTR	Greek Orthodox Theological Review, Brookline, Mass., 1954ff.
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature, Newhaven, Conn., and Boston, 1881ff.
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies, London, 1900-1905; Oxford, 1906-49; NS, Oxford, 1950ff.
LCC	Library of Christian Classics, ed. J.Baillie, J.T.McNeill, H.P. van Dusen, Philadelphia and London, 1953ff.
LCL	Loeb Classical Library, London, and Cambridge, Mass., 1912ff.

LF	Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, ed. E.B.Pusey, J.Keble and J.H.Newman, Oxford, 1838-1888.
LNPF	A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, Buffalo and New York, 1886-1900; reprinted Grand Rapids, 1980ff.
NS	New Series
OECT	Oxford Early Christian Texts, gen. ed. Henry Chadwick, Oxford, 1970ff.
PG	Patrologia Graeca, ed. J.P.Migne, 1-161, Paris, 1857-1866.
PL	Patrologia Latina, ed. J.P.Migne, 1-221, Paris, 1844-1864.
RHE	Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique, Louvain, 1900ff.
RSV	Revised Standard Version translation of the Holy Bible.
SC	Sources Chrétiennes, Paris, 1943ff.
SJT	Scottish Journal of Theology, Edinburgh, 1948ff.
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur, Leipzig, 1882ff.
WS	Woodbrooke Studies 1-7, Cambridge, 1927-1934.
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, Giessen, 1900-32; Berlin, 1933ff; Beihefte, Giessen, 1923-34; Berlin, 1936ff.

CHAPTER ONE

DEIFICATION AND ITS POSSIBLE RELATION TO HUMAN TRANSCENDENCE - AN INITIAL EXPLORATION

'Man is not absurd. It would be nearer the truth to say that he is divine.'[1] With that assertion David Jenkins began the seventh of his 1966 Bampton Lectures, and he then went on to develop the idea that all anthropology is inevitably theology. In establishing his grounds for maintaining that anthropology ultimately extends into theology, Jenkins expanded on his introductory statement about the divineness of man, as follows:

> I would certainly claim that a careful inspection of, and reflection on, the most characteristically human aspects of the human situation provide much that can legitimately be taken as evidence of the divineness in man. This divineness is derived. Moreover, it is a divineness which is not only derived but also largely potential only, for it is the divineness of a creature who is emerging out of materiality and history as a personal pattern capable of forming relationships which are ultimately fulfillable in a relationship of union with the uncreated and transcendent divinity of the true God himself.[2]

This claim, that man is divine and that his divineness is both 'derived' and 'largely potential only', because it is the divineness of a creature who is 'emerging' as a 'personal pattern capable of forming relationships which are ultimately fulfillable in a relationship of union with the... divinity of the true God himself', sets the course and indicates something of the scope of this thesis in which we shall endeavour to examine just what it means to speak of man as being 'divine', conducting our examination in the light of contemporary notions of man as 'emergent' or transcendent.

In the postscript to his lectures in their published form David Jenkins summarized his main argument, which had investigated the two questions 'What is really involved in being a man?' and 'What is truly involved in believing in Jesus Christ?', as: 'the case for maintaining that the only experiment which gives room enough for truly human living is the experiment into God'.[3] The course for this present thesis involves an examination of that 'experiment into God' in terms of a concept which

occurs again and again in the writings of the early church fathers: the concept of 'deification'. But our examination is also concerned with the reason for and the outcome of that experiment, which is the goal of 'truly human living', that quality of life described in St John's Gospel as the reason for and outcome of the life of Jesus (God's experiment of being a man): 'that they may have life and have it abundantly'.[4]

Curiously, it is in the same chapter of St John's Gospel that we find the incident in which Jesus is threatened with stoning by the Jews because they saw him as the deluded victim of what they understood as the blasphemy of deification: 'because you, being a man, make yourself God'.[5] And this very incident brings into sharp focus for us the problem of both the terminology and the concept of deification. Is it not a blasphemy for anyone in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, with its emphasis on monotheism and the essential distinction between God the creator and his creatures, to think in terms of 'deification' - becoming, or being made, God? Was that not the very issue which the earliest strand of the Genesis narrative presents as the cause of the rupture in the relationship between God and man: that man should succumb to the temptation to make himself, or become, 'like God'?[6]

What do we mean when we speak of 'divineness in man'? What are we saying about the divine-human relationship when we talk of 'deification'? The very word has been described as 'not only strange, but arrogant and shocking' to modern ears,[7] and the concept condemned as 'quite unbiblical' and 'thoroughly objectionable',[8] 'the most serious aberration... the disastrous flaw in Greek Christian thought'.[9] Taking heed, therefore, of Eric Osborn's warning that 'it is a waste of time writing on deification unless some attempt is made to elucidate the problem',[10] we shall in this present chapter endeavour to establish just what the concept means, and thereby clarify what it does <u>not</u> mean, first with a word about terminology, and then by considering the concept itself: what it means for those who use it today, how it has developed from its earliest known references in ancient classical authors, through various modifications and interpretations among the

classical Neoplatonists, on to its incorporation as an accepted doctrine among the fathers of the early church. We shall then conclude the chapter by addressing ourselves to the notion of man as an 'emerging' creature, in order to trace the outlines of that 'pattern capable of forming relationships', and to see what it means to speak of such relationships being 'ultimately fulfillable in a relationship of union with the divinity of the true God himself'.

But first, a word about terminology. In the conclusion to his study on salvation in the works of Gregory of Nazianzus, Donald Winslow, pointing out the difficulties in attempting to define the term and the concept 'deification', describes it as a 'dynamically fluid term that is descriptive of the creative and salvific economy as well as of the relation between God and creation'.[11] Winslow explains that deification will not suffer the limitation of strict definition, and he therefore settles for a verbal 'approach' to the idea, an approach that recognizes

> as a methodological base, that 'deification', both as a word and as a concept, is, like most theological language, a <u>metaphor</u>. It is, in a word, the verbal modality by which the distance between reality and our manifold attempts to describe reality is minimized, but never totally eliminated.[12]

In determining what deification is <u>not</u>, in order to clarify what it is, Winslow briefly describes four types of occurrence of deification found in non-Christian literature, occurrences to which we shall make reference later. Because there are these non-Christian parallels to the Christian theological usage of the term and the concept, we shall in this thesis, where possible, distinguish beween the two by reserving the word 'deification' (and its verb form 'deify') for the concept as it is understood, with all its particular nuances, in Christian thought, as man's participation in and assimilation to God, by the grace of God. The word 'divinization' (and its verb form 'divinize') will be reserved for those references to the concept in non-Christian contexts when it is taken to mean the transformation of man into a divine being. It is acknowledged that this distinction is somewhat arbitrary, because many writers use the words 'deification' and 'divinization' as synonyms; the major Greek lexicons give both English words for the various Greek words used to refer to the concept:

ἀποθέωσις, ἐκθέωσις, θεοποίησις, θέωσις, and συναποθεόω [this last word, the verb, does not appear to exist in noun form];[13] and finally, the Oxford English Dictionary makes no distinction in the meanings of the two words, giving the meaning 'to make or render divine, to deify' for the word 'divinize', and the meaning 'to render godlike or divine' for 'deify'.[14] Nonetheless, because there is a definite distinction between the way the concept is used in Christian and in non-Christian writing, we shall endeavour to make the distinction clear by observing the verbal convention we have proposed. This will not be possible, of course, when making direct quotations from authors who use the two terms interchangeably, but in these instances the meaning will be obvious from the context.

Professor P.B.T.Bilaniuk, in a short article on the development of the concept of deification, attempts to make a distinction not only between the two English terms 'deification' and 'divinization', but also between the two Greek terms θεοποίησις and θέωσις. He suggests that in the Alexandrian tradition, faced with the threat of Gnosticism, there was a 'Christianizing' of the Greek ideal of the assimilation of man to God by means of knowledge (gnosis), and this true gnosis, the perfect understanding of the heavenly doctrine revealed by the incarnate Logos, '"divinizes" or even "deifies" the Christian',[15] according to Clement of Alexandria. Bilaniuk then goes on to assert, without any evidence to support his case, that

> this Alexandrian type of gnosis was not conceived as a union or divinization which identified the gnostic with God, therefore it was not a deification properly so called, even if an improper term θεοποίησις (deification) was employed in this instance. The proper term "theosis" or divinization came into use at a later date.[16]

This claim is not only misleading, it is also totally without foundation on several grounds. First, there is no evidence to suggest that the Greek word θεοποίησις was distinguished in meaning from the word θέωσις (Lampe's Patristic Greek Lexicon gives both 'deification' and 'divinization' as the meaning for both Greek words). Secondly, the noun form θεοποίησις was never used by Clement of Alexandria, nor by any of the other early Alexandrians, in fact it does not occur until about two hundred years after Clement, and then only in the works of Athanasius, in three places in his Orations against the Arians,[17] which

were composed probably some time during his third exile (356-362);[18] and as for the noun θέωσις, it appears first in the writings of Athanasius' contemporary Gregory of Nazianzus, in three of his Orations,[19] belonging to the period 379-381 - hardly significantly later - and certainly in no sense as a 'proper' term to correct the 'improper' use of θεοποίησις. Thirdly, while neither of the noun forms θεοποίησις nor θέωσις was used until the fourth century, the verb forms of both words, θεοποιέω and θεόω, were used interchangeably by Clement[20] and later writers[21] without any suggestion of distinction and without any specific comment as to one term being preferred to the other. And finally, it is important to point out that there were other Greek terms used to express the concept of deification: συναποθεόω which occurs as early as Eusebius of Caesarea,[22] ἐκθεόω from Clement[23] onwards,[24] and the much more common verb constructions ποιέω θεὸν and θεὸν γίγνεσθαι, to say nothing of a number of other terms to express assimilation or likeness to God (θεοειδής, θεοείκελος and ἐξομοίωσις) or participation in the divine nature (μετέχω θεότητος and θείας κοινωνὸς φύσεως). For these reasons we would seem to be justified in our hesitation to make any assertion about specific meanings of any of the Greek terms or constructions used to express the concept of deification, and we would also seem to be justified in confirming the claim that the concept itself escapes strict definition. But none of this affects our earlier decision, to reserve the English term 'deification' for the concept we are discussing when it is used within the context of Christian theology to refer to the process of man's assimilation to God (regardless of the Greek terms used), and to restrict use of the term 'divinization' to refer to the concept as it was understood among non-Christian writers of the classical and patristic periods.

One further word on terminology, or to be more exact, typography. Of all the various phrases used to describe the notion of deification, one of the most common is also the most problematic, and that is the phrase 'becoming god', often printed 'becoming God'. Without at this point going into a detailed analysis of the linguistic and theological issues involved here, we would simply point out that throughout this thesis we

shall use this phrase with the lower case 'g' in 'god', because it seems to be the best way of avoiding the possibility of the phrase being misunderstood as suggesting that in being deified man ceases to be a human being and is transformed instead into the divine being we designate by the word 'God'. The theological implications of this matter will be discussed fully later in this chapter, but for the present we merely draw attention to the convention we are adopting, with the qualification, as before, that direct quotations from other sources which do not observe this distinction will be reproduced in their original form.

Having established our terminology, we must now consider briefly the meaning given to the notion of 'divineness in man' by contemporary theologians, before tracing the history of the concept - first as it was understood in the classical (non-Christian) world (and here we shall be employing the term 'divinization'), and then as it emerged within the Christian tradition - noting the modifications and variations of interpretations that it underwent in the process until it became recognizable as the specifically Christian concept for which we shall reserve the term 'deification'.

Despite the great difficulty that many western theologians seem to have with the notion of 'divineness in man',[25] the concept is of fundamental significance in the understanding of the nature and destiny of man in the Eastern Orthodox tradition. In this tradition one of the basic doctrines in its theological anthropology is that man, originally created in the image and likeness of God, was intended to enjoy fellowship with God the creator and is therefore called by God to realize that destiny by adopting a way of life involving belief, faith and practice, by means of which each person is brought to his or her individual fulfilment in God. The means by which this end is achieved is referred to as 'the process of deification', because it first involves the restoration of fellowship with God, and then continues as a process of participation in the life of God by the renunciation of all that is not of God, a process of ascent and communion whereby man is enabled to achieve a 'divine similitude'. The achieving of this

assimilation to and union with God means a union with the divine energies, not with the divine essence; it is a mystical union between God and man which is a true union but not a fusion of natures into a single being. However closely he is linked to God, man still retains his full personal identity and integrity, he 'becomes god' by the gracious activity of God, but he does not cease to be human. Rather, he becomes more truly human, enjoying that quality of humanness that was intended for him by God and which can only be achieved in union with God.[26]

This view of man is described by the Orthodox theologian, John Meyendorff, as 'theocentric', a vision of man

> called to 'know' God, to 'participate' in His life, to be 'saved', not simply through an extrinsic action of God's, or through the rational cognition of propositional truths, but by 'becoming God' [sic]. And this theosis of man is radically different in Byzantine theology from the Neoplatonic return to an impersonal One: it is a new expression of the neo-testamental life 'in Christ' and in the 'communion of the Holy Spirit'.[27]

As we examine the concept of deification and its development throughout the patristic period, we shall see that this theocentric view, which regards man not as an autonomous self-sufficient being, but as a creature whose very nature is truly itself only inasmuch as it exists 'in God', has a dynamic thrust. This process of participation in God is by its very nature a process of growth, a process of 'emergence', in which man is enabled to form relationships which find their 'natural' fulfilment in 'a relationship of union with the uncreated and transcendent divinity of the true God himself'. Meyendorff describes this as the 'essential openness of man':

> It is a challenge, and man is called to grow in divine life. Divine life is a gift, but also a task which is to be accomplished by a free human effort.... Thus there is no opposition between freedom and grace in the Byzantine tradition: the presence in man of divine qualities, of a 'grace' which is part of his nature and which makes him fully man, neither destroys his freedom, nor limits the necessity for him to become fully himself by his own effort; rather it secures that co-operation, or synergy, between the divine will and human choice which makes possible the progress 'from glory to glory' and the assimilation of man to the divine dignity for which he was created.[28]

The idea of man participating in divinity goes back as far as one can

trace the human religious quest. The notion that gods lived an ideal life of perfection and happiness seems, from the most primitive times, to have stirred a latent desire in men to share that life and so presumably participate to some extent in the blessings or attributes of deity, such as enjoyment of sublime pleasures, exercise of various powers, and freedom from suffering and death. Among the earliest accounts we have of mortals being admitted to the realm of divine blessedness otherwise inaccessible to the majority of mankind, are references in the Homeric epics, the Iliad and the Odyssey, to the handsome youths Orion, Cephalus and Tithonus being carried off by Eos, goddess of the dawn, to her abode in the heavens,[29] and to the young Ganymede carried off by Zeus to be enlisted in the personal service of the gods,[30] and to Ulysses being offered immortality by the nymph Calypso.[31] In contrast to the fearful horror of the life of Hades to which most mortals were to be assigned at their death, the dream of limitless pleasures associated with the realm of the gods was always enticing, and was popularized in epics and myths. The Greeks were not content to leave their gods in an unfathomable haze as awesome powers of mystical existence, they portrayed them instead in particular anthropomorphic terms. Gods were deemed to be really like men, treading hills and fields, taking part in human affairs, begetting human children. Thus there seems to have been a movement in both directions: the ancient legends told of gods coming to earth and of men being admitted to fellowship with the gods, and, in the case of particular heroes or rulers, men being admitted to the company and even to the number of the gods.

The one formal qualification necessary for admission to the Greek pantheon appears to have been the existence of a cult in honour of the new god, and here it would seem there was little if any distinction between the expressions of gratitude and reverence offered to heroes and those made to the gods.[32] The basic difference which separated men from the gods was the attribute of immortality, and therefore when, by special favour, certain mortals were admitted to this state, the abyss between men and the gods was crossed, and the way opened for what was to become more regular interchange between the divine and human realms.

The mystery religions of the sixth and fifth centuries BC gave formal cultic expression to such interchange in the ecstatic rituals associated with Dionysus, Orpheus, Demeter and Persephone, involving in some cases sacrificial meals at which the participants ate flesh and drank blood in which the god was believed to be present. In such rituals of communion, the soul was believed to 'come out of itself' and become united to the god and share with him the divine life. In these 'mysteries' the opportunity for union with the divine (ἔνθεος), once reserved for the heroic or the élite, became available to any devotee of the cult. The uninhibited orgiastic revelry of the rituals of Dionysus was gradually modified by the Orphics, whose cultus was more spiritualized and ascetic, substituting forms of mental ecstasy for the physical intoxication of the Dionysian rites. Orphic ceremonies included purification rituals and forms of abstinence, intended to nurture the 'heavenly' part of man in the 'good life', by means of which the individual would eventually become one with the god, when the soul after death obtained eternal bliss. The alternative, for those who turned away from the good life, was temporary or permanent torment in Hades.

As deathlessness had been regarded as the distinguishing characteristic of the gods, so the possibility of deathlessness for the soul of individual 'mortals' gave rise to the idea that the human soul is in some sense a divine being imprisoned in the mortal body as punishment for some pre-natal offence. It was on these grounds that the author responsible for the inscription on the Thurii funeral tablets declares that in death his soul has been released, he has passed from mortality to deity and is now of the kindred of the gods,[33] and similarly, the philosopher Empedocles claimed divine honours.[34] That the living could now claim divine status (as distinct from actual divinity) and expect to be accorded the honour formerly due to gods alone, was a sign, not of an increasing religiosity, but of the growth of rationalism and scepticism. For many in the Greek world of the fifth century BC the traditional forms of worship appear to have become mere formalities, emptied of meaning as acts of religious devotion, and although there

were always some who still held to the piety of earlier times, an increasing number felt no restraint in offering these traditional honours to living mortals. As Bevan observes,

> So far as the old gods remained as figures for the imagination, anthropomorphism had gone a step further....Scepticism had in fact brought anthropomorphism to its ultimate conclusion by asserting roundly that the gods were men, as was done by the popular Euhemerism. The gods, according to this theory, were kings and great men of old, who had come to be worshipped after their death in gratitude for the benefits they had conferred. On this view, there was nothing monstrous in using the same forms to express gratitude to a living benefactor.[35]

The first recorded instance of formal religious worship being addressed to a living man was, according to the chronicler of the early third century BC, Duris of Samos, when Lysander, about the end of the fifth century BC, became the object of a cult in Samos.[36] Other cases of such 'divinization' occurred, as when in the mid-fourth century Dion was received as a god on his entry into Syracuse,[37] and when the tyrant Clearchus compelled his subjects of Heraclea to approach with the devotions appropriate to a god.[38] But by far the most significant instance of divinization in the ancient world, with the most far-reaching consequences, was the apotheosis of the young conqueror Alexander of Macedon in the later fourth century. Anxious to cement the diverse parts of his empire, Alexander, drawing upon precedents from Persia and Egypt, not only received emissaries bearing crowns, which indicated that they understood themselves to be θεωροί approaching to a god; he also claimed divinity for himself, receiving little opposition of any significance, it would seem, except from those conservative groups who protested against such extravagant flattery as profane, but even these critics were prepared after Alexander's death to acknowledge his apotheosis as properly in accord with Greek tradition.[39]

Those who had worshipped Alexander as a god within his lifetime were ready to pay the same honours in some form or another to his successors, but again this was resisted by the pietists and some intellectuals. It is important to recognize, however, that the Greeks had no idea of any divinity in kingship per se. The proffer of divine honours from the fourth century BC appears to have had more to do with the recognition of a personality whose pre-eminence impressed or

terrorized the world and secured the loyalty of those who were to benefit from the guarantee of good-will and protection. The assumption of deity by the rulers in question secured also a sort of legitimacy of their relationship with the otherwise independent but 'subject' Greek states.[40]

With the gradual transition and centralization of political power from the Hellenistic kings to the new leadership in Rome, the Greeks in the eastern states and provinces transferred their homage, in the forms of religious worship familiar to them. The cultus of the goddess Rome replaced that of the rulers of the local states, and by the last century BC it seems to have been usual for local Roman governors to be rewarded with cults and festivals by the peoples under their rule. But for the old Romans, as for the traditionalists among the Greeks, the offering of divine honours to living men was generally unacceptable. However, as the influence of Hellenistic thought and culture permeated the empire and eventually Rome itself, the 'new' ideas of the Greeks gained ground and ultimately found acceptance.[41] The old Roman traditions were gradually superseded, and on his death, Julius Caesar was acclaimed <u>divus</u> by the populace and formally proclaimed to be among the gods by a decree of the senate. When Caesar's adoptive son, Caius Octavianus, finally succeeded as sole ruler and emperor, he accepted the title Augustus, which he took to denote sanctity and sagacity, but he restrained the attempts to offer him divine honours, and, at least among his fellow-citizens in Rome, refused to be saluted as a god or to allow a temple to him to be erected in the capital. Elsewhere in the empire the exercise of such control was not so easy, and the poets particularly, inspired by Greek precedent, employed traditional mythological forms in their extravagant praises of the emperor's deity.

This policy of cautious toleration was followed by Tiberius who succeeded Augustus in AD 14, and while worship of the living emperor was forbidden in Rome, temples and rituals were quietly accepted further afield. Under subsequent emperors, however, no such restraint was exercised; on the contrary, Caligula claimed and flaunted the honours declined by Tiberius although he was denied divinization by the

senate on his assassination, and Claudius had his grandmother created diva to join her husband Augustus, and permitted a temple to be erected to his own honour in Britain.[42] At his death, when the senate consecrated him divus, the philosopher Seneca registered the voice of protest for the intelligentsia with his lampoon, The Pumpkinification of Claudius,[43] but despite such residual opposition, divinization seems to have become the normal formality for every emperor at his death, unless his reign was to be officially condemned. Although worship of the living emperor was not officially instituted in Rome, religious rituals and civic oaths invoking the emperor were generally accepted throughout the empire, practices which, having become part of the political and social custom of the state, were very difficult to abolish, even when Christianity had become the dominant state religion after Constantine.

Such forms of divinization of mortals is an indication, as has been suggested, of the vitiation of traditional religious faith in the Graeco-Roman world, and of the fascination with and proliferation of new and alternative forms of religious expression. The process seems to have been generally accepted, by the educated aristocracy as an appropriate form of respectful if not religious sentiment serving a whole range of vested interests, and by the mass of the people as an institution giving expression of loyalty to the head of state, and embodying impressive symbolism representing political stability and security, and as an opportunity for occasional festivity.[44]

So far our examination of the development of the concept of man participating in divinity has concentrated on the more specifically religious quests of the Graeco-Roman world, and within that context we have considered the impact of the mystery religions, and the rise of cults of divinization of heroic figures of the distant past and the growth of cults associated with the divinization of emperors. But the quest for meaning and coherence, the striving after a synthesis of life's varied activities, was conducted on various fronts, and from the religious dimension we now turn to another dimension of that quest, the dimension with which the early Christian religion found itself in

greater sympathy, despite the deep differences that had to be acknowledged - the quest conducted by the philosophers of the classical era, those who turned philosophy from a rather detached investigation of the cosmos and the natural world, to a more personal study of the nature, purpose, and destiny of man.

Putting aside the cosmological speculation of his predecessors, Socrates, in the late fifth century, gave his attention to the 'humble enquiry' of issues concerned with moral responsibility and individual worth, looking within rather than without to find salvation in the inherent dignity and divinity of man responding to the goodness and providence of God. Plato took up the mantle of his master Socrates, and pursuing the ancient principle that 'like is only known by like'

> opened the way for that divine discontent and boundless aspiration by which man seeks to escape from the evils of dualism and from the prison and tomb of the soul, to find scope for his higher nature in the contemplation of the Divine and Abiding: our souls seek to return to God whence they came, for with God is our true home and fatherland.[45]

According to Plato, the soul, the pure faculty of thought and will, comes from the realm of true Being, and its aim is to flee from this world in which it is embodied and become, so far as is possible, assimilated to God.[46] As Jules Gross observes,[47] many of the ideas and much of the language that Plato employs in developing his doctrine of the soul are taken from Orphism and the mystery religions: the divine origin of the soul, the imprisonment of the soul in the body, the immortality of the soul, the obligation of catharsis, the judgement of separated souls and the doctrine of metempsychosis - but in Plato's synthesis these teachings are no longer items of vague aspirations, they are organized into a coherent philosophical system. And more specifically, the notion of divinization, which in the mysteries often meant little more than a banquet where one enjoyed eternal intoxication among the holy ones, becomes in Plato's system an interior assimilation of the soul to God, effected by the vision of divine reality. Divinization as he proposes it is the true end of human activity. Obviously we are a long way here from what Christianity came to understand as the doctrine of deification: Plato's understanding of this process is primarily and excessively intellectualist and therefore

élitist, and he exhibits an exaggerated optimism regarding the human effort in attaining the desired goal with little significance given to any divine assistance. But for all that, his ideas had, as we shall see, a profound influence on the development of the concept by the early fathers.[48]

With those who followed Plato, philosophy underwent significant modifications, becoming the preserve of an intellectual élite, and dominated by a scepticism that offered little hope in the human quest. Although the Platonic ideal of assimilation to God was never actually renounced, among the Epicureans and Stoics of the fourth and third centuries it was reduced to a benign eudemonism. For the Stoics, one of the prime duties of man was to strive for the virtue of mastery of the passions (ἀπάθεια), the achieving of which made one truly divine - a feature which became prominent in the teaching of some of the fathers who stressed the significance of asceticism and self-denial in their exposition of the doctrine of deification. But so lofty was the Stoic ideal that it was made virtually unrealizable, and by the first century BC, there was a revival of interest in religion and the acknowledgement of the need for some assistance from 'beyond' man if fulfilment of the human quest was to be anything more than theoretical. The neo-Pythagoreans, an eclectic school bringing together teaching from Pythagorean, Platonic, Aristotelian and Stoic sources, accentuated the opposition between the divine immutable realm and the mutable world, but they also held to a belief in a kinship (ξυγγένεια) between man and God, which was the basis for their teaching that salvation was a process of assimilation to God by participation in the divine virtues.

The philosophical school which had perhaps the greatest influence on the thinking of the early fathers, and especially on their understanding of the concept of divineness in man, was the Neoplatonism of Plotinus and his followers. The philosophy of Plotinus, more a description of his personal experience than argument from a set of presuppositions, taught that the human soul is not only naturally immortal, it is also in its essential nature divine, and the object of the philosophical life was

> to understand this divinity and restore its proper relationship (never completely lost) with the divine All and, in that All, to come to union with its transcendent source, the One or Good.[49]

Drawing on Aristotle, Stoicism, Philo, but most of all on Plato, Plotinus developed a philosophical system the focal point of which was the idea of the divine All who is totally transcendent, unknowable, being beyond reality, beyond all determination, description, or limitation, without need of the world or man, enthroned at the summit of the intelligible world, above Mind and Soul. By its very nature, the superabundant life of the One or Good of necessity overflows, descending level by level to the physical universe, a process Plotinus often describes by the metaphors of emanation or procession. The phenomenal world is therefore the result of the overflow of the plenitude of the One, an outpouring that has neither beginning nor end. The overall structure of this universe is, according to Plotinus, both static and eternal. Even the physical world is eternal and unchanging; only in its lower parts are there cycles of change as individuals come into being and perish. But 'static' does not mean 'lifeless'. On the contrary, Plotinus stresses the dynamic nature of the universe. The highest level of being, the intelligible world, 'boils with life',[50] and at its highest is a life of 'intense, self-contained, contemplative activity, of which the life of movement, change, and production of things on the physical level are faint images'.[51] The intelligible universe is made up of three main 'hypostases', individual divine substances: the One, Mind and Soul. Emanating by spontaneous generation from the One is the Mind which has the potential to know. In its attempt to be united with the One from which it has emanated, the Mind generates the Forms which represent the One on the level of contemplation, the way the One is known by Mind. The third hypostasis is the Soul, which contemplates, but is distinguished from the Mind in that its thinking is successive and is the more wide ranging and various in its activities. It is the cause of the sensible world and has the whole range of lower forms of sense consciousness. In this hierarchical structure, although the three hypostases are distinct, they are not totally separate from one another. At the top of its range, the soul reaches the realm of Mind, and with the Mind it can rise by self-transcendence to ultimate union with the One. The soul

thus extends from the lower edge of the realm of Mind down through the sensible world, and it is in this lowest of the three divine levels that man is to be found: a composite creature, with a higher soul close to and continually illumined by Mind, and a lower soul which is an expression (λόγος) of the higher soul and is the subject of ordinary human experience.[52]

The human soul, of the same substance as the universal Soul, is a divine being, an intermediary between the intelligible world and the sensible world, with the capacity to be drawn toward either or to be torn between the two:

> One part of our soul is always directed to the intelligible realities, one to the things of this world, and one is in the middle between these: for since the soul is one nature in many powers, sometimes the whole of it is carried along with the best of itself and of real being, sometimes the worse part is dragged down and drags the middle with it; for it is not lawful for it to drag down the whole.[53]

The object of philosophy is, for Plotinus, to attain to our true end, union with the Good in the divine All, by waking to a knowledge of our true self and its place in reality. The world of real being, the divine All, is always present to the human soul, and the impulse to return to the source is given in the very being of all derived existence. But we have to choose and make the effort required

> to concentrate ourselves upwards towards that good the desire of which is constitutive of our very being in order that we may become that which we always are.[54]

In this quest, the attention of the soul is often diverted by material concerns and the necessities of bodily life which subjugate it to the changes of the sensible world. Return to the superior world requires a specific act of conversion, a difficult process requiring strenuous effort of intellectual and moral self-discipline. Plotinian philosophy is essentially practical, concerned with how we are to attain to the Good. The practice of virtue and the attainment of the highest possible degree of moral perfection are indispensable elements in the quest for contemplation of and union with God. Thus in its ascent towards God the soul passes through two stages. The first stage involves a turning away from the needs and desires of our lower selves, a 'waking' from our dreamlike obsession with our material concerns, and a deliberate

looking 'inward' to trace the image of the Mind. Separated from the body by the practice of virtue and self-discipline, the soul is freed from irrational affections and passions, but for Plotinus this state of ἀπάθεια is very different from the Stoic ideal of impassibility. There is no question here of eradicating or destroying emotions and affections, there is no anxious negation or repression. The process is rather one of attaining full mastery of the self and thereby freeing the true rational self from distractions and illusions originating in the lower self and, in this state of detachment, enabling the self to live its proper life undisturbed. Here the soul has become νοῦς: by eliminating its impure elements it has regained its primitive divine beauty, its resemblance to God (ὁμοίωσιν πρὸς θεόν).[55]

The second stage of the ascent of the soul takes it to the state of perfect union, an experience available only to the philosopher, the lover of truth. Once detached from sensible things and fixed in the intelligible world, the souls of these privileged ones rise towards the divine All, the One, who is beautiful in itself. The interior eye of the soul, sufficiently freed by purification, is able to contemplate this beauty and suddenly perceives the light radiating from the One, the light which is the One. Thus illuminated, the soul holds what it was looking for, its true end, total resemblance to God. This final vision of and union with the One is a mystical experience, a state not so much of contemplation (θέαμα) as of ecstasy (ἔκστασις), a simplification, in which there is nothing separating the soul from God, the two are become one (ἓν ἄμφω).[56] Having arrived at the summit of his ascent, man 'becomes god, or rather he is already god (θεὸν γενόμενον, μᾶλλον δὲ ὄντα)'.[57]

There is, however, a tension in this ecstatic union: it cannot last while man is still in the body because he is still liable to be weighed down by sensible concerns. It is only at death, and the final liberation from the body and the sensible world, that the soul worthy of it will be enabled to enjoy that uninterrupted unitive vision which is the perfect and definitive deification. For Plotinus, we can be

united with the Good because our intellect perfectly conforms to it and is thus made like it in a conformity achieved by love. The Mind which emanates from the One and seeks to know the One also loves the One, and it is the power of this love which enables it to think and so produce the Forms which are the representation of the One on the level of Mind. The Mind in this state of love is enabled to attain self-transcendence, a 'thrusting out towards contact (ἔφεσις πρὸς ἁφήν)',[58] to union with the One in love, a state of ineffable happiness comparable with the folly of love. It is perhaps this very analogy which forces us to acknowledge as somewhat academic the question whether such a mystical experience is one of union in which particularity remains, or one of absorption.

In spite of the significant differences between the Neoplatonism of Plotinus and the teachings of Christianity, his thought greatly influenced the description of the perfection of the soul and the spiritual life as it came to be formulated in the Christian tradition. Plotinus saw his philosophy as the most practical aid for earnest souls. By prompting them to sample the joys of possession by God in this life, he hoped to encourage them in the endeavour to realize their true human nature in bringing to fruition the potentially divine within them. His method was two-fold: to reveal the shame of the present state of man in his sorry plight and then to recall the true dignity to which man was called. As we shall see, there was much common ground between Plotinus and the early fathers in that for both, the final end of man was seen in terms of our unity with the ultimate reality - a unity achieved by becoming like the Highest. This union was achieved in both systems of thought by an increasing knowledge of God, through participation in the second hypostasis (the divine Mind) in the one case, and through enlightenment by Christ the Wisdom of God in the other. For Plotinus, as much as for the Christian exponents of the quest for restoration or salvation, this experience was not simply to be equated with extraordinary psychological excitations or emotional raptures; it was a genuinely mystical experience in which feeling was subservient to reason as a means of knowledge. But for the Christian Platonists the final goal is union with God (ἕνωσις), it is not that we

become God, but rather, remaining creatures, we partake of the divine nature, attaining such a likeness to Christ as to be united with the Trinity of persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

As we shall observe in our examination of the writings of the early fathers, there was always the danger in the Christian Platonist tradition of over-emphasizing the part of increasing knowledge of God in the soul's ascent, a tendency which exalted the contemplative life as the more perfect way of fulfilling the Christian vocation, and encouraged a distancing from, if not outright rejection of, the external material world. It is to one of the earliest manifestations of this tendency that we must now turn in bringing our survey of the background to early patristic theology to its conclusion.

Contemporaneous with the flowering of Neoplatonism and the expansion of early Christian theology was a form of religion which sought to offer an answer to the common longing for a resolution of the most obstinate philosophical antitheses of the One and the Many, and on the more personal level sought to satisfy the desire for the salvation of the individual soul by a process of divinization through revealed knowledge. The teachings of this syncretistic religion, gathered together in a collection of Greek and Latin texts dating from between the first and third centuries AD, known as the Hermetic Books,[59] represent a fusion of Platonic, Stoic, neo-Pythagorean, and Egyptian religious speculations. In common with many other religious movements of the age, the Hermetics presented salvation as deliverance from the tyranny of destiny through gnosis, gnosis which culminated in divinization. Such an intellectual rebirth was the privilege of those who enjoyed the state of the gods by seeing the Good, thereby making themselves secure against all ill. This apotheosis was conceived by some Hermetics as effected in this life, by regeneration, initiatory instruction and by the elimination of bodily senses,[60] but by others as attainable only after death.[61] What was indispensable for the achieving of the desired goal was withdrawal from the sensible world and deliverance from the tent of the body by mystical death and ascension.

The salvation the Hermetics thus offered was of a purely intellectual order, by gnosis, and more particularly through ecstatic contemplation. It shared with the mystery cults a strong sense of the dualism between body and soul, and proclaimed the superiority of the spiritual over the material. But there were very definite divergences. The Hermetics had no cult or liturgy which could act on the emotions and so effect salvation, and there was therefore no provision for ritual assimilation of the initiate with divinity ensuring lasting protection from the tyranny of destiny. Salvation in Hermetic doctrine was based entirely on the revelation of inspired and infallible knowledge which addressed the νοῦς and introduced the adherent to the vision of God. In this apprehension of Truth, the Hermetic might attain the realization of a larger cosmic self, and by transcending time and space escape from the bounds of isolated individuality and identify himself with the whole cosmos. This form of mystical experience ultimately issued in direct and immediate contact with God, identification to the point of absorption into the divine One from whom all had come forth.[62]

From this survey it will be realized that the notion of divineness in man was common to many strands of religious thought. It was a fundamental element in man's ancient quest for perfection because it ensured an assimilation with the divine and the guarantee of protection and salvation. For some traditions, as we have seen, this divinization was a return to an earlier state from which man had fallen, for others it was the elevation to a state for which one had only the potential. But in all the various systems in which divinization occurs, the common element is the upward movement of transcendence from one state to another. Proclaiming the Christian doctrine of salvation within this rich milieu, the early fathers of the church had an extensive range of ideas and vocabulary on which to draw, and we shall now examine the ways in which they incorporated this concept of assimilation to and union with God for which they used the terminology of θεοποίησις.

But first we must try to determine what was meant by applying the term θεός to human beings. From the many different contexts in which this term appears in relation to men, it would seem that to describe a

person as divine (θεῖος) or as a god (θεός), as in the official divinizing of political or military leaders or in the less formal honouring of philosophers, athletes or local heroes, did not necessarily mean the elevating of that particular individual to the pantheon and the inaugurating of a new cult. It was more often than not simply a way of acknowledging the exceptional prowess or prominence of the person so designated, and a means of accounting for the extraordinary feats or powers of which he or she appeared to be capable. To refer to a person as θεός did not therefore imply that divine honours were to be accorded. As Inge points out in a brief account of the language and notion of deification, the term θεός had a variability and a fluidity quite unlike the Latin deus.[63] The associations of the word θεός were not sufficiently limited or venerable to make the idea of divinization as shocking to the Greeks as it would have been to the Latins. When the pagans therefore referred to the human soul as θεῖος or θεός, they most often meant no more than that it was an immortal being; they certainly did not mean that all beings called θεοί were identical with or parts of the Absolute Good, the Supreme Reality or God. In fact they rarely, if ever, used θεός and its derivatives to refer to the transcendent source of being; the term is normally reserved, according to A.H.Armstrong, for 'a variety of beings of different ranks within the universe (down to and including man's true self) which depend wholly for their existence on the supreme principle'.[64] Even for Plotinus, who extends the terms of reference of the words further than does Plato, souls, although divine, immutable and impeccable in their true nature, are essentially created, derived and dependent. However, the later Neoplatonists Iamblichus and Proclus abandoned the uncompromising doctrine of the soul's divinity as they found it in Plotinus and Porphyry, and returned to a position nearer that of Plato, regarding the soul as being capable of sin and ignorance. The terminology of θεός when used in the genuinely Platonic tradition, is thus to be understood in an analogical sense and therefore it is important when we come to examine its use in the patristic authors that we understand this background.

While acknowledging the fundamental differences that there are between

Christians and pagans in their understanding of the nature of God and the manner of his creative activity, differences which account for their differing attitudes to the nature of divinity in relation to man, it is equally important not to make this distinction too sharp or absolute. There was probably a great deal of misunderstanding between Christians (especially those from the Judaic tradition) and pagan Greeks in this area, but for Greek-speaking Christians the terminology would have been much less troublesome. We find just such a situation in the New Testament, when the people of Lystra welcomed the apostles Paul and Barnabas as 'gods come down to us in the likeness of men'[65] causing the apostles to react with understandable horror. And again, we read of the people of Malta concluding that Paul must be a god when he remained unharmed after having a viper fixed to his hand.[66] But even Paul himself provides a witness to this usage of the word θεός when, while affirming the Christian belief that there is 'one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist', he is still ready to acknowledge:

> there may be so-called gods (λεγόμενοι θεοὶ) in heaven or on earth - as indeed there are many 'gods' (θεοὶ πολλοὶ) and many 'lords' (κύριοι πολλοί)...[67]

A further example of the extent to which the meaning of θεός had been stretched is to be found in a surprising passage from the preface to Origen's commentaries on the Psalms, where he quotes, without disapproval, from the Stoic author Herophilus a definition of God as 'an immortal rational being', and then continues:

> In this sense every gentle soul is a god. But God is otherwise defined as the <u>self-existing</u> immortal Being. In this sense therefore the souls that are embodied in wise men are not gods.[68]

And perhaps even more remarkable still are the recurring accusations in the early church that bishops, teachers, martyrs, and philosophers were venerated with divine or semi-divine honours - charges which, according to Harnack, were brought by Christians against pagans, by pagans against Christians, and even by rival Christians against each other.[69]

Thus we find, in the context in which the early fathers were formulating their understanding of the Christian gospel, the concept of divineness in man had already gained considerable prominence in the

concept of divinization, as the formal conferring of divinity on someone and the subsequent honouring of that person as a god with cultic rites proper to members of the pantheon, or the less formal designation of a person as θεῖος or θεός which carried with it popular recognition of worth and status but implied no change of condition or nature. There was, however, the more general philosophical concept, which the fluidity of the term θεός and its derivatives made plausible, and that was the Platonic idea of the natural divinity of the soul, which found expression in a great variety of ways, from the more cautious manner of Plato himself, who does not call the soùl θεός and at most asserts a kinship and likeness between it and the gods, right through to the more extravagant doctrine of Plotinus and Porphyry who taught that the soul was not only naturally immortal (an idea held by all pagan Platonists) but was also in its essential nature divine (though in a subordinate degree) and therefore immutable, beyond corruption, and without any need or possibility of redemption. This teaching of Plotinus and the Neoplatonists also asserted that the part of the soul which is responsible for the reasoning has the capacity to turn itself towards the light of Intellect and its source, the Good, and thereby become by a process of self-transcendence fully and consciously that universal and eternal divine reality which in a sense it always is. The purpose of life, as Plotinus saw it and himself practised, was to ensure that by self-discipline, purification, and detachment from the things and cares of the material world, one woke up to the glory that belonged to the soul by right, and turned the right way, upwards, and by progressive stages eventually arrived at oneness with the divine.

While such ideas in one form or another were intelligible and attractive to the world at large as much in the general realm of popular religion of the mysteries and cults as in the highly rational élite circles of the learned, it was almost inevitable that Christian apologists and teachers, some of whom converted to Christianity from these other pagan circles and others who at least lived among and were educated alongside people who held these views, expressed the new faith in terms that resonated with and reflected such widely held ideas. And

so the concept of man being drawn into a relationship of assimilation and ultimately of union with God is found in the earliest strands of the Christian tradition - in the muted almost inchoate form within the New Testament itself in the Second Letter of Peter, where it is expressed as 'partaking of the divine nature',[70] in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers and the early Apologists of the second century, the philosopher-theologians of the third, and then in the full flowering of the concept in the major theological syntheses of the fourth century.

The essential ideas to which the concept of 'divineness in man' bore witness is that there is a fundamental and essential relationship between man and the ultimate reality from which he derives his being, and that although a creature and separate from God, man is actually defined in terms of his relationship to God, and is therefore in a sense defined as being fully himself only when he is in communion with God. But just as the notion became elaborated to the point of extravagance when in pagan thought it was developed in terms of man being transformed from his creaturely status and becoming divine (divinization), so in the Christian world, where it was taken up and developed as deification, there was a similar shift from the basic concept but in the opposite direction, producing an impoverished understanding not only of the God-man relationship, but also of the process of salvation and the culmination of that process in the fulfilment of the destiny of man and the whole of the created order.

The divergence between these two ways of developing the basic notion of divineness in man was not the result of denial on one side and affirmation on the other, that God is the source of all we are and all we have. It was, as A.H.Armstrong points out in a published lecture which examines this issue, rather a difference in the ways of thinking about what it is that God gives and how he gives it.[71] It is not that the two positions were necessarily irreconcileable or even inconsistent in some of their essential features, in fact, as Armstrong explains, there was a lot more common ground between them than is often realized - common ground which attracted the early Christian to Platonism and made possible the fusion of some of these ideas in Christian Platonism.

Although in both traditions there were extreme groups who stressed certain teachings at the expense or even denial of others, neither pagan Platonists nor Christians, when they were true to some of their most deeply held beliefs, could utterly reject or despise the body or the material universe. But neither could they regard the created order as self-sufficient or self-explanatory, nor could they accept the present state of man and the world as that in which true and final happiness is to be found. Although neither should devalue or despise the world, both are inevitably 'other-worldly'.

The Platonist representation of the universe which so attracted the early Alexandrian Christians in particular was very much in harmony with the biblical picture which was obviously fundamental for any Christian understanding of creation and man's place within it. The Platonic view of the universe on two levels, the higher, divine level being the model of the lower world of the senses, meant that the created world, as the symbol of the divine realm, was not self-sufficient and could have no existence which was not a means to an end and derived. And that end according to God's plan was that the soul should be led to find its true home in the divine; and whatever thwarted or prevented that movement comes within the description of sin. It was this point of view that proved so fruitful to the early Christians in the development of their understanding of the nature and place of sacraments in Christian theology. It is Armstrong's thesis that in taking up such ideas from Platonism, and modifying and adapting them in the development of their theology, many of the early patristic writers actually missed the chance of carrying out a much deeper and more dynamic transformation of Platonism than they in fact effected.[72]

In their reaction against the cosmic religion of the pagan philosophers (understandable enough because of the tendency to identify the creator with his creation and to slip over so readily into pantheism and idolatry) some of the early Christian fathers, particularly those of the fourth and fifth centuries, lost the sense of the inherent holiness and religious relevance of the created order, which was at the very heart of the biblical revelation, and most particularly as it referred

to the sense of the holiness of ordinary human life and affairs. The biblical doctrine of creation speaks most eloquently of the work of the life-giving Spirit of God in the creative process recognized in the movement of the heavens and in the growth and development of all living things. We have here a sense of the holiness of the created order and an awareness of the intimate presence of the transcendent creator in his world. But this concept of the World-Soul or Holy Spirit at work in the world, giving light and life to the cosmos and all things in it, recedes into the background of much early patristic thought: there is an unfortunate confining of the workings of the Holy Spirit to the sanctification of the lives of individual Christians, a turning away from the universe and God's concern with it for a concentration on God's work in the soul or in the church, a failure to recognize the real significance of the created order and the affairs of all men and women. As a result, the appreciation of the sacramental dimension of the whole of life was lost and the notion of sacrament diminished to that which is confined to ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies. However, some of the early fathers incorporated this wider understanding of the holiness of creation, and derived from it the doctrine of cosmic redemption, the renewal and transformation of the whole universe in and through Christ.

Irenaeus, taking up the New Testament idea of Christ, the creative Word, writes in his treatise Against Heresies of Christ 'who invisibly contains all things that were made, and is established in the whole creation, governing and disposing all things'.[73] And on the idea of cosmic redemption, he speaks of the creation being 'renewed to its old condition',[74] an idea mentioned by Gregory of Nyssa in the fourth century, but developed little further in the thought of the other Cappadocians. It is only much later, in the writings of Maximus the Confessor in the seventh century that there is a full flowering of these ideas that were so firmly embedded in mainstream Platonism. It is in Maximus that we find the doctrines of creation and redemption interrelated in a way that does full justice to the biblical notions of the holiness of the created order and the concept of a redemption of the whole cosmos. In his thought there is an emphasis on movement, all

things created in Christ being brought to redemption in him. The dynamic thrust in his understanding of reality is spelled out in terms of transcendence - but transcendence understood as divine transformation and progress to a new stage of being, not as escape. In man, the microcosm of the larger universe, the whole is brought back to find its unity and fulfilment in God. Uniting the material and spiritual, earth and heaven, within himself, man brings it all back to God, presenting it for redemption, transformation and deification. Here we find again an affirmation of the divineness in man, and an acknowledgement of his openness, his potential as an emerging, incomplete being finding his fulfilment through Christ in whom God himself became Divine Man. As we trace the development of this notion of the divine in man in the writings of the early fathers we shall be seeking to draw attention to just how and where they managed to maintain this broader vision of the work and purposes of God, and how they accounted for the divineness in man without going over into pagan pantheism or Platonic mysticism, or reducing the concept to an impoverished spirituality confined to strictly ecclesiastical structures and systems.

When the patristic writers took up this concept of the divineness in man and from it developed their particular doctrines of man and of salvation using the language of deification, they were not aware of promoting ideas that were particularly novel or suspiciously out of sympathy with the Christian tradition. It is understandable that, living in a world in which Hellenistic ideas were common currency, they should express the gospel in terms which were readily available to them even though from other traditions, because it was with those 'other' traditions in all their various forms that they were most often trying to communicate. However, as we shall discover, they did make specific appeal to their own tradition, finding within the Christian scriptures texts which witnessed not only to the divineness in man, as in the 'divine image' passages of Genesis (1:26-27; 5:1-3; 9:5-6), but also to the potential of man to 'partake of the divine nature' as in the Second Letter of Peter (1:4), or to become assimilated to Christ, as in much of the Pauline and Johannine writings. In Luke 20:36 they found a text

declaring those in the resurrection to be 'equal to angels' and 'sons of God', and in Psalm 82:6, one of the most common patristic proof-texts of deification, the reference to men as 'gods', taken up again in words attributed to Jesus himself in John 10:34.

At no stage, however, did these early fathers believe that they were transgressing into polytheistic or pantheistic Neoplatonic notions of man being absorbed into the divinity, or even of man's spirit becoming merged in the deity. They resolutely denied such notions, affirming always the traditional biblical doctrine of man as a creature, created in the divine image and likeness, but nonetheless a creature, and as such distinct from and not to be confused with God. The language of deification was most often used to refer to that process by which the divine element in man (however that 'element' was understood) was brought into closer and more conscious union with God from whom it derived in the beginning. Other terms were used to fill out this idea, terms such as adoption, sonship, enlightenment, incorruption, sanctification, impassibility, and immortality, and often the process was associated with teaching on the sacraments, especially baptism and the eucharist, with their special emphasis on incorporation and identification, but care was always taken to avoid any suggestion of confusion or fusion of the divine and human natures.

As we trace the development of this notion of deification from the biblical concepts upon which it was based, through the writings of the fathers from the immediate post-New Testament period up to the end of the fourth century, we shall note how from time to time individual fathers make special point of stressing exactly what they mean to convey (and what they do <u>not</u> mean to convey!) when they refer to the deification of man. Time and time again specific reassurances are given that this doctrine does not mean that man becomes God 'in the strict sense of the term', as St Gregory of Nazianzus puts it,[75] for, as Gregory points out, that would suggest that God is a creature, one who was 'begotten', with a beginning in time, which is a contradiction in terms, for that would mean that God is other than what we mean by God.

Deification does not imply any consubstantiality or identity between the human and the divine. For if man becomes god, then that means that he was not god originally; and furthermore, as Eric Osborn reminds us, deification has never been held to mean that the human and the divine are either identical or co-extensive: 'Man does not acquire all the attributes of God any more than God acquires all the attributes of man.'[76] We find the same principle enunciated by G.L.Prestige, who describes expressions of the deification of man as 'purely relative', and goes on to explain:

> they express the fact that man has a nature essentially spiritual, and to that extent resembling the being of God; further, that he is able to attain a real union with God, by virtue of an affinity proceeding from nature and from grace. Man, the Fathers might have said, is a supernatural animal. In some senses his destiny is to be absorbed into God. But they would have all repudiated with indignation any suggestion that the union of man to God added anything to the Godhead. They explained the lower in terms of the higher, but did not obliterate the distinction between them.... The gulf is never bridged between Creator and creature. Though in Christ human nature has been raised to the throne of God, by virtue of His divine character, yet mankind in general can only aspire to the sort of divinity which lies open to its capacity through union with the divine humanity. Eternal life is the life of God. Men may come to share its manifestations and activities, but only by grace, never of right.[77]

When the principle behind the concept has been so clearly explained by the fathers themselves, and by theologians in our own day, it is hard to understand just how or why the idea is still so persistently misrepresented as it is by such contemporary writers as David Cairns, who maintains that, by contrast with the New Testament notion of mystical fellowship, deification means 'mystical absorption... of the divine nature into oneself',[78] and that it 'may also be spoken of almost in mechanical terms as though it were a sort of spiritual innoculation'.[79] Another critic, B.J.Drewery, implies, again by contrast, that in this doctrine 'the distinction between "divine" and "human" [is] abolished',[80] and again, that it results in the 'effacement of the distinction between the Person of Almighty God and the person - even the restored, redeemed, and sanctified person - of man'.[81]

Maurice Wiles, on the other hand, in a brief exposition of deification

in the early patristic period, makes it clear that as Irenaeus employed the concept, Adam's potential deification is seen as

> the fulfilment rather than the negation of his humanity, as manhood is the fulfilment rather than the negation of childhood. His becoming a god was never intended to suggest his becoming an additional member of the Trinity. It was intended to imply his entry into the eternal and immortal realm of being, in the closest possible relation and assimilation to God which can be conceived but one which falls clearly short of a relation of identity.[82]

This idea of Adam's potentiality being brought to fulfilment in his deification is one of the characteristic features of the patristic understanding of deification, and brings us back to our initial discussion of man's divineness being 'derived' and 'largely potential only', because it is the divineness of a creature who is 'emerging'. And just as in his deification Adam is said to enter into the closest possible relation and assimilation to God, so we have considered man finding the ultimate fulfilment of all his relationships in a relationship of union with the divinity of God. This brings together the two themes of our present thesis: man as potentially divine, or having a potentiality for deification, and man as 'emergent' or 'transcendent'. It is our contention that in this notion of emergence or transcendence we come very close to the essence of what the fathers were trying to express when they spoke of deification: that process whereby human nature finds its fulfilment as it participates in the life of God, realizing that image and likeness in which it was created.

That man should strive for self-transcendence to the point where he becomes 'god', has been described by Sartre as an absurdity. But we shall endeavour to show that self-transcendence is fundamental to the human condition, and that in exercising his capacity for self-transcendence man is actually on the way to fulfilling his God-given potential in the way his creator intended. E.L.Mascall links these two dynamic concepts, transcendence and deification, in an exposition of what he describes as 'deified creaturehood': the Christian doctrine of finite beings as dependent realities. It is the essence of the finite to be incomplete, but it is this very incompleteness which gives the creature its potential, because:

> to be a finite being is to be essentially <u>open</u>, open to the

> activity of God, who without annulling or withdrawing anything that he has given, can always give more. Thus the potentia obedientalis of nature for grace is not a kind of afterthought or accident; it arises out of the very notion of a finite creature as Christian theology sees it. But the kind of potentia obedientalis - the type of perfectibility of which it is capable without its nature being suppressed - will, of course, depend upon the kind of creature that it is, and it is here that our second point comes in, that man is made in the image of God. To put the matter briefly, to be in God's image is to be capable of possessing God's life.[83]

We must now take up our second theme, the notion of man as an emergent, transcendent being, who is capable of possessing God's life, and in so doing we shall consider man as a 'personal pattern capable of forming relationships' in order to find out what it means to speak of man's relationships finding their fulfilment in God.

During the 1960s and 1970s there appeared a number of essays, articles and books which explored, or within a broader context made specific reference to, the notion of transcendence.[84] One of the earliest of these studies was the investigation of G.F.Woods, 'The Idea of the Transcendent', in the collection of essays called Soundings.[85] In this essay Woods, starting from the widely held assumption that 'the transcendent' refers to that which is beyond the limits of our possible experience and which therefore cannot be known, and consequently never proved, examines the possibilities of analogical explanations of transcendence. This examination includes an analysis of the history of the meaning of the word 'transcendence' and it reveals that in fact the word has undergone something of a reversal of meaning, from a primarily active idea to a passive one.

Originally the word 'transcendence', formed from the verb 'transcend', referred to an act of crossing over or going beyond some obstacle or barrier; the obstacle was the object which was transcended. By a curious process of extension, however, the noun 'transcendent' came to refer to that which the would-be transcender was attempting to overcome - the meaning of the word began to operate in the reverse direction. Faced with an insurmountable obstacle, the would-be transcender is himself transcended, the obstacle is beyond his capacity, it transcends his powers, and he becomes the transcended object, and the obstacle

becomes the 'transcendent', that which transcends the human agent, and not the agent's transcending act or attempt. In popular usage, then, the word came to mean that which could not be transcended, and so came to be associated with the traditional biblical and philosophical images of God.[86]

Taking his examination a step further, into the philosophical implications of the etymology of transcendence, Woods suggests that

> the deepest use of the vocabulary of transcendence is to describe the fact of being in existence. To be is to transcend. To be transcended is to lose being. A personal being knows himself to be existing because he is outstanding above or transcending over what is not.[87]

Woods then explores the possibilities of analogical explanations of the notion of transcendence and our experience of the transcendent, in terms of our experience of what is in being:

> My experience of transcendence is experience of being. It is very difficult to say whether I experience the experience of transcendence or whether I simply have the experience of transcending and of being transcended. These may not be alternative experiences but aspects or elements of human experience. We touch here the mysteries of self-transcendence.[88]

But here Woods leaves the issue of the 'mysteries of self-transcendence', because the main purpose of his essay is to consider what it means to talk of the transcendence of God and whether or not it is possible to speak of having experience of God as Transcendent Being ('if we define the transcendent as what lies beyond the most extreme limits of human experience'). On the basis of his argument from the analogy of human encounter (the experience of 'sheer presence', the experience that enables us to acknowledge 'that other people and things are in existence, as well as ourselves') Woods claims that in our experience of beings which come into and pass out of existence (the sequences of nature, the tremulous quality of our own lives), we also have a sense of the unchanging beneath the changes which we see. And so he concludes:

> In our experience of the changing, we have also a curious experience of the unchanging. I believe that we are gradually driven towards an awareness of some being, which is variously styled pure, absolute, or transcendent. The conclusion is being itself. It is difficult to say whether one experiences this pure being or whether more usually one experiences being transcended by

it.[89]

Enlightening though Woods' examination is, however, it has only established the legitimacy of our speaking of experiencing God as transcendent, confirming, albeit by analogy with forms of human experience, the traditional, that is, the popular (if not original) association of the concept with the distance and distinction between human beings and God.

A distinct shift in emphasis is discernible, however, in John Macquarrie's treatment of the notion of transcendence in his Studies in Christian Existentialism, which appeared in 1965, three years after Woods' essay. Addressing himself to the question of 'how man is awakened to his relation to divine Being', Macquarrie advocates taking up the philosopher Martin Heidegger's idea of speaking of God in terms of Being, 'the transcendens, the non-entity which is yet "more beingful" (seiender) than any possible entity'.[90] By using this model and language, Macquarrie moves beyond the traditional metaphysical understanding of transcendent Being, as standing somehow above or beyond the world, and defines transcendence in terms of the relationship between Being and beings. In support of this thesis, Macquarrie says:

> The transcendence of God is certainly preserved since Being utterly and incomparably transcends all particular beings, and is of a different order so that one may even define 'transcendence' as the relation of Being to beings - probably a better definition than the metaphysical one that visualizes God as 'outside' or 'beyond' the world, or the mythological one that thought of God as 'up there'. But the immanence of God is also preserved, for Being has presence in and expresses itself in every particular being, that is to say, in everything that is.[91]

Exploration of this idea continued, as others, puzzled and fascinated by the various ways of understanding and appropriating the concept of transcendence, were inspired to enquire further into the possibilities to which the notion seemed to be pointing. Concern at the extent to which the emergent technological culture of the 1960s was bringing about a mutation, if not the dissolution, of a viable sense of transcendence, a group of theologians, philosophers and sociologists came together in 1968 at a symposium to explore contemporary ideas about transcendence. The papers prepared for these discussions,

subsequently published under the title Transcendence,[92] revealed that, while there may well be a gradual breaking down of a sense of transcendence as it related to metaphysical arguments or revelational statements about the nature of God outside of and independent of the world, there were in fact new dimensions in the concept being discovered as people from various disciplines made their contribution to what the editors of Transcendence referred to as the 'contemporary quests for transcendence', quests which are 'legion, manifold, and compelling'.[93]

The scope of the discussion presented in the essays from the symposium included the examination of such issues as the possibility of cognitive liberation and the resultant expansion of the self to new levels of experience, the problem of control in the techno-historical process calling for a new definition of transcendence and a new fantasy orientation that gives up entirely the Eden-dream of a stable state, the function of myths of transcendence as ordering social structures, the transcendence beliefs of traditional religions, and finally, the implications for a concept of transcendence that follow from affirming the creative freedom of man.

Have we not perhaps now taken our examination of the notion of transcendence well beyond the bounds and concerns of what can legitimately be claimed to be theology? Writing of transcendence as it relates to the dynamic character of man's being, John Macquarrie claims that such an idea is very much in accord with biblical teaching:

> In the biblical picture of man there is an openness in his nature. Indeed if we are to speak of his 'nature' at all, we would need to say that man's very nature is to transcend himself. We see man in the Bible as the distinctive creature to whom God has given the possibility of going out beyond himself into ever new ventures of faith.[94]

But in his book The Way of Transcendence, Alistair Kee would have us take the notion of transcendence out of a theistic framework altogether, and so he argues for an understanding of transcendence that is 'purely secular', freed from 'the old supernaturalistic metaphysic'.[95] The main proposition of Kee's book is 'an understanding of Christian faith, appropriate to our secular age, which does not

require belief in God as its prior condition' - 'Christian faith without belief in God', as the subtitle of his book has it. This would certainly seem to put transcendence beyond theology. Kee's model for human transcendence is a kind of life 'for which [one] must consciously decide, and for which he decides he must strive with all his determination'.[96] This kind of life, he claims, 'is one by which we transcend our nature', and which may 'ultimately prove more natural, since in it we find fulfilment'.[97] And although Kee rejects the theistic framework of belief, he yet looks to the way of life definitively revealed in Jesus Christ as the life which constantly transcends the natural life (the 'natural' life being the 'way of immanence', the natural way of the world, a lifestyle conforming to the passing fashions and popular codes of behaviour, a way of compliance rather than deliberate choice). For Kee, then, 'transcendence is a secular category',[98] involving a value judgement 'that things are not as they seem', and 'disputing what the nature of man really is'.[99] He also demands the jettisoning of any belief in the God of traditional supernaturalism, and therefore the rejection of attempts to reinterpret traditional theism in terms of onto-theology. But for all these protestations, Kee still refers to his solution as an 'escalating theology', leading 'towards a mystery beyond our ultimate concerns' - although he seems at a loss to say any more about what that 'mystery' might be (except that 'it' is not personal). So, in effect, Kee severs the link between transcendence and theism, although he somewhat contradictorily insists on referring to his solution as an 'escalating theology', which 'must not simply concern itself with man', but must also 'involve larger issues too'.[100] We seem now to have traversed the full spectrum: from transcendence as involved solely with God in his distance and distinctiveness from man through to transcendence as a secular notion having taken leave of God.

There is however another approach to the question of the understanding of transcendence involving what one contemporary theologian, Roger Hazelton, describes as a shift of the centre of theological gravity, and 'a decided break with former, though still recent, ways of thinking about transcendence as confined to "God", as if the name pointed to an

entity distinct and distinguishable from "man"'.[101] This is no simplistic attempt merely to revitalize the notion of transcendence without going to the extreme lengths of severing links with theism altogether. Rather Hazelton proposes to relocate transcendence, by taking a fresh look at the 'God-question', which he suggests is so bound up with the 'humanity-question' that they become the same question. This understanding is echoed by John Macquarrie in the preface to his book In Search of Humanity when he claims that the 'best approach to many of the problems of theology and philosophy is through the study of our own humanity'.[102]

Roger Hazelton's approach is not only a fresh and radical analysis of the notion of transcendence itself, it also has profound implications for the way in which we understand God and the relationship between God and humanity. Hazelton seeks to extend the scope of the meaning of transcendence not by setting it over against the notion of immanence, but by re-introducing what he refers to as a 'neglected element of immanence into the doctrine of God',[103] and this he does by exploring features of human self-transcendence. He maintains that there are not in fact two types of transcendence - one related to God and another related to man - and he therefore proposes we shift our focus in theology

> from a superbeing called God to the examination of those experiences of transcending or being transcended which provide not only the occasions for religious faith but also the testing ground of its interpretation by theology.[104]

Hazelton suggests that by examining human experience, or rather the symbols by which we convey the tone and texture of our experience, we discover that human experience is itself symbolic and analogical, and that our experience of the transcendent is 'not that of a distinct sensible feature or quality of an object, person, or event; neither is it that of something hidden behind what appears to me'; it is rather the experience of presence - 'the presence of being other than my own, including my presence to myself in being'.[105] The conclusions Hazelton draws from this relocation of transcendence are, first: that in our present theological situation human self-transcendence can be legitimately regarded as the most basic if not the most central meaning

of transcendence-in-general; second: since we ought not to think of transcendence without thinking of immanence, nor of immanence without transcendence, may not man's self-transcending capacity be properly expressed as God's immanent activity in him? And third: he maintains that with the emergence of symbols suggesting that the search for God starts with man's search for himself, 'or at least that human self-transcendence is to be explored and relied on for whatever meaning God may still have in our epoch', there is no need to draw new lines of distinction between God and man in our thought and speech about both or either. And thus he finds himself drawn to rejecting the old Reformation principle of distinction: Finitum non capax infiniti, and to affirming instead the much earlier patristic principle: Homo capax dei.

The value of Hazelton's thesis is that it invites 'a renewed stress upon the co-inherence of the transcendent and the immanent, both in reflecting upon lived experience and in making belief in God available and credible to minds formed by that experience',[106] and that it enables us to avoid the rather forced distinction between ontological transcendence and immanence or this-worldly transcendence, suggested by William A. Johnson in the introduction to his book The Search for Transcendence.[107]

If then we accept this new location for transcendence - in the human existent rather than in God, recognizing however that this does not mean any abandonment of theism but rather a renewed stress upon the co-inherence of the transcendent and the immanent - we can begin looking to human self-transcendence to see if it does in fact reveal for us the most basic if not the most central meaning of transcendence-in-general, and open up a richer understanding of the way in which we relate to God and he relates to us.

Returning to the fundamental meaning of transcendence, as an act of crossing over or going beyond some obstacle or barrier, and trying to relate that to human self-transcendence, we find it can be applied not only to physical, spatial or temporal movement, but also in a more

general sense, to going beyond less tangible barriers which circumscribe or compromise our human existence. Human self-transcendence, as it is discussed by most contemporary writers, is related to that quest inherent in the human condition

> for a deeper and more profound meaning of life itself and for a sensitizing and intensification of human experience. The impulse to move from the ordinary dimensions of life to the extraordinary is not one invented by the theologian but is one which appears to spring up from the deepest levels of consciousness itself.[108]

It is the process of 'becoming something other than one is at present', the pursuit of the 'more' that exceeds our current possession, motivated by 'the presentiment that salvation, while not identical with our present stance, is nevertheless at hand'.[109] But this whole quest, we have suggested, is inherent in the very nature of man. To speak of transcendence is to describe the fact of being in existence, and as Woods reminds us, it is very difficult to say whether we experience transcendence or whether we simply have the experience of transcending and being transcended - and in any case these may not be alternative experiences, but rather, integral elements of human experience.[110] For our experience of being in existence means that we are aware of and open to being itself, and in that we are aware of transcending, so we are also aware of being transcended, being 'addressed', being drawn towards that 'more' to which we aspire. If then as philosopher Gabriel Marcel suggests, the urgent inner need for transcendence is signalled in an experience of dissatisfaction which has to do with 'the sense of something which is properly speaking external to me, though I can assimilate it to myself and in consequence make it mine',[111] perhaps we can best describe the human quest for transcendence as a response to or reciprocating of God's immanent activity within us. What is it in fact that motivates and generates this quest? And why is it that the concern with this quest, as expressed in terms of 'transcendence', has only recently emerged in philosophical and theological studies of the question of humanity?

To answer these questions we will need to trace the development of the concept of transcendence as it relates to human experience (as distinct from a characteristic traditionally attributed to God); but perhaps first we should address ourselves to the question of the

dissatisfaction that Marcel refers to, that sense of disenchantment and disquiet that stirs the heart of human beings causing them to question the very nature of their existence and the quality and conditions of their human experience.

Now that we have established what we mean by the terms 'deification' and 'transcendence', and explored something of the background to the understanding of the concepts to which these terms refer, we are ready to undertake a detailed analysis of both notions. Our objective will be to discover what parallels there might be between these two ways of speaking about the nature and purpose of human existence. We shall first examine the development of the notion of deification in order to see what it tells us about the potential divineness that we believe is in man, and then we shall endeavour to determine how the process of bringing that divineness to fulfilment might be related to the process of self-transcendence, man's emergence out of materiality and history in search of 'truly human living'.

It may appear at first that the two notions are very different from each other. Deification is understood as a specifically religious, spiritual concept concerned with man's participation in and ultimate assimilation to God, whereas self-transcendence is usually associated with that impulse from within the human existent to search for a deeper and more profound meaning of life, for a sensitizing and intensification of human experience. And yet both concepts are based on a fundamental belief in human nature as essentially 'open', 'unfinished', 'on its way', and 'emerging'.

This thesis will seek to demonstrate that that process of emergence or self-transcendence which is of the very essence of being human, the process of becoming fully human, fully alive, is what the fathers were describing when they spoke of man 'becoming god'. We shall endeavour to show that the process of deification, as the fathers understood and expounded it, does not involve the negation or subsuming of our human nature; it is rather the bringing of humanity to its true fulfilment by confirming the very principle of its being, the uncreated and

transcendent divinity of the true God himself. Christians believe that this true fulfilment of humanity has already been realized in that life which was the perfect union of divinity and humanity, the life of Jesus Christ, that life which was defined and fulfilled in God because it was in the beginning with God and was God. The pursuit of this fulfilled humanity is of the very essence of being human; its realization is thus the attaining 'to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ';[112] and it is to that realization, we submit, that the fathers direct us in their assertion that 'he became what we are in order that we might become what he is'.[113]

CHAPTER TWO

THE EMERGENCE OF THE CONCEPT OF DEIFICATION IN THE WRITINGS OF THE FATHERS TO THE END OF THE THIRD CENTURY

The view of man that we have been considering in our examination of the terms 'transcendence' and 'deification', a view that we might describe as 'dynamic' in that it refers to man as an 'emergent' being, as a creature 'aware of and open to being itself',[1] and as a creature 'whose very nature is truly itself only inasmuch as it exists "in God"',[2] is a concept that developed quite naturally from within the Hellenistic philosophical and religious world view which we have outlined in the first chapter. But it is a view that was not peculiar to that tradition. Its roots are also to be found in numerous places in the scriptures of the early Christian church, that is, the Jewish scriptures and the various other sacred writings, letters and 'gospels', that were being circulated among the scattered communities of Christians and were beginning to be accepted as a 'canon' of authoritative 'books'. Thus in their expositions of the Christian 'gospel', that man and his world have been reconciled to God in Jesus Christ, the early fathers of the church were able to draw upon language and ideas from both these traditions.

As we have suggested,[3] in taking up this dynamic, 'theocentric' view of man, the patristic writers found within the scriptures available to them ideas which witnessed to the concepts of divineness in man and of man as an emergent, transcendent being. Within the Jewish scriptures there were of course the passages in the priestly strand of the pentateuchal narrative that spoke of man being made in the image of God,[4] of man's capacity for immortality,[5] of certain men being particularly close and special to God,[6] and of the prophets who experienced a distinctive relationship of intimacy with God to the extent that they could be said to have a communion with the divine consciousness, a 'sharing of the divine pathos' in which God identifies with and participates in the life of his creatures and thereby enables them to participate in his life.[7]

In the Christian writings which came to make up the recognized canon of the New Testament there was of course the message of the incarnation itself, upon which most of the patristic writers focused their teaching on the perfect, definitive embodiment of God in human terms - that unique event in which they recognized the potentiality of human nature to incorporate the divine. But beyond that, considering the potential of human beings generally, there was much in the Pauline and Johannine writings which referred to identification with God through Christ, by incorporation into Christ understood in both the general sense, as admission into the church, 'the body of Christ', and the more specific sense, as mystical participation of individuals in Christ. And furthermore, there was that ultimate eschatological union with Christ, in the Holy Spirit, in a continuing relationship beyond death in the life of the kingdom. In Paul's letter to the Romans, for instance, with its message of a mystical assimilation through baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ,[8] or in his second letter to the Corinthians with its reference to 'beholding the glory of the Lord' and 'being changed into his likeness, from one degree of glory to another',[9] we have the suggestion that the ultimate destiny of man involves a progression towards God or assimilation to God which reflects some aspects of the religious aspirations of the age. Likewise in the First Letter of John we find a similar idea of a dynamic progression, a transcendence involving not only a vision of God but a form of identification with him:

> Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.[10]

Using such images as light and darkness, life and death, corruption and incorruption, ignorance and knowledge, mortality and immortality, reflecting ideas common enough in many of the different religious quests of the time, these early Christian writers of the first century provided a theological framework and vocabulary that expressed their message in terms which their hearers and readers would find congenial, and gave their successors in the faith a basis upon which to develop the doctrine of the divineness in man. This doctrine came to be expressed ultimately in the terminology of 'deification', terminology

which gathered up various ideas and aspirations from within the Judaeo-Christian world, about the human condition as initially created by God, and about the human destiny as intended by God. But it was this very 'resonance' that caused some within the Christian tradition to regard this specific terminology as suspect and inappropriate for a tradition which they felt should set itself apart from, and indeed over against, all other religious quests and systems of belief.

One must be very careful, therefore, when referring to the development of the language and concept of deification, not to read into the writings which the early church regarded as their authoritative scriptures ideas which are not actually there, and not to impose a doctrinal structure which is either foreign to the traditions from which those scriptures arose or at the very least premature.[11] It is important here at the outset to acknowledge that the terminology of deification does not appear anywhere in what came eventually to be recognized as the canon of Holy Scripture of the Christian church. The expression that comes closest to formulating the concept is found in one of the latest documents to be incorporated into the New Testament, the Second Letter of Peter, which speaks of salvation in terms of partaking 'of the divine nature'[12] in a passage which has many verbal parallels with Hellenistic mystical and philosophical writings from as early as Plato.[13] But as J.N.D.Kelly points out, in commenting on the obvious links between this particular passage and the Hellenistic religious aspirations to which it bears some close resemblances, there are nonetheless distinct differences which the writer of the epistle is careful to make explicit. There is no suggestion here that there is any natural kinship between the higher part of man and God, nor that the corruption of the world to which he refers has anything to do with its materiality or createdness. This passage does however give voice to ideas which in time were developed into a theological tradition which saw redemption as part of a greater process, a process which took human nature beyond a restoration to its primeval state, to a fuller expression of the original destiny for man, to its coming to a degree of fulfilment and perfection in God that could only be expressed by a word that was as shocking as it was explicit: deification.

In the earliest strands of the Christian tradition outside the New Testament writings we find the idea of the divine likeness in man expressed in terms of the 'image' motif from the Genesis creation narrative, as in Clement of Rome's first letter, where man is described as 'stamped' with God's own image,[14] called 'from darkness to light, from ignorance to the full knowledge of the glory of his name'.[15] Those who conform themselves with diligence to the creator's will shall in due time receive the blessed gifts of God: 'life in immortality, splendour in righteousness, truth in boldness and faith in confidence'.[16] Here salvation is understood more as a participating in the new life imparted by Christ in whom man tastes of 'immortal knowledge',[17] rather than as an atonement through the death of Christ, which is the emphasis in much of Paul's teaching in the New Testament. When Clement mentions Christ's death it is as a model of supreme obedience, humility and self-giving love, and not so much as an efficacious event.[18] In the Epistle of Barnabas Christ's saving work is described as making known the things that are past and giving wisdom concerning things present,[19] rescuing us from darkness and the iniquity of error,[20] a theme taken up in the last section of the epistle which deals with 'the two ways' - the way of darkness and death, and the way of light, which is a partaking of things which are incorruptible.[21] These 'two ways' appear again, in slightly different form, in the later manual of apostolic teaching known as the Didache. There the two ways are the way of life, that is the life of love of God and of neighbour,[22] and the way of death, exemplified in wickedness, hatred of truth, and ignorance of the reward of uprightness,[23] and again there is emphasis on knowledge,[24] faith and immortality[25] revealed by Christ.

Prominent in the teachings of these 'Apostolic Fathers'[26] is the idea that man's relationship with God is restored by God's gifts of illuminating knowledge, love and new life made available through his son, Jesus Christ. These gifts enable man to turn from the ways of the world, the ways of darkness, evil and death, and to turn to the way of light and life, in accordance with God's original plan for mankind. But it was also the belief of these early writers that God had other gifts

available, over and above those belonging to human nature, such gifts as incorruptibility, impassibility and immortality, which belong properly, and by nature, to God alone. Thus salvation came to be understood in terms of man's participation in aspects of God's own nature, becoming a partaker in the divine nature - a notion which, as we have already noted, finds a place within the New Testament itself, in the Second Letter of Peter,[27] and also appears in the letters of Ignatius of Antioch.

It is in these letters of Ignatius, written on his way from Antioch to Rome where he was to suffer martyrdom, that we find the theme of participation expressed in an intensely spirited and graphic way. Interpreting his forthcoming death as an opportunity to imitate the passion and death of Christ, Ignatius speaks of his impatience to 'get to God',[28] for it is by his martyrdom that he believes he will achieve that intimate union with God which is the goal of the Christian life. Fellowship with Christ, union with Christ, identification with Christ, are expressions which occur again and again in these deeply personal devotional writings. For Ignatius the Christian life is essentially a mutual indwelling, of Christ in the believer, and the believer in Christ: not as a statue 'inhabits' a temple, but as a total identification - Jesus Christ is 'our inseparable life',[29] 'our true life'.[30] Furthermore it is not merely a union of identification with Christ, it is also a union with the Father, a partaking of God,[31] as he writes to the Ephesians; or as he writes to the Magnesians: 'I know that you are full of God (Θεοῦ γέμετε)'.[32] It is also a union with the Holy Spirit.[33] Thus the faithful are variously referred to as carriers of Christ (χριστοφόροι), carriers of God (θεοφόροι), and bearers of holiness (ἁγιοφόροι).[34]

Having outlined the various forms of union with God that the faithful enjoy in this life, Ignatius presses this relationship even further. The faithful not only live in God, they also 'die unto God',[35] and subsequently 'attain unto God (Θεοῦ ἐπιτύχω)'[36] and likewise unto Jesus Christ.[37] This then is the ultimate realization of the Christian's pilgrimage for Ignatius, the supreme blessedness, when he comes to

enjoy, with others who are faithful, 'a portion with them in God (...τὸ μέρος γένοιτο σχεῖν παρὰ θεῷ)'.[38] Such a union is not simply a moral assimilation by imitation - the moral implications for believers are presupposed. Rather it is a total identification and immediate union with Christ[39] and the Father,[40] nourished by the eucharist, 'the bread of God which is the flesh of Christ'.[41] By this union with 'the physician of flesh and of spirit, God in man, true life in death, Son of Mary and Son of God... Jesus Christ our Lord',[42] fallen man is healed and infused with new life, he is possessed by God and himself possesses God, he receives the medicine of immortality[43] and the prize of incorruption and life eternal.[44]

In these and other similar passages Ignatius of Antioch portrays a relationship between humanity and divinity in which humanity participates in and appropriates attributes of the divine nature. But to describe a relationship of this order, intensity, and intimacy, clearly puts a considerable strain on language (even a language as fluid and conceptually dynamic as Greek), when one is attempting at one and the same time to do full justice to the idea of intimate communion and indeed union between the divine and human orders, and yet to preserve the essential distinctiveness of each and the distinction between the two.

The awkwardness with which the earliest patristic writers expressed these ideas is also noticeable in the writings of the Christian apologists of the later second century, and as the language of this latter group becomes more explicit, so the conceptual difficulties become more apparent. It was only towards the end of the second century that the Christian tradition finally found the terminology appropriate to express its belief that humanity could be the locus for divine self-revelation and divine presence, not only in Jesus called Son of God, but also in those who sought to be identified with and incorporated in him. The doctrinal basis for this notion was found of course in the hypostatic unity or 'communication' between the divine and human in Jesus Christ, and in the belief that man, although a creature and as such external to God, is actually defined in his very

nature as the 'image' of God, as being fully himself only when he is in communion with God. But this communion with God did not diminish or destroy humanity - on the contrary, it was this communion that made humanity fully human, by making directly available to man the healing, liberating, redemptive energies of God.

The supreme exemplar of such full humanity was Jesus of Nazareth, but it was also believed that wherever communities of followers gathered and witnessed to acts of redeeming love, there too may the presence of Christ be found. Thus we may understand grace, as Karl Rahner suggests, as the unfolding within human nature of the union of the human with the divine (as in the incarnate Logos), and therefore as something which can also be found in those who are not the ek-sistence of the Logos in time and history, but do belong to his necessary environment.[45] And if those in whom grace is operative in this way can be said to reflect the divine image, can we not go further and claim that they embody something of the divine life? Perhaps then we might take this thought a step further and suggest that in affirming a specific and definitive incarnation of God in human terms, in Jesus of Nazareth, this need not be regarded as a unique and once-for-all form of expression. For if we accept that God can so express himself, then as man appropriates and participates in the grace of God, he becomes another expression of God in human terms. The distinction between Jesus of Nazareth and other human beings is that Jesus, the Christ, is the one 'who embodies a full response of man to God but also the one who expresses and embodies the way of God towards men'.[46] He is therefore the definitive incarnation of God. Other human beings derive their nature and status from this definitive incarnation. By virtue of their being 'in Christ' they are enabled to make a fuller response to God, to participate more fully in God, and so become 'other Christs', those in whom God becomes flesh, becomes incarnate yet again.

It was in the writings of the 'Apologists' in the latter part of the second century that Christianity began to engage directly in more formal debate with the philosophers of the pagan world. In apologetic treatises addressed to particular individuals or in tracts intended for

more general reception, these writers expounded and defended the Christian faith against the criticisms of pagan intellectuals or civil authorities who attacked the conscientious resistance that Christians put up concerning accepted social and political conventions and public duties. In contrast to the evangelical and devotional simplicity of the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, the apologies of this more academic group of fathers give greater prominence to the place of reason in faith.'[47] They present Christianity as a philosophy rather than as simply a way of life; it is the true philosophy, it is claimed as the culmination, if not the refutation, of all philosophy that came before it.

Justin, who embraced Christianity after a long search for truth in the pagan philosophies, was one of those who believed there was a fundamental harmony between Christianity and pagan philosophy, because the Logos, the mediator between God and the world, the guide to God and the instructor of man, is available to all mankind. Although it was only in Christ that the Logos was manifested in his fullness, all human beings possess a 'seed' of the Logos in their souls:

> We have been taught that Christ is the firstborn of God, and we have declared that he is the Logos of whom every race of man were partakers, and those who lived according to the Logos are Christians, even though they have been thought atheists, as among the Greeks, Socrates and Heraclitus, and men like them.[48]

By developing this implanted seed, God-given reason, and enlightened by the saving knowledge of Christ 'the new law-giver',[49] man is capable of choosing what is right and pleasing to God, and in return will be kept free from death and punishment.[50] Sin, which is 'erroneous belief and ignorance of what is good'[51] cuts man off from God, but religion, the knowledge of divine things, opens up the possibility of ethical improvement, of being

> counted worthy of dwelling with him, reigning together and made free from corruption and suffering. For as he made us in the beginning when we were not, so we hold that those who choose what is pleasing to him will because of that choice be counted worthy of incorruption and of fellowship with him.[52]

Every human being has the potential to attain this salvation, according to Justin. All depends on how one responds to the knowledge of divine truth revealed by Christ. For those who choose what is pleasing to God,

the reward is participation in those blessings which God alone can bestow: incorruptibility and immortality, blessings which restore men to the God-like condition in which they were originally created by God:

> they were made like God, free from suffering and death, provided that they kept his commandments, and were deemed deserving of the name of his sons, and yet they, becoming like Adam and Eve, work out death for themselves; let the interpretation of the psalm [82] be held just as you wish, yet thereby it is demonstrated that all men are deemed worthy of becoming gods (θεοὶ κατηξίωνται γενέσθαι) and of having power to become sons of the highest.[53]

This life is but a terrestrial preparation, making possible the moral transformation and the gradual assimilation to the will and purposes of God. The consummation of the process, however, belongs not to this life but to the parousia of Christ when

> according to prophecy, he shall come from heaven with glory, accompanied by his angelic host, when also he shall raise the bodies of all men who have ever lived, and shall clothe those of the worthy with incorruption.[54]

This participation in the incorruptibility, impassibility and immortality of God is understood by Justin as an assimilation to God, a means of making man like God, or rather, restoring to man the divineness with which he was originally created and for which he was intended by God. Here then, we have an indication of the way in which Christian theology was gradually moving towards the concept of deification, but as yet it was not expressed in the specific terminology that was to emerge in the writings of later fathers.

One of Justin's more notable pupils, Tatian, was, like his master, a convert to Christianity after much searching in pagan philosophy. But in contrast to his mentor, Tatian rejected totally all Greek philosophy and renounced on principle everything associated with Greek civilization, religion, art and science. So extreme was he in his views that he advocated the rejection of all contemporary education and culture and was therefore not prepared to incorporate anything of his previous learning in his Christian thinking, only referring to Greek writers in order to denigrate them.

On the divineness in man, Tatian taught that at his creation man was made

> an image of immortality, so that just as incorruptibility belongs to God, in the same way man sharing in a part of God (θεοῦ μοίρας), might have the immortal principle also.[55]

He regards man as a composite creature, as 'part of the material world, and at the same time above it',[56] because of the two different kinds of spirit with which he is endowed: 'one which is called the soul', and the other, 'greater than the soul', that is 'the image and likeness of God'.[57] The soul, he says, is not in itself immortal, but it does have the capacity for immortality[58] which will be realized if the soul has obtained knowledge of God. In the beginning, the divine spirit was the soul's constant companion, but at the Fall the spirit forsook the soul because it was not willing to follow the spirit's lead. But the soul retained a spark (ἔναυσμα) of the spirit's power and so retained the capacity to enter again into union with the divine spirit, and mount 'to the realms above where the spirit leads it'.[59] This is no automatic process, however, in which man is a merely passive recipient. The divine spirit is not given to all. He takes up his abode with those who live justly and with those who are obedient to wisdom, for it is they who attract to themselves the kindred spirit.[60] The soul that is ignorant of the truth will die and rise at the end of the world to suffer death by immortal punishment. The soul that has obtained knowledge of God, on the other hand, even if it is dissolved for a time, does not die but partakes of that blessed incorruptibility and immortality that will restore in man the image and likeness of God. It is to this prospect of salvation that Tatian exhorts his readers:

> It becomes us now to seek for what we once had but have lost, to unite the soul with the Holy Spirit and to strive after union with God.[61]

This condition of union with God is, according to Tatian, the realization of man's true destiny, to advance beyond 'mere humanity' to God himself. For that which is distinctive of man is not his rationality and intelligence - all animals are possessed of understanding and knowledge - but rather his bearing the image and likeness of God and his capacity for self-realization and personal integration consonant with his true nature, in short, his capacity for God. As Tatian expresses it:

> Man is not, as the croakers teach, a rational being capable of intelligence and understanding, but man alone is 'the image and

> likeness of God'. I mean by man not one who behaves like the animals, but who has advanced (κεχωρηκότα) far beyond his humanity towards God himself.[62]

Here we find the specific linking of self-transcendence with the notion of union with God - not simply the association of the language of these ideas but the relating of the process of self-transcending to the concept of advancing 'towards God himself', and the consequent restoration of the divine image and likeness, enabling man to discern again the 'things that are perfect'[63] and share again in 'a part of God', his incorruptibility and immortality.[64]

Contemporary with Tatian was the Athenian Athenagoras, regarded as the most eloquent of the early Christian apologists, a writer of great sophistication whose use of language and style of reasoning indicate his classical training in rhetoric. Unlike Tatian, he did not reject the Greek philosophy and culture in which he was educated, and quotes freely from classical philosophers and poets. In his two works which have come down to us, a plea to the emperors on behalf of the Christians, and a treatise on the resurrection, he has much to say on the nature and destiny of man, affirming the biblical doctrines of the essential distinction between God (as uncreated and eternal, and to be contemplated only by thought and reason), and his creation (which because it is created is perishable),[65] and the creation of man in the image of God, and gifted with intelligence and the faculty for rational discernment.[66] It is by virtue of this capacity to know and contemplate God and his power and wisdom, that men are also endowed with unending existence that they

> might live without distress eternally with the powers by which they governed their former life, even though they were in corruptible and earthly bodies.[67]

Athenagoras argues that since man, unlike the rest of the created order, was created 'simply for the sake of existing and living in accordance with its own nature' there can be no reason for him to perish entirely:

> Since, then, the reason is seen to be this, to exist for ever, the living being with its natural active and passive functions must by all means be preserved; each of the two parts of which it consists makes its contribution.[68]

And on the basis of this claim he then goes on to link the Greek notion of the natural immortality of the human soul with the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body. For if the very reason for human existence is that it should exist, then the soul must continue to exist in the form in which it was created and to work at the tasks which suit its nature (ruling the body and assessing all that impinges on man), and the body must be 'moved by nature to what is suitable for it' and be 'receptive to the changes decreed for it'.[69] Therefore, while 'content with life in this needy and corruptible form as suited to our present mode of existence', Athenagoras asserts that we can with confidence 'hope for survival in an incorruptible form'.[70] The basis for such assurance is the 'infallible security' of the will of the creator,

> according to which he made man of an immortal soul and a body and endowed him with intelligence and an innate law to safeguard and protect the things which he gave that are suitable for intelligent beings with a rational life. We full well know that he would not have formed such an animal and adorned him with all that contributes to permanence if he did not want this creature to be permanent.[71]

But because these attributes with which man is endowed by God are in fact divine attributes - rationality, incorruptibility, and immortality - they are the means by which man participates in the divine:

> The Creator of our universe made man that he might participate in rational life and, after contemplating God's majesty and universal wisdom, perdure and make them the object of his eternal contemplation, in accordance with the divine will and the nature allotted to him. The reason then for man's creation guarantees his eternal survival, and his survival guarantees his resurrection, without which he could not survive <u>as man</u>.[72]

Athenagoras then proceeds to examine the argument 'which naturally and inevitably follows these points'.[73] It is by providing for the resurrection of the body that God provides for the survival of man <u>as man</u>, because as Athenagoras makes clear, human nature is a composite entity 'constituted by an immortal soul and a body which has been united with it at its creation',[74] and it is therefore necessary that 'the harmony and concord of the entire living being'[75] be maintained, and 'the end will truly be one if the same living being whose end it is remains constituted as before'.[76]

That which is characteristic of human nature, understanding and reason, is given to men to discern intelligible realities such as the goodness, wisdom, and justice of him who endowed them. It is necessary therefore that the capacity to discern these realities, as well as the realities themselves, be permanent, but this in turn requires that the nature that received that capacity is also permanent. So, he concludes:

> It is man - not simply soul - who received understanding and reason. Man, then, who consists of both soul and body, must survive for ever; but he cannot survive unless he is raised. For if there is no resurrection, the nature of men as men would not be permanent.'[77]

It is absolutely necessary then, according to Athenagoras, that the body should be permanent in a way that conforms with its own nature and should exist eternally with a deathless soul. It is the whole man, body as well as soul, who thus participates in God, even though the soul and the body are of different orders, for whereas only the soul of man was 'created to survive unchanged', the body's future existence is assured, not by continuing duration in its present form, but by a transformation which will render it incorruptible. There is no inconsistency, therefore, argues Athenagoras, in claiming that human existence, although cut short by death and corruptibility, is termed 'permanence',[78] because permanence is a term relative to each reality to which it refers: the soul is by nature permanent, whereas the body, although involved according to its nature in the discontinuity of dissolution as a concomitant of its needy and corruptible existence, yet looks forward to a permanent incorruptibility to follow its present existence.[79] Thus mutability is for Athenagoras inherent in human life as it was created by God and as it was endowed by God with the capacity to participate in his own attributes:

> Since then this human nature has been allotted discontinuity from the outset by the will of the Maker, it has a kind of life and permanence characterized by discontinuity and interrupted sometimes by sleep, sometimes by death, and by the changes that take place at each stage of life.[80]

But it is because of this very discontinuity which Athenagoras relates to the various transcending experiences of 'each stage of life', a discontinuity which characterizes the 'kind of life and permanence' of human nature, that we are enabled to make that final transcendence of self, when we depart this present life and participate totally, as far

as the human existent is able, in the attributes of the divine nature itself:

> When we depart this present life we shall live another life better than here, a heavenly one, not earthly, so that we may then abide near God and with God (σὺν θεῷ), changeless and impassible in soul as though we were not body, even if we have one, but heavenly spirit.[81]

Athenagoras justifies such a destiny for human nature on the grounds that mankind's end must surely be distinguished from that common to other creatures, since it has to do with a distinctive composite nature of the physical and the spiritual, and can in no way ignore or undermine the physical aspects of human existence. He argues that the end proper to men cannot be freedom from pain (for this it would share with things entirely devoid of sensation) and neither can it be unlimited indulgence in sensual pleasure (for this would give prominence to the animal side of human life and take no account of the moral discernment and self-discipline of the virtuous life).[82] But nor is there happiness for the soul in a state of separation from the body, for what we are considering is the life or end, not of one of the parts which constitute man, but of the creature made up of both parts:

> For such is the nature of every man allotted this life of ours, and there must be some end which is proper to this form of existence.[83]

Thus he concludes:

> A man would not be wrong in saying that the end of a life capable of prudence and rational discernment is to live eternally without being torn away from those things which natural reason has found first and foremost in harmony with itself, and to rejoice unceasingly in the contemplation of their Giver and his decrees, even though it is true that the majority of men live their lives without reaching this goal.[84]

Thus Athenagoras sees mutability as of the very essence of human nature, involving the human existent in a process of change or transcendence; but it is a process of transcendence that also involves participation in the divine attributes, the attributes with which the soul is endowed by its very nature, but attributes also which, by the grace of God, are made available to man as composite of body and soul, and enable him to experience that ultimate union with God that is akin to what we would term deification. In the writings of this Athenian, then, we find the biblical doctrine of man bearing the image of God

being explored and expounded in ways that take us very close to the notions of human transcendence and human transformation, both concepts converging in that ultimate union with God that came to be termed deification.

It is in one of the works of the last of the second century apologists whom we shall consider, Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch c. AD 170, that we find the first explicit reference to deification in Christian literature. Born of pagan parents and given a traditional Hellenistic education, Theophilus did not become a Christian until his mature years, and only then after extensive consideration and study of the scriptures (mainly, it would seem, the Greek Old Testament). The only extant work we have of Theophilus from the number referred to by Eusebius[85] is a three volume apology in which he defends Christianity against the objections of his pagan friend Autolycus.

Theophilus, basing his anthropology on the Genesis account of the creation of man,[86] regards man as

> created in an intermediate state (μέσος), neither entirely mortal nor entirely immortal, but capable of either state.[87]

He then introduces a theme, taken up as we shall see by Irenaeus and a number of later fathers, that Adam was created as an uncompleted sketch, in years but an infant (νήπιος), not yet able to digest the solid food of knowledge - a state in which God was prepared to allow him to remain for some time.[88] But Adam failed the test that God set him, to see whether he would be obedient to his command, and through his disobedience 'he acquired pain, suffering, and sorrow, and finally fell victim to death'.[89]

Death however was turned into a 'great benefit' for man, because by this 'kind of banishment' and punishment, God gave man the opportunity to expiate his sin and after chastisement to be recalled to paradise after the resurrection and judgement.[90] Opportunity was thus given man for repentance and amendment,

> for as by disobedience man gained death for himself, so by obedience to the will of God whoever will can obtain eternal life for himself. For God gave us a law and holy commandments; everyone

> who performs them can be saved and, attaining to the resurrection, can inherit imperishability.[91]

Whoever puts off what is mortal and puts on imperishability will then rightly 'see God',

> for God raises up your flesh immortal with your soul; after becoming immortal you will then see the Immortal, if you believe in him now.[92]

And it is by thus turning to the life of immortality, by keeping the divine commandment, that man wins immortality as a reward and 'becomes a god'.[93] But in speaking of salvation in these terms, in the unambiguous language of deification, Theophilus is not suggesting that man usurps the place of God or becomes what God is in himself, in fact he specifically repudiates any such idea, stressing that immortality is always a divine gift, it is never an attribute that man can claim as of right:

> For if God had made man immortal from the beginning, he would have made him God.[64]

But at his creation man was given the capacity, provided he was obedient to God's commands, to advance toward full maturity, which Theophilus again describes, in the explicit vocabulary of deification, as becoming god by divine appointment:

> God transferred (man) out of the earth from which he was made into paradise, giving him an opportunity of advancing (ἀφορμὴν προκοπῆς) so that by growing and becoming mature, and furthermore having been declared a god (θεὸς ἀναδειχθείς), he might also ascend into heaven possessing immortality.[95]

This is the destiny which Adam forsook by his disobedience. But the descendants of Adam, still retaining that capacity for growth to full maturity, can, by being faithful to the divine will, receive the gift of immortality, and with it the deification which was part of Adam's declared inheritance.

In the writings of the apologists we have surveyed, we have detected the gradual emergence of the idea that salvation for man is a process of growth, particularly growth in the knowledge of divine things as revealed in the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Logos of God. This knowledge not only makes man aware of what the will and purposes of God are, it also enables man to respond to the divine will by the exercise of his free will, and so receive from God the gifts of blessed

incorruptibility (ἀφθαρσία) and immortality (ἀθανασία). Salvation, then, is available to all, not because incorruptibility and immortality are in the nature of man, but because, by divine grace, man is able to participate in the immortality and incorruptibility of God who as the unbegotten (ἀγέννητος) is immortal by nature. To participate thus in the divine attributes is to enjoy a degree of union with God - in whatever form that is understood: through participation in the Logos, Jesus Christ (as Justin expresses it), or by the restoration of the link (συζυγία) between the spirit of God and the human soul (Tatian), or again, by being assimilated to God in the resurrection life (Athenagoras), or by growing and becoming mature (τέλειος) (Theophilus).

In the Apostolic Fathers this participation is almost exclusively an eschatological experience, available in the life beyond. In the Apologists, however, there is a shift of emphasis in that while the fullness of the experience is still usually reserved for the life beyond, there is yet a sense in which man begins to appropriate it here and now. In some of the fathers this is merely a terrestrial preparation involving a moral transformation, but in others there is the distinct impression that union with God is available to some (the enlightened ones) here and now in their earthly life. Some of these early attempts at such a synthesis managed, with considerable skill, to enrich the biblical concepts not only by re-phrasing them in a different vocabulary which naturally expanded the scope of their interpretation, but also by supplementing them with new ideas which later theologians were to utilize with even greater daring and imagination.

The biblical teaching that man was made in the image and likeness of God gave rise quite naturally, as we have already noted, to the development of the idea that there were built into man at creation certain resemblances to God, resemblances that enabled man to be the locus for a divine self-revelation and a divine presence, a disclosure of God in the world. The contribution of these early apologists to Christian thought in the second century took this idea to the point

where it was becoming possible to talk of man not merely partaking of the divine nature, but actually becoming one with God, achieving his full God-given potential by a form of union with God which theologians within a very short time were quite prepared to describe as 'becoming god', deification. The terms used to describe this destiny of man differ markedly in the various writings we have examined, and while we have attempted to trace the emergence of the idea of deification, it is important to acknowledge that there is nothing like a coherently developed doctrine of the concept at this stage. At the very most all we have are sketchy outlines of a concept of deification, more distinct in some writers than in others. But these outlines provided the basis for the considerable and rapid development of the doctrine within the next hundred and fifty years.

In the writings of Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons during the last two decades of the second century, we find the notion of man's capacity to relate to and participate in the divine attributes taken up in a way that links it directly to the concept of human transcendence; and both concepts are in turn firmly grounded in the doctrine of the incarnation, the cornerstone of Irenaeus's theology.

In refutation of the Gnostic heresy which was threatening the church in the later second century, Irenaeus proclaimed unequivocally the traditional biblical doctrines of the inherent goodness of the created order, the essential distinction between God the creator and his creation, and the teaching that man is a psychosomatic unity, a composite creature both carnal and spiritual, in his original state, bearing both the image and likeness of his creator. But for Irenaeus this did not mean that man was created perfect. On the contrary, he makes much of the idea that Adam was created an infant (νήπιος),[96] and although God could have given him perfection from the outset, man was incapable of receiving it, because he was as yet a child. What Adam did receive at his creation was the 'breath of life' from God, and this was 'united to the material form, gave man life, and revealed him as a rational animal'.[97] Although not created perfect, Adam was given the potentiality, by virtue of the image of God in which he was made, of

realizing that image by growing into the likeness of God, 'and so come to his perfection'.[98] And by this process of growth, in communion with God, man would come to his full human maturity; but the corollary was that if this process of growth was thwarted or ceased by the severing of his communion with God, then man's attainment of humanity would also cease. Not only would the 'divine' in man's life be impaired, his humanity would be lost also. The life-giving breath of God given to Adam, which endowed him with his likeness to God and made him potentially incorruptible, was a gift very easily lost, not one deeply rooted in his being. When by his weakness and ignorance Adam disobeyed God, the divinely intended process was interrupted, and he fell into the clutches of the Devil[99] and lost the divine likeness. However, all was not lost, 'for never at any time did Adam escape the hands of God'[100] - although he lost the likeness Adam still retained the image of God - and in the fullness of time,

> the Word of the Father and the Spirit of God, united to the ancient substance from which Adam was formed, made a living and perfect man who received the perfection of the Father; so that as in the animal man we all died, so in the spiritual man we shall all be made alive.[101]

Here Irenaeus draws the parallel between the first Adam, given the breath of life at the initial creation, and the second Adam (Christ), who in the incarnation embodied the perfect likeness of God, and so also the Holy Spirit of God.[102] In Christ alone was God's design perfectly realized; all who went before him, although bearing the potentiality for perfection, were but rough drafts of what was to come. Not only did Christ manifest the true image of God unimpaired, he also restored to humanity the likeness Adam had lost:

> For in times past it was said indeed that man was made in the image of God, but it was not demonstrated. For the Word was at that time still invisible, he in whose image man had been made; and that is why man easily lost the likeness. But when the Word of God was made flesh, he established both the one and the other. He manifested the true image by becoming that which was his image; and he restored the likeness by consolidating it, making man like the Father by means of the visible Word.[103]

As this passage makes clear - and this is crucial for the correct understanding of Irenaeus' whole theology of redemption - perfection comes not at the beginning but at the end. There was a form of perfection at the beginning, in that when the first man received the

breath of God he thereby received the divine likeness (although he soon lost it!). But Adam was only a child of a man, and could receive only as much of the Spirit (and likeness) as he could bear. God's overall plan for the destiny of man is therefore a single whole. Both the Spirit and the Word (referred to by Irenaeus as the 'hands of God')[104] are always present to man, but man is able to receive them only by progressive stages. Although there were some to whom the Spirit of God had been given prior to the incarnation, and some of these, like Enoch and Elijah, enjoyed blessed incorruptibility to such a degree that 'they were assumed and translated',[105] it is in the Risen Christ that the Spirit lays hold upon humanity once and for all and so bestows upon it incorruptibility, bringing to realization the perfect man.

Adam's sin of disobedience, according to Irenaeus, entailed consequences for the whole human race: '... through the disobedience of that one man who was first formed out of the untilled earth, the many were made sinners and lost life'.[106] What Adam lost, all lost in him - his disobedience was the source of the sinfulness and mortality of all mankind. Although he nowhere formulates a specific account of the connection between Adam's sinful act and the rest of mankind, Irenaeus clearly presupposes some kind of mystical solidarity or identity between the first man and his descendants.

But just as all men fell because of their solidarity with Adam, so Irenaeus makes it a fundamental point in his teaching that all can be restored through their solidarity with Christ. This is not understood, however, as a restoration to a former state (as Tatian taught). It is for Irenaeus a more complex notion, of 'recapitulation' (ἀνακεφαλαίωσις),[107] the gathering up of all things - the human race and indeed the whole of reality - by Christ into himself. Because Adam was not fully perfect, and lost what perfection (the likeness) he did have, what God achieved in Christ could not be a return to an original state. It had to be, rather, a 'bringing to a head', a consummation, a summing up of all that had gone before, the culmination of the process which had been intended for Adam (and so for all men), but until Christ, had never been realized. Now that in Christ 'the Word of the

Father and the Spirit of God are united to the ancient substance from which Adam was formed',[108] the destiny for which Adam was intended is again realizable.

The essence of Irenaeus' theory of 'recapitulation' is that Christ both gathers up all things and all peoples of all ages into himself, and brings all things to fulfilment. Thus while there is a retrospective aspect in this idea, the implications of this recapitulation are forward looking, because in the incarnation Christ inaugurated a new redeemed humanity.[109] In Christ, humanity is given the opportunity of making a new start through incorporation into his mystical body. As the first Adam by his disobedience introduced sin and death, so Christ, the second Adam, by his obedience reintroduced the principle of life and immortality, and 'righteousness having been introduced, shall cause life to fructify in those persons who in times past were dead'.[110]

Because he identified with the human race at every phase of its existence by passing through every stage,[111] Christ restores communion with God to all, 'perfecting man after the image and likeness of God'.[112] In Christ, God caused man to cleave to and to become one with God. The Word, having been made flesh, entered into communion with us:[113]

> For it was for this end that the Word of God was made man, and he who was the Son of God became the Son of man, that man, having been taken into the Word, and receiving the adoption, might become the Son of God. For by no other means could we have attained to incorruptibility and immortality, unless we had been united to incorruptibility and immortality. But how could we be joined to incorruptibility and immortality, unless first, incorruptibility and immortality had become that which we are, so that the corruptible might be swallowed up by incorruptibility, and the mortal by immortality, that we might receive the adoption as sons.[114]

Through the union of Godhead and manhood in Christ the corruptibility of human nature was removed, and man was enabled by adoption to share the sonship of Christ. This removal of corruption, often referred to as the 'physical' theory of redemption, is obviously associated with Christ's taking on of human nature in the incarnation, and although this seems to suggest that it is the incarnation itself which effects the redemption, elsewhere[115] Irenaeus is quite emphatic that Christ

redeemed us with his blood, and he presents immortality as the fruit of the passion as well as of the incarnation. Neither is there anything automatic or mechanical in this process of man's salvation and ultimate deification according to Irenaeus' teaching. Those whose belief is deficient, who assert that Jesus was simply a good man, are according to Irenaeus 'in a state of death, having been not as yet joined to the Word of God the Father, nor receiving liberty through the Son'.[116] Furthermore, he insists that God requires man's obedience:

> for this reason does God demand service from men, in order that, since he is good and merciful, he may benefit those who continue in his service.... For this is the glory of man, to continue and remain permanently in God's service.[117]

The use of the sacraments, too, is enjoined upon all who desire incorruptibility and the hope of the resurrection to eternity.[118]

As we noted earlier, for Irenaeus the Holy Spirit is the principal source of the divine life (and also of the divine likeness), and therefore the gift of the Holy Spirit to man constitutes a participation in the divine life itself:

> ... where the Spirit of the Father is, there is a living man; ... (there is) the flesh possessed by the Spirit, forgetful indeed of what it belongs to, and adopting the quality of the Spirit, being made conformable to the Word of God.[119]

Those who have thus received the Holy Spirit are termed 'perfect', for

> when the Spirit here blended with the soul is united to (God's) handiwork, the man is rendered spiritual and perfect because of the outpouring of the Spirit, and this is he who was made in the image and likeness of God.[120]

But this perfection is but a foretaste preparing us for incorruption to be received in its fullness at the resurrection of the dead:

> If therefore, at the present time, having the earnest, we do cry, 'Abba, Father', what shall it be when on rising again, we behold him face to face; when all the members shall burst out into a continuous hymn of triumph, glorifying him who raised them from the dead, and gave the gift of eternal life?[121]

This eschatological blessedness, effected by the complete grace of the Spirit

> will render us like unto him, and accomplish the will of the Father; for it shall make man after the image and likeness of God.[122]

Does this coming to a state of perfection and incorruption, and being rendered like unto God, mean, for Irenaeus, that man has been 'deified'? In response to this question, Gustaf Wingren, in his study on the biblical theology of Irenaeus, suggests that Irenaeus does understand this process as one of deification, even though, as Wingren notes, the word 'deification' (θεοποίησις) does not actually appear in Irenaeus.[123] It is clear, however, that the idea itself is present in his writings, in that he understands man's coming into being as a process of emergence which takes place in his continuing fellowship with God and will in the age to come make man 'like God', a concept he expresses in various terms: 'become one with God',[124] 'joined to God',[125] 'promotion into God',[126] 'pass into God',[127] 'attaining even unto God',[128] all of which point to the idea of deification. But as Wingren points out, for Irenaeus this does not mean that man gives up his existence as man and takes upon himself 'a different existence, viz. God's existence, while his human part disappears'.[129] On the contrary, in asserting that man has been destined for eternal life, for that incorruption which will bring him nigh unto God, Irenaeus understands this clearly as a process of human self-transcendence, by which man attains his full maturity as man. As Professor Maurice Wiles has observed, deification so understood is the fulfilment rather than the negation of humanity, just as, with particular reference to Irenaeus, manhood is the fulfilment rather than the negation of childhood.[130] According to God's decree in creation, man as man is to be like God, and when man becomes like God he is in fact becoming truly man:

> By this order, then, and by measures such as these, and by this kind of training, man being originated and formed comes to be in the image and likeness of the unoriginate God: the Father approving and commanding, the Son performing and creating, the Spirit giving nourishment and growth, and man for his part silently advancing, and going onward to perfection; i.e. coming near the Unoriginate. For the Unoriginate is perfect; and this is God. And it was needful that man should first be brought into being, and being made should grow, and having grown should come to manhood, and after manhood should be multiplied, and being multiplied should grow in strength, and after such growth should be glorified, and being glorified should see his own Lord. For he who is to be seen, is God: and the vision of God produces incorruption, and incorruption makes one to be near unto God.[131]

Man's destiny, therefore, by God's design, is to grow, silently advancing and going onward to perfection, and if this principle of

growth ceases man's humanity is destroyed, for he can only be fully human, according to his own nature, in communion with God. Through faith, discipleship, right believing, and the sacraments, Christ and the Holy Spirit come to dwell in men, God comes to enter full communion with man. This communion reaches its culmination in the resurrection when the fellowship with God is brought to its consummation; man's humanity is fulfilled, he shares the incorruption and immortality of God, he has attained the image and likeness of God. His true end is to become <u>like</u> God, but obviously not to become God, even though Irenaeus does refer to this goal of full humanity as being 'made god':

> ... we have not been made gods from the beginning, but at first merely men, then at length gods; .... For after his great kindness he graciously conferred good upon us, and made men like to himself, that is in their own power; while at the same time by his prescience he knew the infirmity of human beings, and the consequences which would flow from it; but through his love and his power, he shall overcome the substance of created nature.[132]

The end of human life, then, is for man to participate in the divine life which is made available through the incarnation of the Logos and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit. Fully human life is to be found only where God is at work, in creation, in the incarnation, and in our continuing re-creation which is our salvation. It is indeed a continuing process, in fact in one passage Irenaeus suggests it is a process that has no ending (a notion which we shall find later in Gregory of Nyssa);

> God is truly perfect in all things, himself equal and similar to himself, as he is all light, and all mind, and all substance, and the fount of all good; but man receives advancement and increase towards God. For as God is always the same, so also man, when found in God, shall always go on towards God.[133]

This participation in the salvation of God is a process of continuing self-transcendence, but it is also, in Irenaeus' own words, a deification:

> How can they be saved unless it was God who wrought out their salvation upon earth? Or how shall man pass into God, unless God has first passed into man?[134]

he asks. By God becoming man, man is enabled to 'pass into God', to enter that fullness of communion which, as we have noted, is termed 'being made god', being deified. But that does not mean becoming all that God is, it means rather becoming all that man can be in fellowship with God, a fellowship that includes partaking of the vision of God:

> For the glory of God is man fully alive, and the life of man consists in the beholding of God.[135]

This seeing of God confers on man incorruption for eternal life,

> for as those who see the light are within the light and partake of its brilliancy; even so, those who see God are in God, and receive of his splendour. But his splendour vivifies them; those therefore who see God, do receive life.[136]

In seeing God, man is given life and immortality, a life of continuing fellowship and enjoyment of God's goodness. And in that fellowship he attains unto God by a process of continuing self-transcendence, continuing emergence, by being taken beyond where he is so that he may become what God would have him be.

In contrast to Irenaeus, the man of tradition who regarded Hellenistic philosophy and culture as a threat to the Christian faith, his near contemporary, Titus Flavius Clemens, head of the catechetical school at Alexandria, had a much more positive attitude to classical philosophy, arguing that it could actually be employed to expound and deepen Christian faith. Whereas Irenaeus set out to expose and refute the speculation of the Gnostics, Clement of Alexandria sought to establish a relationship between knowledge (γνῶσις) and faith, suggesting that faith is in fact the foundation of philosophy and when brought into harmony they can produce the perfect Christian and the true as distinct from the false or heretical Gnostic.

Clement claims that Christianity is 'the true philosophy',[137] the 'science of things divine and heavenly',[138] for which classical philosophy paved the way.[139] Salvation for Clement is a paedagogic process in which the Logos of God, divine reason, the teacher and lawgiver of mankind,[140] leads man from gentile wisdom to faith, from faith to knowledge, from knowledge to love, and then ultimately 'to where the God and guard of our faith and love is', establishing 'a mutual friendship between that which knows and that which is known.[141] This takes man on to a plane and into an experience which Clement describes as:

> ... that perfect end which knows no end, teaching us here the nature of the life we shall hereafter live with gods according to the will of God, when we have been delivered from all chastisement

> and punishment, which we have to endure as salutary chastening in consequence of our sins. After this deliverance rank and honours are assigned to those who are perfected, who have done now with purification and all other ritual, though it be holy among the holy; by their closeness to the Lord, the final restoration attends on their everlasting contemplation of God. ... (looking) upon God face to face..... For herein lies the perfection of the gnostic soul, that having transcended all purifications and modes of ritual, it should be with the Lord where he is, in immediate subordination to him.[142]

This paedagogic process is a gradual process of transcendence, a passing from one stage of knowledge and experience to another, through 'all purifications and modes of ritual' until the soul arrives at the ultimate perfection, 'with the Lord'. But the Logos is not only man's instructor, he is also the saviour who administers 'rational medicines',[143] and the physician who bestows incorruptibility[144] because knowledge is 'the communication of incorruptibility',[145] continuing the idea of salvation as a healing as well as an educative process. There is little emphasis given, however, to the notion of salvation as redemption, and what references there are to Christ laying down his life as a ransom, redeeming us by his blood, or offering himself as a sacrifice,[146] are conventional phrases drawn from the language of liturgy or preaching.

Thus for Clement it is the philosopher, the true gnostic, who is the perfect Christian:

> For God created man for immortality, and made him an image of his own nature; according to which nature of him who knows all, he who is a gnostic, and righteous, and holy with prudence, hastes to reach the measure of perfect manhood.[147]

And in the attaining of perfection through the acquisition of knowledge, the gnostic experiences assimilation to God:

> Thence assimilation to God the Saviour arises to the gnostic, as far as permitted to human nature, he being made perfect 'as the Father who is in heaven'.[148]

Here we have an example of Clement's Christianized version of the Greek ideal of human perfection, achieved by knowledge (γνῶσις) and purification (κάθαρσις), which leads to assimilation (ἐξομοίωσις) to God, as outlined in Plato's Theaetetus[149] to which Clement specifically refers.[150] But in Clement's scheme 'the perfected gnostic' is the man who has reached the heights of Christian knowledge and who is thus

'translated absolutely and entirely to another sphere', he is 'assimilated to God', and experiences 'undisturbed intercourse and communion with the Lord'.[151] But this assimilation to God is not an absorption into God, it is not a negation of humanity, but rather, as we noted in Irenaeus, a bringing of manhood to its fulfilment. As Clement expresses it, it is a 'promotion in glory', a growing into 'perfect manhood',[152] for it is a bringing to its appointed consummation that perfection for which man was intended at his creation.

The first man, Clement states, was 'not created perfect in constitution but suitable for acquiring virtue'.[153] He was in his primitive state, childlike and innocent,[154] destined to advance by stages to perfection; he was created for incorruption and immortality, in the image of God's own nature,[155] but (and here Clement opposes Gnostic teaching) he is still a creature, neither a portion of God nor consubstantial with him. To say that man at his creation received what is 'according to the image',[156] means that

> Adam was perfect, as far as respects his formation; for none of the distinctive characteristics of the idea and form of man were wanting in him.[157]

But that which is 'according to the likeness' he will only receive afterwards on attaining perfection.[158] The image and likeness of God that man bears has nothing to do with bodily form,[159] it has to do rather with the intelligent faculty in man, the νοῦς, the highest part of his being, that gives him his natural kinship with God.[160] In fact the image of God is the divine Word, and man (or more specifically, the human mind) is the image of the image.[161] It is thus for Clement the human mind which gives man his real and unique dignity:

> For the Word of God is intellectual, and we see the 'imaging' of this in man alone. Hence, as respects his soul, the good man is godlike in form and semblance. For the distinctive form of each one is the mind by which we are characterized.[162]

Salvation, then, for Clement is something of an intellectual process, for it is the acquiring of knowledge, the knowledge which deifies,[163] which brings man to perfection, to that likeness to God which is his true destiny, and all men are therefore free to obey or disobey God's law. But here we find an inconsistency in Clement, for on the one hand

he teaches that all who turn to Christ and accept his teaching will attain perfection,[164] whereas in the later miscellaneous collection, the Stromata, he makes a distinction between the common faith[165] of those who simply know God, accept his revelation and practise no injustice, and an augmented faith possessed by 'the gnostic', who alone is truly pious, the true Christian.[166] Clement's teaching can thus be charged with being élitist, because it appears that only the advanced Christian who is prepared to receive the true gnosis is in a position to exercise his freedom in such a way as to aspire to the contemplation of God and so attain the divine likeness. The perfection for which all were destined and to which all the faithful aspire, has thus become a state which only an élite has any hope of achieving, for the way to perfection presupposes an arduous training involving not only strenuous intellectual effort in the acquiring of all knowledge,[167] but also a severe moral discipline which aims to exterminate all the passions and conquer all the virtues.[168] In fact, a second conversion is necessary to take 'those who show themselves worthy of it', from simple faith to 'the endless and perfect end', the reward and honours assigned 'to those who have become perfect', and are worthy to be called 'gods'.[169] Thus the gnostic is finally 'initiated into the beatific vision face to face'.[170] He is rescued from slavery to the passions of the soul, and will therefore no longer eagerly desire to be assimilated to what is beautiful, possessing, as he does, beauty by love; for

> what more need of courage and of desire to him who has obtained the affinity to the impassible God which arises from love, and by love has enrolled himself among the friends of God?[171]

And he further explains this as meaning that 'pre-eminently a divine image resembling God, is the soul of a righteous man'[188] in which the eternal Word is enclosed and enshrined. It is the Word who is

> the true Only-begotten, the express image of the glory of the universal King and almighty Father, who impresses on the gnostic the seal of the perfect contemplation, according to his own image; so that there is now a third divine image, made as far as possible like the second cause, the essential Life through which we live the true life.[189]

Thus mortal man, the image of the image, ('for the image of God is the divine and royal Word, the impassible man',[190]) cannot, by definition, be consubstantial with, or indeed absorbed into, the immortal deity. That which makes man the image of God is specifically the intelligence

(νοῦς) or the rational soul 'breathed by God into man's face; for there, they say, the ruling faculty (τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν) is situated; interpreting the access by the senses into the first man as the addition of the soul'.[191] It is this gift, this breath, that gives man his superiority over other animals,[192] and gives him a share in the divine thought. But something more is necessary for the complete man, for as Clement observes, 'the real man in us is the spiritual man'.[193] It is by the gift of the Holy Spirit, available to believers through Jesus Christ, that man is brought to perfection by God - he becomes 'that spiritual and perfect man', 'son and friend... replenished with insatiable contemplation face to face'.[194]

This participation in the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ, also presupposes, of course, a participation in the life of the church,[195] and participation in the sacraments, particularly baptism.[196] Another specific character which distinguishes the deifying gnosis in Clement's teaching is that it is at least as moral as it is intellectual, and is to be manifested in the quality of life lived by the believer, a life of virtue and purity, in which two particular qualities are regarded as having a significance above all others: impassibility (ἀπάθεια) and love (ἀγάπη). While the combination of these two features may at first sight seem contradictory, it must be realized that although Clement's understanding of ἀπάθεια was certainly influenced by Stoic thought and was at times expressed in a negative sense as absence of feeling, indifference or 'apathy',[197] it also had the distinctly positive meaning of royal independence, a liberty of the spirit, a freedom from domination by the passions, a freedom to direct one's energies in a specific way, to enable the gnostic soul to achieve that vision attainable by the pure in heart,

> assimilating, as far as possible, the moderation which, arising from practice, tends to impassibility, to him who by nature possesses impassibility, and especially having uninterrupted converse and fellowship with the Lord.[198]

Understood in these terms, ἀπάθεια does not mean the suppression or denial of love; on the contrary, gnostic souls who have been perfected by divine gnosis embrace the divine vision

> not in mirrors or by means of mirrors, but in the transcendently

> clear and absolutely pure insatiable vision which is the privilege of intensely loving souls (ἀγαπώσαις ψυχαῖς) ....[199]

Just as ἀπάθεια for Clement enables the soul to attain union with God, so the soul given over to ἀγάπη gains the inheritance of being with the Lord,[200] and through him is united with God. This love of the gnostic is superior to all knowledge, and is exercised not simply in avoiding the doing of evil, but in the active pursuit of that which is good, for being given over to the love of God, and by love allied to God,[201] the gnostic soul 'loves the creator in the creatures'.[202] But primacy is still given to the gnostic's love of God, for it is this which marks him as the perfect man:

> The gnostic, consequently, in virtue of being a lover of the one true God, is the really perfect man and friend of God, and is placed in the rank of son.[203]

And as we have already observed, a love of this depth 'does not desire anything, having as far as possible the very thing desired',[204] but simply fills the soul with a joy which delights but without ever satisfying or satiating:

> ... accordingly as to be expected, he continues in the exercise of gnostic love, in the one unvarying state.[205]

There does appear to be some tension, however, in Clement's explanation of the gnostic's assimilation to God. Is the assimilation purely of a moral and mystical order, a simple imitation which does not affect man's nature? Or does it suppose that there is an element, a superior principle, inherent in the soul? While there are possible allusions to sanctifying grace in certain passages of Clement which speak of justice as of a mark or seal of the soul,[206] such justice is not that of any baptized person, but is the mark of the perfect gnostic. And moreover, those texts do not suggest that the characteristic quality of this perfection is a spiritual habitus - it is simply of a moral order. It seems likely, therefore, that Clement did not posit the existence in the Christian of a divine gift which raises him up and deifies the very essence of the soul. But one is still left with the distinct impression that Clement does suggest that the gift of divine γνῶσις, acting on the co-operative soul's superior faculties, can produce behaviour and virtues beyond the native capacity of man. There is here an indication that in this concept of transforming gnosis there is not only an idea of a transformation by the renewal of the mind,[207] but also a hint of

the concept of the transcendence of man himself - the going beyond horizons, the transcending of limitations of individuality, to the deepening and enriching of human life. As Clement himself puts it:

> (Adam) was not perfect from his creation, but only fitted to acquire virtue. For it is of great importance with respect to virtue to be made fit to attain it. And furthermore, it is intended that we should be saved by ourselves, for it is of the nature of the soul to be self-moving.... All then, as I said, are naturally constituted for the acquisition of virtue.[208]

Or as a twentieth century theologian expresses it,

> ... it seems that a natural tendency of man towards transcendence or self-transcendence towards the absolute, the infinite and the eternal, which is manifested in the religious phenomena of meditation, prayer, cult, moral responsibility, etc., must be interpreted primarily as a tendency towards divinization [sic], or better as a process of divinization tending towards eschatological divinized fulfilment in a certain form of union with the Godhead.[209]

There is also another point of tension in Clement's exposition, in that while on the one hand he thinks of salvation in terms of spiritual contemplation rather than as deliverance from corruption and death, yet on the other he wants to hold to the traditional biblical doctrine of a resurrection of the body. This also raises the question of whether the deification of which he speaks is to be experienced only after death, in the world to come, or is to be granted to souls here on earth.

So sublime is the ideal of deification, the assimilation of man to God, for Clement, that only Christ the incarnate Logos could have realized it here on earth:

> I know of no one of men perfect in all things at once, while still human though according to the mere letter of the law, except him alone who for us clothed himself with humanity.[210]

Others will only attain to the fullness of this blessedness in the life beyond after the resurrection:

> The end is reserved till the resurrection of those who believe; and it is not the reception of some other thing, but the obtaining of the promise previously made.[211]

The souls of those not yet completely purified will have to undergo further purification, by various punishments, but the pure souls, the gnostics, who have by the divine γνῶσις already attained a measure of deification, will, immediately after their separation from the body, receive 'the honours after death, which belong to those who have lived

holily';[212] they will be established in

> the crowning place of rest, where they will gaze on God face to face, with knowledge and comprehension.[213]

And yet as we have already noted, Clement makes many references to the perfected gnostic soul already enjoying on earth an assimilation to God, which he describes as deification, and yet in these other passages he is presenting the idea of a final transition after death, to 'the holy hill of God',[214] 'the heritage of beneficence which is the eighth grade', of 'the glories in heaven', where the beatified soul will be united with the glorified (spiritual?) body, in the ultimate deification of the entire man:

> which crowning step of advancement the gnostic soul receives, when it has become quite pure, reckoned worthy to behold everlastingly God Almighty, 'face', it is said, 'to face'. For having become wholly spiritual, and having in the spiritual church gone to what is of kindred nature, it abides in the rest of God.[215]

The tension seems to arise because, while wanting to maintain the traditional biblical idea of the resurrection of the dead, Clement wanted even more to affirm that it was possible for man <u>in this life</u> to attain to God, by applying himself to the faithful knowledge as taught by and embodied in God's Logos, Jesus Christ. Here the concept of the deification of man is taken a step further than in Irenaeus' writings, for Clement has 'realized' the eschatological hope and brought the experience of assimilation to God into the earthly life of man, so that man can even be spoken of as 'a god walking about in the flesh'.[216] The only way of resolving the resulting tension, therefore, was to affirm the reality of salvation through a participation, in this life, in things which are by nature divine, but also to suggest that this blessing would be guaranteed as permanent in the resurrection life where the purified soul would enjoy 'undisturbed intercourse and communion with the Lord'.[217]

To be sure, there are limitations and inconsistencies in Clement's thought, and his language is by no means precise; but we are making an inappropriate demand in expecting from him a systematic treatment of Christian doctrine, and more particularly of one specific doctrine such as 'deification'. For Clement the Christian faith is a mystery analogous to that of the pagans, but it is the true philosophy, the

culmination and refinement of all that has gone before. He understands salvation as the attainment of likeness to God (ὁμοίωσις τῷ θεῷ), a resemblance higher than the similitude man already enjoys by virtue of his nature. The attainment of this likeness is by the gift of God, and while it brings man nigh unto God, the essential distinction between creature and creator is still preserved. Although Clement makes it clear that the assimilation to God is as much a moral assimilation through impassibility (ἀπάθεια) and love (ἀγάπη), as it is an intellectual assimilation by knowledge (γνῶσις) and contemplation (θεωρία), he makes the attaining of the resemblance the privilege of a spiritual aristocracy separated out from the common mass of believers. For Irenaeus, likeness to God, conditioned here below by the gift of the Holy Spirit, was available to all who joined themselves to Christ and thereby participated in the divine incorruptibility (ἀφθαρσία) and immortality (ἀθανασία). For Clement, by contrast, influenced by contemporary Hellenistic thought, particularly Platonism and Stoicism, the prominent feature of the likeness is its intellectual component, the γνῶσις acquired by those who are receptive to it. Thus in Clement's interpretation deification is not only the reward for members of a spiritual élite, it is also understood more as an individualistic than a corporate experience. For a more systematic treatment of some of these issues we must look to the vast corpus of material produced by Clement's successor, Origen, but the resolution of the more serious difficulties did not come until this concept of deification was developed by the great theologians of the fourth century.

From the witness of Hippolytus, one of the foremost theological minds of the early third century, it appears that the concept of deification was known in theological circles as far afield as Rome. A priest, and later bishop, of the Roman church, Hippolytus was probably of Greek birth and education, and certainly in theological attitude has much in common with contemporary Greek theologians and the Alexandrian school in particular. It is perhaps not so surprising therefore that in his writings we find an anthropology which reflects the thought of the apologists of the previous century in maintaining that man was from his creation endowed with a capacity for self-determination

(αὐτεξούσιον),[218] able to will and not to will. He also taught that man was originally by nature incorruptible, but when in the exercise of his free will he chose disobedience, he lost his incorruption and became mortal.[219] After his fall, however, man was not abandoned by God, because God still reserved for him the possibility of attaining immortality by faithfulness to the knowledge of God mediated through the Law, the teachings of the prophets, and ultimately through the teaching of the Logos himself.[220]

It is in the conclusion of his treatise on the refutation of all heresies, that Hippolytus gives us his understanding of deification, bringing together many of the different elements that we have been considering: the image and likeness motif, the concept of divine filiation, the role of knowledge, particularly the injunction 'know yourself', the necessity for obedience to God's 'solemn injunctions', and fidelity in following 'him who is good'. There are also elements of the physical theory of redemption: being placed 'beyond the possibility of corruption', being rendered impassible ('no longer enslaved by lusts or passions'), and finally being made immortal - participating in those attributes which are 'consistent with the nature of God'. He writes:

> Now you shall avoid torments such as these by being instructed in a knowledge of the true God. And you shall possess an immortal body, even one placed beyond the possibility of corruption, just like the soul. And you shall receive the kingdom of heaven, you who, while you sojourned in this life, did know the Celestial King. And you shall be a companion of God and a co-heir with Christ, no longer enslaved by lusts or passions and wasted by disease. For you have become god (γέγονας γὰρ θεός). For whatever sufferings you underwent while being a man, these he gave to you, because you were of mortal mould. But whatever is consistent with the nature of God, such attributes God has promised to bestow upon you, because you have been deified (ὅταν θεοποιηθῇς), and been made immortal. This is what it means to 'know yourself'; that is to discover God who has formed you. For with the knowledge of self is conjoined the being an object of God's knowledge, for you are called by God himself.... God called man his image from the beginning, and has evinced in a figure his love towards you. And provided you obey his solemn injunctions and become a faithful follower of him who is good, you shall resemble him, inasmuch as you shall have honour conferred upon you by him. For God is not diminished having made you even god unto his glory! (σὲ θεὸν ποιήσας εἰς δόξαν αὐτοῦ).[221]

In this exposition Hippolytus, careful to preserve the divine

initiative and the essential distinction between God and man, stresses that the resemblance to God that man comes to enjoy, although involving man's co-operation and effort, is first and foremost the gift of God. It is a process of transcending the limitations of one's own facticity and being transcended as an object of the divine knowledge and love. By knowing ourselves, which is the discovering of God who has formed us, and by becoming aware of being an object of his knowledge and love, we discover a new definition of ourselves, taking us beyond our contradictory state, to resemble him. This is for Hippolytus the essence of deification, and as we shall see, it is the essence of the doctrine as it came to be elucidated in the succeeding century.

One of the foremost witnesses in the third century to the derived divineness of man and to the 'emergent' character of human nature, is the great biblical exegete and theologian, Origen, who succeeded Clement as rector of the catechetical school in Alexandria. An original thinker of encyclopaedic knowledge and vast literary output, Origen was the product of the eclectic intellectual environment of the Egyptian capital, influenced by the contemporary understanding of the Platonic philosophical tradition, but recasting its ideas to make them congruent with and serviceable to Christian beliefs.

Fundamental to Origen's anthropology is his belief in the divine origin and divine nature of the individual human soul, a conviction he shared with his contemporary, the philosopher Plotinus,[222] with whom he also had a common teacher, the Alexandrian Neoplatonist Ammonius Saccas. Whereas Plotinus regarded the human rational soul as a direct emanation of the divine essence, Origen, basing his theory on the biblical view of creation, could not accept that the human soul was of the same essence as the divine,[223] but he was able to assent to the belief that the soul was at least capable of participating in the divine,[224] and was also capable of attaining perfection and 'likeness to God'.[225] He taught that in the beginning God, out of his own goodness, created a fixed number of rational natures, all of them equal and alike (because there was no reason for producing variety and diversity), and all endowed with the power of free-will.[226] These souls were thus able of

their own free will to choose either to progress by imitating God, or to fall away by neglecting him.

With the single exception of Christ's pre-existent soul,[227] each of these rational beings chose, in varying degrees, 'to fall away', giving rise to the many and unequal states of spiritual existence, each in turn obtaining a lot proportionate to his sin. But there remained 'the souls', who had not sinned so greatly as to become demons, or so venially as to become angels. These God bound to bodies, and assigned them to the present world[228] with the capacity to re-establish themselves, by the exercise of their free will, in the state of their original condition. Evil, which Origen regards as 'non-being',[229] cannot finally triumph, because the created spirits are truly free 'in order that the good that was in them might become their own, since it was preserved by their own free-will'.[230] This situation, then, of free-will and free choice, implies a state of mobility, which is a fundamental principle of Origen's cosmology.

Maintaining as he does that the created spirit receives its very being as a gift from God, that what God possesses by nature, the spirit can possess only by grace, Origen affirms the essential distinction between the created spirit and the creator, God. But the created spirit is also the image of God and as such, transcending all particular natures and endowed with the power of 'free and voluntary movement by means of which it might make the good its own',[231] it can be thought of as a being in perpetual process of becoming divine, a process which continues into eternal life.

Here in this notion of the human spirit being essentially changeable and mobile, we find emerging again the idea of transcendence, of 'perpetual progress', of a process of movement beyond, towards the Absolute wherein lies fulfilment, the idea that 'it is of the nature of the soul to be self-moving'[232] - a concept which we shall find taken up and developed and modified in different ways by subsequent theologians, and particularly by Gregory of Nyssa. Life in this visible world, then, is part of a continuous process of purification and education, a

process which continues after death. Fallen man, despite his condition, possesses by virtue of his intelligence and free-will the means of returning to his creator and thus obtaining the divine likeness - for in every age God, by means of his word, passes into holy souls 'and constituting them friends of God and prophets improves those who listen to his words... those who have chosen the better life, and that which is pleasing to God'.[233] The whole creation has been illuminated by the only-begotten Son who is not only the mediator of the light of God, but is also the way who leads to the Father, the word who interprets and presents to the rational creatures the secrets of wisdom and the mysteries of knowledge, and 'the truth and the life and the resurrection'.[234] The ultimate and fullest revelation, however, came to man in the incarnate Logos, who is our teacher,[235] the giver of the second law[236] and the pattern of the virtuous life.[237] By their imitation of Christ, the teacher, men are gradually transformed into his likeness, led 'upwards to behold him as he was before he became flesh',[238] and in their contemplation of him, they are illuminated and ultimately deified:

> (With Jesus) there began the coming together of the divine with the human nature, so that by communion with divinity human nature may become divine (γένηται θεία), not in Jesus alone, but in all those who not only believe, but enter upon the life which Jesus taught, the life which elevates to friendship with God and communion with him everyone who lives according to the precepts of Jesus.[239]

Thus for Origen the deification of man is the goal of the divine teaching of which the incarnation was the definitive statement. This process of deification is initiated by faith, which leads to baptism[240] whereby sins are remitted, but while faith and baptism suffice for salvation, there is much more involved in achieving perfection. Here Origen, as Clement before him, distinguishes between two classes of Christians: the simple believers[241] who are content with 'the shadow of the mysteries of Christ',[242] and the élite, the perfect,[243] who are more intelligent and are raised up to wisdom and guided by the Only-begotten of God, from the knowledge of the intelligible cosmos, to the knowledge of the Logos, finally attaining to the contemplation, 'the eternal power of God, in a word, to his divinity'.[244]

This knowledge of God constitutes the perfect gnosis which purifies and elevates the intelligent mind above material things that it may have a clearer vision of God, and so be deified by its vision.[245] Although Origen puts considerable emphasis on the intellectual character of this process, he makes it plain that the gnosis which deifies is not merely speculative knowledge, for all true knowledge presupposes a likeness, or a union, between the knower and the known: to know involves a blending, a participation, a union.[246] Divine gnosis comes to its fulfilment therefore in union with God; by coming to the knowledge of God man is transformed into the divine likeness, because knowledge of God cannot exist without, for it is in fact identical with, union with God.

The fundamental concept in Origen's teaching on redemption is ἀποκατάστασις, restoration: a complete and final restoration of all 'fallen' spirits, angels, men, and demons, to their original pristine spiritual condition and status - a return to pure spirituality - and it is to this that we must now turn our attention. In the chapter on the soul in his treatise First Principles, Origen says: 'mind when it fell was made soul, and soul in its turn when furnished with virtues will become mind'.[247] This, it appears, is but the first stage of 'restoration' when the mind, nourished by the food of wisdom to a whole and perfect state, as man was made in the beginning, is restored to the image and likeness of God.[248] Souls who achieve this degree of renewal are, in consequence of their progress, 'taken up into the order of angels', they are made 'sons of God', 'sons of the light'. All this, however, is related to the gnostic's life here below, and as such is 'only a kind of outline of truth and knowledge, to which there shall be added in the future, the beauty of the perfect image'.[249] After his departure from this life, the worthy and deserving man, the pure in heart, will be shown the reason of things on earth, and then

> he will proceed in order through each stage, following him who has entered into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, and who has said 'I will that where I am they also will be with me'.[250]

Finally, when the saints have reached the heavenly places they will see clearly the nature of the stars, and will be shown the perfection of God's creation.[251]

From this contemplation and understanding of God the spirit draws nourishment, a nourishment measured appropriate and suitable to man's created nature.[252] In attaining this state of unitive contemplation, man does not become other than what he is and always was, namely a creature - there is no suggestion of absorption into God or any confusion of beings with the divine substance. The process of redemption is thus understood by Origen as a progressive restoration of the spiritual creation to its primal state, when the process comes to rest in the so-called restoration of all things, when

> there will be but one activity left for those who have arrived at God on account of his word which is with him, that, namely, of contemplating God, so that formed in the knowledge of the Father, all may become perfectly sons, in the same way as now only the Son knows the Father.... No one knows the Father if he has not become one with him as the Son and the Father are one.[253]

Here we find the idea of deification linked with the concept of divine sonship, which is one of the common biblical images in both Old and New Testaments from which the idea was subsequently developed.

At the culmination of the ἀποκατάστασις, the saints will see the Father as the Son sees him, without intermediary. Even the incarnate Christ himself will be as it were left behind, because the Son will hand over the kingdom to the Father and God will be all in all.[254] It should be noted here that Origen's notion of ἀποκατάστασις is very different from Irenaeus' idea of restoration or rather consummation (ἀνακεφαλαίωσις). For Irenaeus, the process led to a recapitulation, a culmination of all things under the headship of Christ - a goal intended (but never realized) from the creation of Adam. In Origen's scheme, the ἀποκατάστασις is rather a return to the primal state, the re-establishment of the original harmony of all things by the destruction of all that had distorted it, the restoration of the primitive order when all rational creatures (spirits) will again be in subjection to God.

Thus, salvation as Origen understands it is essentially a complex process of re-deification, since it involves the return of the human spirit to its original spiritual state. It is a restoration of a

condition from which the human spirit fell, rather than a super-added grace which raises man above his natural condition. Somewhat inconsistently, however, Origen still holds to a doctrine of the resurrection of the body,[255] referring of course to a totally spiritual body, but this enables him to affirm that there can be no confusion between even the spiritual bodies of those who are raised and the totally spiritual divine essence. Furthermore, treating the ἀποκατάστασις as he does, as a return to the original state of things,[256] cannot mean an abolition of the original distinction between God who is pure intelligence (Noûs)[257] and the created spirit (νοῦς) of man. One major flaw in his thesis, however, is the unresolved contradiction between the idea of a universal restoration when all things will be brought to perfection, and the notion of an eternal cycle of 'many and endless periods'[258] of fall and return.

Despite the inconsistencies and novelties in Origen's thought, much of what he puts forward on the subject of the deification of man is a significant development of the ideas of earlier theologians. In contrast with contemporary Neoplatonic theories he taught that fallen spirits are utterly impotent to save themselves by their own efforts; salvation is solely the act of God's love manifested throughout history, specifically within the history of his chosen people, reaching its climax in the incarnation, and continuing on throughout the ages until Christ once more brings all things into subjection to the Father and restores all spirits to their original state. In this scheme Origen manages to preserve basic elements of the Christian tradition: the divine initiative in salvation, human freedom and responsibility, and the essential distinction between God and his creatures - even deified creatures. But as Jules Gross suggests, if Origen's interpretation of gnosis might be termed mystical, it is certainly not a Neoplatonic mysticism, but rather a Christian mysticism of deification.[259]

When in AD 230, as the result of an ecclesiastical wrangle over the alleged irregularities of his ordination as a priest by the Bishops of Caesarea and Aelia, Origen found himself deprived of his chair at the catechetical school and expelled from Alexandria, he took refuge in

Caesarea and there set up a school over which he presided for almost twenty years. One of his notable pupils at that school, for five years from about 233, was the subsequent Bishop of Neocaesarea in Pontus, Gregory Thaumaturgus. On taking leave of his master in 238, Gregory delivered a panegyric on Origen, in which he extols the master's virtues and gives an account of his teaching methods. Among the many aspects of Origen's teachings for which Gregory expresses his gratitude, he puts particular emphasis on the true righteousness, 'the nobler vocation of looking into ourselves and dealing with the things that concern ourselves in truth'.[260] On this pursuit of self-knowledge, Gregory continues:

> And he educated us to prudence none the less - teaching to be at home with ourselves, which indeed is the most excellent achievement of philosophy.[261]

Now Origen himself, in the final chapter of his manual of dogma, First Principles, written between the years 220 and 230, before he left Alexandria, also mentions prudence as one of the marks of the divine image in man, suggesting that by such practice of virtue man may attain to an increasingly perfect understanding of God, receiving a share of the light and wisdom of the heavenly powers, that is, of the divine nature.[262] The mind, says Origen, thus capable of receiving God,

> always possesses within some seeds of restoration which become operative whenever the inner man is recalled into the image and likeness of God who created him.[263]

This is an assimilation to God, a participation in God, which elsewhere Origen describes as deification, but where he does so describe it, he also includes mention of 'true gnosis', the gnosis which unites the knower with the known in a mystical deifying union.

In the section of his panegyric on Origen referred to above, Gregory Thaumaturgus, drawing upon ideas strongly reminiscent of this passage of Origen's First Principles, makes a similar connection between the exercise of prudence (leading to self-knowledge), and a 'reflective' relationship between the human soul and the divine mind, which leads to what Gregory describes as a 'kind of deification':

> And that this (the precept 'Know thyself') is the genuine function of prudence, and that such is the heavenly prudence, is affirmed well by the ancients; for in this there is one virtue common to

> God and to man; in that the soul is exercised in beholding itself as in a mirror, and reflects the divine mind in itself, if it is worthy of such a relation, and traces out a certain inexpressible method for the attaining of a kind of apotheosis. And in correspondence with this come also the virtues of temperance and fortitude...[264]

What is of particular interest in this passage, which appears to be the only reference in the works of Gregory Thaumaturgus to the concept of deification, is the bringing together of the notions of both moral assimilation to God (by the practice of the virtues) and mystical assimilation reflecting the divine Noûs. In Origen's writings these two forms of participation are most often treated separately, and scholars usually regard this as an inconsistency in his thinking. It is significant, therefore, that Gregory incorporates the two features in this single brief reference to deification, suggesting that it was generally accepted that both belonged together and that he was taught as much by his master. It is also important to note that in speaking of deification Gregory is rather hesitant in expression; this is possibly related to the fact that he uses the word ἀποθέωσις for deification (a term taken from the vocabulary of pagan philosophy), for as yet the nouns θεοποίησις and θέωσις had not come into theological vocabulary. His caution indicates that while the reality he was attempting to describe was acceptable to his hearers, the language in which it should be expressed was something about which he felt considerably less secure.

Somewhat bolder in his manner of articulating the concept of deification was Methodius of Olympus, one of the most distinguished adversaries of Origen in the late third century. Fiercely repudiating Origen's theory of the pre-existence of souls and the notion of various pre-cosmic falls, Methodius affirms instead the traditional literal interpretation of the Genesis account of creation. Man, he teaches, is a unity of body and soul;[265] souls are not incorporeal but are reasonable bodies[266] provided with members. God alone is by nature unbegotten, impassible, and incorporeal,[267] and therefore the first man could not have been a purely spiritual being. With Irenaeus, he believes that all men are contained in the first parents, therefore just as Adam at his creation bore both the image and likeness of

God,[268] the image being related to man's free and intelligent nature which he retained after the fall, and the likeness related to incorruption and immortality, so that image and likeness are shared by every soul which comes into the world.[269]

Adam received the divine similitude in incorruption and immortality but only in a precarious and impermanent fashion, like a clay vessel 'still soft and moist', and before he had become hardened and strengthened 'he was ruined by sin dripping and falling on him like water'.[270] And from the day sin established itself in Adam all men have been deprived of the divine breath (of immortality) and are filled with troublesome thoughts and carnal yearnings.[271] Thus the divine resemblance was even more fragile in Adam's descendants because 'all were overwhelmed by error',[272] and the Law was powerless to free mankind from corruption.

According to Methodius the work of redemption required the total identification of Christ with Adam, so that 'the Evil One should be defeated by no one else but by him whom the Devil boasted he ruled since he first deceived him'.[273] Christ is, therefore, in a very real sense the 'new Adam', so that just as all died in the first Adam, so all are made alive in the second. In thus taking our human form, Christ made it possible for us to receive the divine form,[274] that is to say, the incorruptibility which deifies.[275] This is a theory which bears some resemblance to Irenaeus' 'physical' theory of redemption. But also, like Irenaeus, he makes it quite clear that man's co-operation is an indispensable element in the redemptive process, co-operation expressed in imitation of Christ, virtuous living, and participation in the life of the church. Thus it becomes possible for us 'to fashion our lives in the likeness of God',[276] and thereby regain that which we lost because of the sin that established itself in Adam and so in all men.

This transformation or restoration in man is possible, however, only for a certain few, for those capable of rising to perfection. For Clement and Origen this perfection was identified with gnosis, but for Methodius the essential element is virginity, the free consecration of the whole person, body and soul, for life, to the Lord,[277] the virtue

which seizes man from the domination of the Devil,[278] enables him to keep intact the spotless beauty of the soul,[279] and transforms him into a state of incorruptibility. It is virginity, above all else, that enables man to attain to deification:

> ...virginity alone makes divine those who possess her and have been initiated into her pure mysteries.[280]

Here in describing the goal of redemption Methodius is employing the language of mysticism and the mystery religions[281] rather than the terminology proper to the doctrine of deification that we have found in the other fathers in this survey. Those who give themselves unreservedly to Christ will be rewarded already in this life, by being granted a vision of heaven - so intense is this experience that it virtually transports those who attain to it into the heavenly realms.[282]

This is pure mysticism, sheer ecstasy, coming very close to Origen's mysticism of deification. But whereas for Origen it was, as we have noted, perfect knowledge which brought the soul to the contemplation of divine things and so into deifying union with God, for Methodius it is the practice of virginity which enables believers, though still dwelling in the body, to behold things divine,[283] to attain, in fact, to the vision of God himself:

> ...leaping easily over the world with the lightning speed of thought, they stand on the very vault of heaven and gaze directly upon Immortality itself as it wells up from the pure bosom of the Almighty.[284]

The final consummation, however, belongs to the life beyond death. The world itself, submerged and burnt by a fire which comes down from above, will be purified and renewed,[285] and then the resurrected saints, risen and transformed, will be taken into heaven,[286] where they will behold, not the faint copies observable from this world, but the realities in themselves. And there, contemplation passes over into assimilation, and assimilation into deification, in which the purified will grow into immortality and divinity.[287] This deification is shared by the body also, for Methodius teaches that the bodies of the just will be transformed into impassible and incorruptible bodies, assimilated to the glorious body of the resurrected Christ,[288] but unlike Origen, he identifies the risen body with that borne in this

world:

> ... the tabernacle of my body will not remain the same, but after the Millenium it will be changed from its human appearance and corruption to angelic grandeur and beauty.[289]

For Methodius, then, the deification of man is the culmination of a life totally identified with that of Christ, a process involving various elements which we have found in the writings of earlier theologians: the 'physical theory' and also the idea of recapitulation, as in the works of Irenaeus, the gnosis of Clement's theology, and even the mysticism of Origen. To these ideas he added his own contribution, on the essential place of virginity in the life of the righteous, and on mystical union as the reward for the life of total commitment. His particular achievement was that he managed to combine, more successfully than most of those who had preceded him, traditional Christian theology and Hellenistic speculation, and thus prepared the way for the great developments in the doctrine of deification which were to take place in the following century.

We conclude this survey of the development of the concept of the deification of man in patristic sources to the end of the third century with an examination of the few references to the concept which appear in one of the Latin fathers who falls within the period - the African apologist and theologian, Quintus Septimus Florens Tertullianus.

According to J.N.D.Kelly[290] it is with Tertullian that the 'marked divergence between Eastern and Western thought on the subject of man and his redemption begins to manifest itself'. In Tertullian's anthropology we find the seeds of those features which were to become characteristic of 'western' theology: the idea that all souls were contained in Adam,[291] and therefore, because of Adam's sin, all human nature is 'infected' with a bias towards sin.[292] Tertullian's teaching that the soul is material, that it is a body occupying the same space as the physical body to which it belongs and with which it is intimately united,[293] led to the idea that there is a quasi-physical identity of all souls with Adam, for every soul is, as it were, a twig cut from the parent-stem of Adam and planted out as an independent tree.[294] Despite his stress on free-will and man's responsibility for

his own acts,[295] Tertullian's ideas on man's bias to sin prepared the way for the development of the doctrine of original sin in the theology of later western theologians and the consequent shift in emphasis in western thinking on redemption - that process by which man's relationship with God was put right.

When Tertullian turns his attention to the doctrine of redemption, although he lays considerable stress on the death of Christ, as a sacrifice for all nations,[296] for the sins of mankind,[297] he does tend to give even more significance to Christ's proclamation of a new law and a new promise of a heavenly kingdom and on his role as the illuminator and instructor of mankind.[298] Perhaps it is all the more surprising, therefore, that in the treatise Against Marcion we should find a passage which begins by emphasizing the importance of the incarnation in God's plan of salvation, and then goes on to make the incarnation, the commingling in Christ of God and man, the token of man's salvation which is, indeed, the deification of man:

> God entered into converse with man, so that man might be taught how to act like God: God treated on equal terms with man, so that man might be able to treat on equal terms with God. God was found to be small, so that man might become very great.[299]

The suggestion here seems to be that the union between the divine and the human effected by God in the incarnation is itself a sacrament or sign of man's salvation, it is a union which 'adds as much to man as it detracts from God' and therefore this union has implications for the salvation of all men, implications which are as significant as the implications and effects of the teachings of Christ and even his death and resurrection. And, indeed, there is such a relationship drawn between the resurrection and the notion of the deification of man in Tertullian's treatise on The Resurrection of the Flesh.

In the tightly-packed argumentation of the main body of this treatise, the examination of biblical passages in chapters 18 to 55, Tertullian, taking up the apostle Paul's discussion of the substance of the resurrection body,[300] claims that those who after Christ's fashion are referred to as 'heavenly' 'must be understood to have been declared heavenly not on the ground of their present substance but on the ground

of their future splendour'.[301] The attaining of this 'eminence in glory' is regarded by Tertullian as a process of deification, a process which, to be sure, will reach its fulfilment in the life to come but which nonetheless begins and continues in this present life.[302] And again, in his treatise on the Trinity,[303] written to refute the popular misconceptions regarding the relationship of the Father and the Son in the heretical modalism of one Praxeas, arguing from the familiar proof text, Psalm 82:6,[304] Tertullian uses the notion of the deification of man - specifically, 'those men who by faith have been made sons of God' - to justify his claim that Christ 'the true and only Son of God' has even more right to the name and style of God.

In these, the few specific references to the concept of the deification of man in Tertullian's work, we see that although the concept does not seem to feature as a major influence in his theology, it does at least appear - and without apology or specific justification - perhaps reflecting the influence of the Greek apologists whom he had read. Although in his treatise Against Praxeas he seems to accept uncritically the Old Testament proof text for the concept, in the polemic Against Marcion, when he considers the implications of the incarnation, he explores the idea of man's assimilation to God, and his participation in God or in some aspect of divinity. But the most explicit consideration of the concept appears in his work On the Resurrection of the Flesh, where Tertullian relates the process of deification to the process of moral transformation and the restoration of the image of God in man, an interpretation which, as we have seen, appears in the thought of Justin Martyr, Athenagoras and Theophilus.

It is in his Apology, however, that Tertullian, in refuting, and at times caricaturing, pagan religious thought and practices, puts forward the idea which we have already noted, and which will be explored further and at length in the later sections of our thesis - that there is a natural tendency in man towards transcendence or self-transcendence towards the Absolute, the infinite and the eternal, a tendency which is manifested in various phenomena such as moral responsibility, cult, meditation and prayer. These activities are

commonly termed religious or transcendent in that they open us up to new possibilities, particularly the possibility that reality houses reservoirs of value qualitatively different from what we normally perceive or assume, and the possibility of discovering a deeper and more profound meaning of life itself. As one contemporary sociologist has expressed it:

> The impulse to move from the ordinary dimensions of life to the extraordinary is not one invented by the theologian but is one which appears to spring from the deepest levels of consciousness itself.[305]

In Tertullian's words this is the 'testimony of the soul naturally Christian' (testimonium animae naturaliter christianae)[306] - certainly more particular than the above observation in that it identifies the transcendent motion specifically with Christianity, but it witnesses to the same idea, of a tending towards fulfilment, which is found in that form of union with the Godhead which we have described as deification. It is the identification of these two notions which we shall explore further in the final chapter of the thesis.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF DEIFICATION IN THE WRITINGS OF THE MAJOR WITNESSES OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

The gradual emergence of the idea of the deification of man, and its ultimate expression in the explicit and specific terminology associated with the verbs θεοποιέω and θεόω, was certainly no systematic process. As we have seen from the previous chapter, the concept, as it became more widespread, incorporated various ideas related to the redemption of man, chiefly his attaining (or regaining) the gifts of impassibility (ἀπάθεια), incorruptibility (ἀφθαρσία), and especially immortality (ἀθανασία). All these attributes possessed by God by nature, could, it was believed, be bestowed on man by God's grace, thereby making man a partaker of the nature of God by participation. This state of grace, referred to by the early fathers as deification, was regarded as the ultimate destiny of man desired by God from the creation of the first man.

From the many and various forms in which it found expression in the earliest fathers, the concept of deification became for a number of the Greek theologians of the fourth century one of the central ideas in their understanding of soteriology, despite the different ways in which they incorporated and expounded it. In this chapter we shall examine the development of the idea among the major fourth century exponents of this way of speaking of the human potential: Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria from 328, and the three 'Cappadocian Fathers', Basil of Caesarea, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and their mutual friend and episcopal colleague Gregory of Nazianzus.

In his doctrine of man, Athanasius taught that man's primitive state was one of supernatural blessedness. At his creation, Adam was made in the divine image, and was thus made perceptive and understanding of reality through this similarity and also given a conception and knowledge of his own eternity, so that as long as he kept this likeness he might never abandon his concept of God or leave the company of the

saints.[1] But this ideal state, in which we see in embryo the idea of original righteousness, was not, according to Athanasius, man's natural state, and the blessings which he enjoyed did not belong to his constitution as such, but came to him from without.[2] For although God had 'so created man and willed that he should remain in incorruptibility'[3] and bestowed upon him supernatural knowledge, yet we are reminded, in the same passage of this treatise on the incarnation, that 'man is by nature mortal in that he was created from nothing'.[4] Like other finite beings he is liable to change and decay, is by nature incapable of taking any thought of God,[5] and ever tends to revert to non-being, and so to 'suffer the natural corruption (φθορὰν) consequent on death'.[6] Athanasius thus establishes the contrast between man in the natural state which he shares with all other creatures, and man as recipient of God's favour, made in the divine image and participating in the divine Word.

But Athanasius differs from a number of earlier fathers in that he does not distinguish the divine image (εἰκών), as a natural endowment of the soul, from a subsequent added superior divine resemblance (ὁμοίωσις). There was, he suggests, only a single divine resemblance in man which resulted from the indwelling of the Logos. It was this 'added grace', this share in the power of God's own Word, which transfigured the soul of Adam, making him in the divine image, that being made rational he might remain in felicity, live the true life in paradise,[7] live a divine life.[8] But the first human beings, instead of keeping their minds fixed on God and the contemplation of him, were distracted and began to consider themselves, and so they fell into fleshly desires, and received the condemnation of death with which they had previously been threatened.[9]

As a result of this disobedience man became emptied of the Logos, and with that deprivation lost his knowledge of the divine, and lost his incorruptibility. But all was not lost, he did not lose the power to know God, and he retained the immortality of his soul and his free will.[10] The result was not a complete, but rather a progressive, enfeeblement, a process which could be arrested by conversion. By

throwing off the entanglements of sensuality and turning from the attraction to materiality, man could recover his vision of the Word and regain his lost relationship with God. At best, however, such a recovery could be only partial, for, as Athanasius is at great pains to emphasize, only the Saviour himself could bring what was corrupted to incorruptibility, no other could raise up what was mortal to immortality save our Lord Jesus Christ who is life itself.[11] Athanasius thus establishes the essential link between the redemption of man and the incarnation of God. The redemption has its centre of gravity in the constitution of the person of Christ, the crucial factor in his impassioned controversy with the Arians.

For Athanasius, redemption, the restoration of the divine image in us, was the reason for the incarnation. The Logos, consubstantial with the Father, became man, so that mankind might once again be restored to a right relationship with God, that he might achieve the destiny intended for him by God from the beginning: to enjoy the true knowledge of God which is eternal life,[12] to regain the precious gift of incorruptibility (ἀφθαρσία) lost at the Fall,[13] and to become partaker of the divine nature.[14] These are the ideas which Athanasius brings together in sharp focus towards the end of his treatise On the Incarnation, in a passage which has come to be regarded as the classic expression of his doctrine of deification:

> For he became man that we might become god (αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν).[15]

There is difficulty in translating his exact meaning in this passage because, while he obviously did not mean to suggest that we become God in the sense that God is God, yet his terminology clearly indicates that he did mean something more than 'divine'. It is precisely because, for Athanasius, salvation involves our 'becoming god', that he argues that the Word cannot deify us if he is not himself God by nature and in substance. And that the Logos has already effected such a salvation is obvious because, had he not saved man from his alienation from God, the human race, cut off from the source of its being, would have ceased to exist, and would have reverted to non-being.[16] Fundamental to Athanasius' doctrine of redemption, therefore, is the idea of the union of natures in the Logos, a union which establishes the substantial and

essential identity of the Father and the Son.[17]

A problem arises here, however, because, when he refers to the human nature assumed by the Logos, Athanasius often seems to be speaking of human nature as a concrete idea or universal in which all individuals participate in the manner of Platonic realism. If he is referring to humanity in general as a concrete reality ('generic man'), can any convincing significance be attached to such a humanity, lacking particularity? But if on the other hand he is regarding the humanity of Christ in strictly individual terms, how can the assumption by the Logos of a particular humanity avail for the sins of humanity as a whole? There is little doubt that he did conceive of human nature as a concrete reality, for as J.N.D.Kelly observes, his Platonism 'tended at times to lose touch with his Christianity'.[18] But as Jules Gross explains, while Athanasius sees in Christ humanity as a whole[19] and all men as being consubstantial one with another,[20] yet he attributes to the incarnate Logos a strictly individual body and soul which belong exclusively to him.[21] It must be remembered here, however, that Athanasius employed a wide range of expressions when addressing himself to the question of the relation between God and man in Christ, and seems to have been willing to admit different interpretations of such important terms as οὐσία (substance, essence, being) and ὑπόστασις (person, nature, individual existent), which at this period were not clearly defined and distinguished realities.

This understanding of the consubstantiality of all men in Christ and the fact that in so many of his dogmatic, apologetic and polemical works Athanasius is more concerned with establishing correct ideas about the Son of God than with formulating ideas about the sons of men, are perhaps the two major factors which influenced the way in which he developed his theory of redemption, leading him to give particular prominence to the place of the incarnation in the scheme of salvation.

But Athanasius did not regard the incarnation of the Word as the sole means of our salvation, but rather - and the shift in emphasis is

important - he believed that salvation was the prime object of the incarnation. The ultimate outcome of the work of the Logos (and this 'work' includes his incarnation, his death and his resurrection) was the transformation of the corruptible into the incorruptible, and the restoration in human nature of the image of God lost at the Fall. This restoration involves three interrelated processes. First, man recovers the true knowledge of God, which is the eternal life lost when Adam and his descendants were reduced to ignorance and idolatry;[22] secondly, man is restored to fellowship with God and becomes a 'partaker of the divine nature';[23] and thirdly, because the Word is the very principle and author of life, the principle of death which established its hold over man at the Fall is reversed and the gift of incorruptibility restored.[23] But Athanasius takes us yet further into the mystery of salvation, for redemption in its fullest sense involves more than mere restoration to a prior state.[25] The image of God in man is restored in Christ, but as man participates in the death and resurrection of the Lord, he is sanctified and raised to eternal life, the life of heaven itself.[26]

The Word is not a creature, however, he is not of things originate, but rather himself their framer:

> For therefore did he assume the body originate and human, that having renewed it as its framer, he might deify it in himself (ἐν ἑαυτῷ θεοποιήσῃ) and thus might introduce us all into the kingdom of heaven after his likeness. For man had not been deified if joined to a creature, or unless the Son were very God; nor had man been brought into the Father's presence unless he [the Son] had been his natural and true Word who had put on the body.... For therefore the union was of this kind, that he [the Son] might unite what is man by nature to him who is in the nature of the Godhead, and his [man's] salvation and deification (θεοποίησις) might be sure.[27]

Here we have reached what Gross terms 'the central idea' of Athanasius' theology: salvation understood as deification.[28] By the fourth century, the belief that the ultimate destiny for Christian man was to enjoy the fullness of life 'in Christ', usually understood in terms of such biblical language as 'union with Christ', 'putting on the new nature created after the likeness of God', 'participating in the glory of Christ given him by the Father', or as in 2 Peter 1:4 'becoming a partaker of the divine nature', was becoming more commonly expressed in

the terminology of deification (θεοποίησις, θέωσις). And so we find in the major Christological controversies of the period that this terminology, employed to express the New Testament concept of union with Christ the Son of God, comes to be identified with the basic premises from which the various Christological ideas were argued. Thus, in opposition to the Arians who denied the divinity of the Logos, Athanasius argues that if the saviour was not God, he could not deify us.

Athanasius makes it clear that by using this terminology of deification to express these basic New Testament beliefs, he is in no way introducing any novel ideas or teachings that are contrary to scripture, for he deliberately identifies deification (θεοποίησις) with the biblical image of divine filiation (υἱοποίησις), in fact he often uses the two terms (in noun or verb form) synonymously. As he writes in his first oration against the Arians:

> [The Son] had not promotion from his descent, but rather himself promoted the things which need promotion; and if he descended to effect their promotion, therefore he did not receive in reward the name of the Son of God, but rather he himself has made us sons (υἱοποίησεν) of the Father, and deified (ἐθεοποίησε) men by becoming himself man.[29]

And again in the third oration he says: 'Because of the Word in us we are sons and gods (υἱοὶ καὶ θεοὶ)',[30] but he takes particular care to show that the linking of these two concepts of sonship and deification in no way implies an equality between Christ as Son of God by nature and men made sons of God by adoption and grace alone:

> Although there be one Son by nature, true and only-begotten, we too become sons, not as he in nature and truth, but according to the grace of him who calls, and though we are men from the earth, we are yet called gods (θεοὶ χρηματίζομεν), not as the true God or his Word, but as has pleased God who has given us that grace.... we are made sons through him by adoption and grace (δὲ θέσει καὶ χάριτι), as partaking of his Spirit... we by imitation (κατὰ μίμησιν) become virtuous and sons.... For it is as 'sons', not as the Son, as 'gods', not as he himself.... And by so becoming one, as the Father and the Son, we shall be such, not as the Father is by nature in the Son and the Son in the Father, but according to our own nature.[31]

Deification and sonship as they relate to man are essentially gift from God; man becomes θεός or a son of God by adoption, he can never become θεός or son by nature, in the same sense as the Logos is θέος and son.

Even in his choice of vocabulary for deification and filiation, Athanasius uses as parallel terms θεοποιέω and υἱοποιέω, both of which contain the -ποιέω element suggesting agency, something done to or for someone, an act of making by someone, to emphasise the action of God in the process. Just as in 2 Peter 1:4 it is made clear that human beings do not become the divine nature, they become partakers of the divine nature, so Athanasius makes it plain that the deification of man is an assimilation to God, not absorption into God.

In his treatises Against the Heathen and The Incarnation of the Word, where he is writing more as an apologist, and where the main issue of debate is Christology, Athanasius makes the 'agent' of deification the incarnate Logos:

> ... through the incarnation of the Word the universal providence and its leader and creator, the Word of God himself, have been made known. For he became man (ἐνηνθρώπησεν) that we might become god (θεοποιηθῶμεν).[32]

Later, however, in the Discourses against the Arians, in which the specific role of the Spirit is worked out in more detail, he introduces the idea of the Holy Spirit as effective in the deifying of man:

> These are they who having received the Word gained power from him to become sons of God, for they could not become sons, being by nature creatures, otherwise than by receiving the Spirit of the natural and true Son. Wherefore, that this might be, 'the Word became flesh' that he might make man capable of Godhead (ἵνα τὸν ἄνθρωπον δεκτικὸν θεότητος ποιήσῃ).[33]

Although in this passage the Holy Spirit's role is integral to the whole process of deification, the emphasis is still on the Word as the deifying agent. One of the earliest formal ascriptions of deification to the Holy Spirit is in Athanasius' letter in defence of the Nicene definition, but even here it is the Spirit of the Word:

> the Word was made flesh in order to offer up this body for all, and that we, partaking of his Spirit, might be deified (θεοποιηθῆναι).[34]

In the Letters to Serapion, however, a correspondence which deals specifically with the question of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, much more prominence is given to the Spirit's role in deification; in fact, as he argued concerning the divinity of the Son in the earlier works, so here he argues that it is the deifying action of the Holy Spirit

which proves his divinity:

> It is through the Spirit that we are all said to be partakers of God.... If the Holy Spirit were a creature we should have no participation of God in him.... But as it is, the fact of our being called partakers of Christ and partakers of God shows that the unction and seal that is in us belongs not to the nature of things originate, but to the nature of the Son who, through the Spirit who is in him, joins us to the Father. If by participation in the Spirit we are made 'sharers in the divine nature', we should be mad to say that the Spirit has a created nature and not the nature of God. For it is on this account that those in whom he is are made divine (θεοποιοῦνται). If he makes men divine (θεοποιεῖ), it is not to be doubted that his nature is of God.[35]

Athanasius deduces the Spirit's role in the deifying process from the very principle of the Holy Trinity. He argues that since there is one single sanctification, it must come from the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit, for who can separate either the Son from the Father, or the Spirit from the Son or from the Father himself?[36] The Spirit not only realizes the power of God in sanctifying us, he also brings about our vivification and our deification by bringing us to oneness with God, by bringing us into relationship with the Trinity.

In emphasizing the unity of the activity of God, Athanasius departed from one of the common lines of contemporary teaching which appropriated functions within the Godhead: creation to the Word and sanctification to the Spirit. He taught rather that the whole is the work of the one God, and he therefore did not hesitate to associate the Spirit as much with the work of creation as with the work of sanctification.[37] It was by thus associating the work of creation with the process of sanctification that he extended the idea of deification from the sanctification and redemption of man to the salvation of the entire cosmos, the whole created order:

> And if, because all things come into being through the Word, you think correctly that the Son is not a creature: then is it not blasphemy for you to say that the Spirit is a creature, in whom the Father, through the Word, perfects and renews all things?[38]

And again later in the same work:

> The Lord called the Spirit 'Spirit of truth' and 'Paraclete', whence he shows that the Triad is in him complete. In him the Word makes glorious the creation, and, by bestowing upon it divine life (θεοποιῶν) and sonship (υἱοποιῶν), draws it to the Father. But that which joins creation to the Word cannot belong to the

> creatures; and that which bestows sonship upon the creation could not be alien from the Son.... The Spirit, therefore, does not belong to things originated; he pertains to the Godhead of the Father, and in him the Word makes things originated divine (τὰ γενητὰ ὁ λόγος θεοποιεῖ). But he in whom creation is made divine (θεοποιεῖται ἡ κτίσις) cannot be outside the Godhead of the Father.[39]

This idea was taken up and elaborated, as we shall see, by the Cappadocian Fathers, for whom it became one of the central and distinctive elements in their understanding of deification. So deification comes to be understood as a process which incorporates but is not identical with salvation; it is the bringing to its culmination of the whole creative process.

From the foregoing survey of the main ideas in Athanasius' understanding of deification, three principal phases in the process seem to emerge: first, the deification of human nature by the incarnation of the Word in the God-man Jesus Christ; secondly, following on from the first, the deification of the whole person of the Christian; and thirdly, the ultimate deification of the whole cosmos.

The first of these phases we have already considered, pointing out the difficulty of reconciling Athanasius' Platonist language and ideas with traditional Christian teaching. One particular problem was his understanding of human nature as a concrete universal in which all men might participate, which has led some to conclude he was suggesting that when the Word suffused human nature with his divinity, the deifying force would be communicated almost automatically to all mankind. This of course relates to the 'second phase' of the process of deification, the deification of the whole person of the Christian. But when we examine Athanasius' own words on the subject, we find him asserting that deification is by no means an automatic process which through the incarnation of the Word comes naturally to all men. Rather he insists that only those who are in a special relation to the Word will be deified.[40] Despite his so-called Platonic generic realism, Athanasius recognized in every individual complete moral autonomy. Faith, conversion and obedience to the teachings of Christ are indispensable for the Christian who would become partaker of the divine nature.[41] Participation in God has a very definite ethical aspect:

> .... we are made sons through him by adoption and grace, as partaking of his Spirit.... we by imitation become virtuous and sons.[42]

Even when he refers to the sacrament of baptism by which we are truly made sons[43] and joined to the Godhead,[44] Athanasius makes it plain that it is in fact faith that unites us to God and that baptism follows upon faith.[45] And furthermore, he insists it must be right faith nurtured by proper instruction.[46] The soul thus 'born again' is 'restored in being in the image (of the Father)',[47] which means, as we have already seen, that man recovers the true knowledge of God which Adam enjoyed in Paradise, he becomes a partaker of the divine nature, and he receives the gift of blessed incorruptibility which Adam had lost for himself and his descendants as a result of the Fall. But this transformation of corruption into incorruption actually constitutes something more than mere restoration to what obtained prior to the Fall; it is the transference into an even higher grace:

> For mankind is perfected in the Word and restored as it was made at the beginning, nay with greater grace. For on rising from the dead we shall no longer fear death, but shall ever reign with Christ in the heavens. And this has been done, since the own Word of God himself, who is from the Father, has put on the flesh and become man. For if being a creature he had become man, man had remained what he was, not joined to God.[48]

This joining to God, this deification, not only re-establishes man in the divine similitude and restores him to divine sonship, it also frees man from the curse of sin and clothes him in immortality and incorruption. But whereas the first man, Adam, lost his immortality and incorruption and became subject to death, for the deified man, participating in Christ's victory over death in the resurrection,[49] immortality and incorruptibility are secure, because they are the culmination of the deifying process. As Athanasius puts it in his second discourse against the Arians:

> ... (God) sends his own son, and he becomes Son of Man by taking created flesh; that since all were under sentence of death, he being other than them all, might himself for all offer to death his own body; and that henceforth, as if all had died through him, the word of that sentence might be accomplished... and all through him might thereupon become free from sin and from the curse which came upon it, and might truly abide for ever, risen from the dead and clothed in immortality and incorruption.[50]

For Athanasius, the process of deification begins when man turns to

faith in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, and seeks to model his life on that of Christ, appropriating his teachings for himself, and accepting incorporation into the fellowship of believers through baptism. For some, this process of being joined to God and partaking of the divine nature reaches a degree of fulfilment before death, particularly for those who flee from the world and give themselves over totally to God, as did St Antony, but even for such as these, it is only a partial realization. For all, however, whether they begin the process in this life or not, participation in the divine nature and the consequent union with God comes after death when one enters upon immortality:

> For (believers in Christ) really know that when they die they do not perish but live and become incorruptible through the resurrection.[51]

But this state of incorruptibility, unlike that of Adam, is for ever:

> ... henceforth men no longer remain sinners and dead according to their proper affections, but having risen according to the Word's power, they abide ever immortal and incorruptible. For no longer according to our former origin in Adam do we die; but henceforward our origin and all infirmity of the flesh being transferred to the Word, we rise from the earth, the curse from sin being removed, because of him who is in us, and who became a curse for us. And with reason; for as we are all from the earth and die in Adam, so being regenerated from above of water and Spirit, in the Christ we are all quickened; the flesh being no longer earthly, but being henceforth made Word by reason of God's Word who for our sake 'became flesh'.[52]

To be thus made Word, joined to God, deified, is the realization of the destiny of man: from his initial response in faith to Christ, through the various stages of his advance, his transcendence towards God, through death, into the eternal life of the resurrection where he abides ever immortal and incorruptible - and all this made possible because the Word 'became man that we might become god'.[53]

For Basil of Caesarea the concept of deification was understood as the culmination of the life of faith, that process of advance in the knowledge of God and progress in sanctification satisfying the soul's quest for the infinite. And as we shall see, Basil frequently expressed this process of gradual advancement in terms of human self-transcendence, as a reaching forth and longing for that which lies beyond, a process of being drawn out of self towards the goal of human

existence - ultimate union with God. Basil is more reserved than either of his Cappadocian colleagues, Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus, in speaking of this ideal state; he tends to confine himself to biblical language and images.

Fundamental to Basil's anthropology, and to his ideas of the ultimate goal of human life, is the concept of man made in the image of God. It is by virtue of being created in the divine image that man is distinguished from all other created beings.[54] Man is not deemed to be the perfect image of God; there is only one perfect image of the Father and that is the Son, who reflects not only the attributes (ἀπηριθημένα) and the operations or 'energies' (ἐνέργειαι) of God, but also his very essence (οὐσία), the one who is, 'the living image showing the whole Father in himself'.[55] For his part, man is a lesser or imperfect image of God - but for all that, he is still held to be honourable 'in his natural constitution',[56] honoured above all of God's creation. This image, which Basil refers to as a 'particle of [God's] own grace',[57] is that which orients man towards God, and which enables man to recognize 'likeness through likeness', giving to human beings 'the power of understanding and recognizing their own creator and maker'.[58]

The special attributes which characterize the divine image are found in the soul and are primarily the reason (λογικός) and freedom of will (αὐτεξούσιος).[59] But there are also other attributes of the soul which reflect the divine image in man, attributes such as love,[60] dominion over the creation,[61] and immortality,[62] which, when cultivated, enable man to grow in the knowledge and love of God, and so come to resemble more closely the divine Archetype. Thus, by virtue of his creation in the image of God, man has the capacity to know God through the exercise of these 'faculties' of the soul, the very features which give man his resemblance to God:

> Attention to yourself will be of itself sufficient to guide you to the knowledge of God. If you give heed to yourself, you will not need to look for signs of the creator in the structure of the universe; but in yourself, as in a miniature replica of cosmic order (μικρῷ τινι διακόσμῳ),[63] you will contemplate the great wisdom of the creator. From the incorporeal soul within you, learn that God is incorporeal.... Believe that God is invisible from a

> consideration of your own soul.... it is discernible by its operations (τῶν ἐνεργειῶν) alone.[64]

There is in man then a truly natural desire for God, a thirst for the divine which is a very part of the human constitution:

> ... men are naturally desirous of beauty. But the good is properly fair and lovable. Now God is good, and all creatures desire good. Therefore all creatures desire God.[65]

These God-given attributes when rightly employed enable man to arrive at a dignity equal to that of the angels[66] and to attain knowledge of God, but if misused they can bring about man's downfall. By exercising the gift of free will, befitting a nature endowed with reason and the sign of an independent life made in the image of God, the human soul can deviate from the good and from all that is in accord with its very nature (κατὰ φύσιν) and fall prey to sickness and all manner of illnesses.[67]

Basil gives this human predicament an existential if not ontological dimension, describing those who divorce themselves from faith in God 'who is', and so repudiate their natural thirst for God, as 'non-existent because of their deprivation of truth and their alienation from life'.[68]

Such was the choice before Adam: to preserve his natural life, in the contemplation of the good and the enjoyment of intelligible things, to respond to that yearning of the soul for God and seek after an authentic existence, or to turn away from what was according to nature, to fall from higher things and mingle with the flesh and base pleasures, in an inauthentic form of existence.[69] As a result of his decision, Adam:

> ceased to desire divine glory in expectation of a better prize, and strove for the unattainable, [and] he lost the good which it was in his power to possess.[70]

He broke away from that intimate union with God which was his birthright, and lost his likeness to God. As Basil expresses it, in a poignant phrase, 'he lost his kinship with life',[71] and so lost the capacity for growth in knowledge of God.

Thus 'fallen' from grace and from his natural inheritance, man stood in

dire need of 'restoration to his original state... not through his own efforts but seeking it from God'.[72] But God wills that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth,[73] and so he offered man the chance to turn from his unnatural, inauthentic state, and to return to the state and status he previously enjoyed, to have his original God-given faculties restored: the capacity to grow in knowledge of God and to progress in that knowledge to nearness and familiarity with God.[74] It is important to recognize that when Basil speaks of knowledge in this context he uses it with wide application, referring not only to intellectual objective knowledge of that which is knowable of God, but also to the deeper experiential faith-knowledge, involving observance of God's commandments and eventually intimate communion with him.[75] For not only does the exercise of knowledge constitute the highest dignity of man,[76] it also constitutes the very life of the soul,[77] because it is that desire for the infinite implanted in all reasonable creatures:[78]

> that advance (προκοπὴν) to perfection which is made stage by stage, and in regular order, through the works of righteousness and the illumination of knowledge; ever longing after what is before and reaching forth (ἐπεκτεινόντες) to those things which remain, until we shall have reached the blessed end, the knowledge of God, which the Lord through himself bestows on those who have trusted in him.[79]

Here Basil, employing ideas and terminology very much in sympathy with the notion of human transcendence, shows that human destiny, the 'blessed end', is achieved by a gradual process of advance, an advance involving a continuing reaching forward, a transcending of all that is associated with temporality, a process which brings man to full humanity, because it restores those faculties which are 'natural' to him but which atrophied as a result of the Fall. This process of the restoration of these faculties is the work of salvation for it is a process of advance in holiness, a process of ceaseless perfecting, and in many of his works Basil spells out the various ways and means by which it is to be undertaken.

The body, Basil teaches, is as it were a prison from which the soul must be set free,[80] and so he advocates a programme of ascesis by which the passions and desires of the body are brought under control, which

prepares the way for that ascent, that process of transcendence, when the God-given thirst for the infinite can be nurtured and eventually satisfied and the soul brought to perfection.[81] In his Exhortation to the Young, a treatise on education, Basil gives detailed instruction in what he considers appropriate measures to be taken for those who would devote themselves to the care of their souls: warning against excesses of food, spending more time than necessary on care of the hair or on dress, indulging in pleasurable entertainments and cultivating the senses - all concerns which are both unprofitable to the body and a hindrance to the soul. He exhorts his readers instead to acquire 'travel supplies' appropriate for the soul's journey to eternity.[82] But all this is by way of preparation, to clear the way, for the positive step of re-ordering one's life 'according to nature' and allowing the Spirit to undertake his work of bringing the soul to perfection in the contemplation of the truth.[83] For Basil, participation in this process of self-transcendence, this progress to salvation, presupposes incorporation into the life of the Christian church through the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist, by virtue of which we are introduced to the knowledge of God,[84] and participate in goodness,[85] holiness,[86] and ultimately in the divine nature itself by deification (θεοποιοῦν).[87]

Having turned from the unnatural life to the life of virtue, and strengthened by an increasing knowledge of God, the converted soul is then engaged upon a continuous process of renewal, a ceaseless perfecting in the Spirit:

> Since the sayings of God have not been written for all, but for those who have ears according to the inner man, he wrote the inscription, 'For them that shall be changed', as I think, for those who are careful of themselves and are always advancing (ἀεὶ... προκόπτουσιν) .... one who is advancing in virtue is never unchanged.... There is change, therefore, of the inner man who is renewed day by day.... It is not for just anyone to advance in the perfection of love and to learn to know him who is truly lovable, but for him who has already put off the old man... for the one who is being progressively renewed in knowledge in the image of his creator.[88]

This continuous growth in knowledge, intellectual knowledge leading to affective knowledge, brings about a gradual process of transformation by God into likeness with God 'according to his image'. Basil puts

considerable emphasis on the continuing dynamic of this process, his vocabulary reinforces the idea of movement, of transcendence:

> ... looking forward with great joy to perfect knowledge in the future... ... hastening to attain to the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ... ... the knowledge which will be revealed to the deserving in the life to come... ... in this life they made ever greater progress and advancement...[89]
>
> ... more knowledge is always being acquired by everyone...[90]
>
> ... make progress in the knowledge of God...[91] ... always progressing in the knowledge of divine dogmas.[92]

And he goes so far as to suggest that this dynamic is never ending when he claims that 'the soul that loves God is never saturated with him'[93] - an idea that we shall see taken up again and developed even further by Gregory of Nyssa.

As co-worker with God in the process of salvation, co-worker drawn into intimate communion, man comes to participate in the energies of God,[94] to participate in the holiness and goodness of God,[95] to appropriate the grace of God and to realize that dignity which he enjoyed at his creation,

> for what is set before us is, so far as is possible with human nature, to be made like unto God (ὁμοιωθῆναι θεῷ). Now without knowledge there can be no making like; and knowledge is not got without lessons.[96]

As a conscientious pastor and teacher of his people, Basil sought by his homilies, treatises and vast correspondence, to supply those lessons which would impart the knowledge by which his hearers might realize this potential of being made 'like unto God'. So he taught of God's plan of salvation, the 'divine economy', to restore in man the divine image marred by the Fall,[97] and to restore to man the possibility of a new proximity and intimacy with God by true knowledge.[98] This plan conceived by the Father was set in operation by the Son and accomplished by the perfecting work of the Holy Spirit.[99]

Basil sums up the role of the Son in the work of salvation as Christ 'calling us back from death and making us alive again':

> Moreover he took our weaknesses and bore our diseases... he redeemed us from the curse... and underwent the most dishonourable death, that he might bring us to the life of glory. And he was not

> content merely to quicken us when we were dead, but he bestowed the dignity of divinity (θεότητος ἀξίωμα ἐχαρίστο), and prepared eternal resting places, surpassing all human thought in the greatness of their delight.[100]

And in one of his letters, 'to the Monk Urbicius', in defence of the orthodox teaching on the incarnation, he refers to the work of Christ in terms closely resembling the 'physical theory' of salvation:

> How could the benefit of the incarnation be conveyed to us, unless our body, joined to the Godhead, was made superior to the dominion of death?[101]

But he seems to give much more prominence to the role of the Holy Spirit in the work of salvation, and it is here that he uses the most specific language of deification. Writing in his treatise On the Holy Spirit against Sabellianism, the Arians, the Macedonians (the early 'Pneumatomachi') and all others who held a deficient doctrine of the Holy Spirit, Basil champions the Catholic cause in ranking the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son,[102] but also affirms that the Holy Spirit's work is one with that of Christ.[103] The particular aspects of the Spirit's role in the divine economy to which Basil gives special mention, however, are those of enlightenment[104] and bringing to perfection.[105] It is in drawing together the work of the Son and the Spirit in the economy of salvation that Basil also brings together the two notions of transcendence and deification - transcendence as a quest for expanding thresholds, a thirst for the infinite, and deification as that ultimate goal of human existence when man reaches the 'blessed end', that knowledge of God, not of man's achieving but of God's bestowing, that drawing into intimate union in which man is made 'like unto God':

> We understand by the Way that advance to perfection which is made stage by stage, and in regular order, through the works of righteousness and the illumination of knowledge; ever longing for what is before, and reaching forth unto those things which remain, until we shall have reached the blessed end, the knowledge of God, which the Lord through himself bestows on them that have trusted in him.[106]

And so on to the final stage of perfection by the Spirit:

> Only after man is purified... and has come back again to his natural beauty, and as it were cleaning the Royal Image and restoring its ancient form, only thus is it possible for him to draw near to the Paraclete.... Through his aid hearts are lifted up, the weak are held by the hand, and they who are advancing are brought to perfection. Hence comes foreknowledge of the future,

> understanding of mysteries, apprehension of what is hidden, distribution of good gifts, the heavenly citizenship, a place in the chorus of angels, joy without end, abiding in God, the being made like to God, and, highest of all, the being made god (θεὸν γενέσθαι)[107]

Thus Basil makes it clear that the perfecting, deifying work of the Holy Spirit is not to be understood as a super-added grace, added to nature and working from outside. It is rather a work of transformation and transfiguration, operating from within, whereby those who are sanctified by grace

> become one with that which is holy in its nature, by sharing in it through all their being.... they come to be holy by a process of participation.[108]

Grace is not added to man's nature in Basil's theology; it operates from within, bringing nature to perfection, to its divinely appointed end - 'like unto God'. And to emphasize the divine initiative and responsibility in this process, Basil dissociates his understanding of God's work of deification from the beliefs of the apocalyptic movement, the Pepuzeni, whom he condemns for applying to its founders Montanus and Prisca the title of 'Paraclete', and so 'ascribing divinity to men (ὡς ἀνθρώπους θεοποιοῦντες)',[109] clearly a very different matter from the deifying work of the Holy Spirit. Likewise he makes it clear that man does not and cannot in any way share the essence of God. He describes as 'manifest lunacy' the suggestion that man is of the same essence as God,[110] and states in very definite terms that even though man may be designated 'god', he receives this name by divine favour and is certainly not thereby deemed to share the divine substance or essence.[111] By being called 'god' or even being made god, man does not become God.

The assimilation to God of which Basil writes when he teaches about deification is not at all a process generated by man, nor is it an honour conferred by man on himself. It is totally the work of God within man; it is the 'restoration of man to his original grace'.[112] And then by a gradual process of illumination, man is given the potential to realize the capacity he was given at his creation: to satisfy his thirst for the beautiful, his desire for God.[113] And by a process of advancement in grace,[114] through purification and increasing perfection,[115] he is drawn into greater intimacy and familiarity with

God in contemplation, until he arrives at the ultimate fulfilment, that state of complete perfection in virtue when he is deemed worthy of the designation of son of God,[116] or even of god,[117] that final state after death where there is total freedom from the passions,[118] no more change, no more 'becoming',[119] when that process of advance to perfection begun in this life reaches its fulfilment face to face with God himself in the life to come.[120] Then the ultimate fulfilment has been reached, the purpose of man's creation realized:

> God became man for you, the Holy Spirit was poured out, the dominion of death destroyed, the hope of resurrection affirmed, divine precepts given to enable you to lead a life of perfection, and the commandments provided for you to come to God.[121]

Thus the human quest for the infinite is satisfied. Having assented to his diviner part and accepted the boons of the Spirit, man, so far as his nature permits, has become perceptive of the divine,[122] and although still remaining man, is made like to God, and finally, 'made god'.[123]

For Gregory of Nazianzus, as for Basil of Caesarea, the ultimate goal of all Christian life was the restoration of that original union which God had with his creation at the beginning and which had been broken by man's disobedience. Theology was the process by which the activity of God and the quest of the searching human soul become one, so that God and those who seek him are ultimately joined together. It was the task of theology to articulate and facilitate this coming together, and the role of the theologian to

> ... renew the creature, and set forth the image, and create inhabitants for the world above, aye and greatest of all, be god (θεὸν ἐσόμενον), and make others to be god (καὶ θεοποιήσοντα).[124]

But while we can say that for Gregory of Nazianzus theology is a soteriological process which has as its goal the restoration of the original intimacy between God and his creatures, leading ultimately to the union of 'that within us which is Godlike' with 'that which is its like'[125] - in a word, deification (θέωσις) - it would be a serious oversimplification to suggest that for Gregory deification is to be equated with salvation (σωτηρία). Whereas salvation is that process whereby the broken relationship between man and God is restored, a process which has as its goal atonement and re-creation, deification as

Gregory understands it is a wider and more comprehensive term that has its theological roots not so much in the recreative act of God in Christ, as in the original and continuing creative activity of God. As Donald F. Winslow observes in his study of the concept of salvation in the writings of Gregory of Nazianzus, deification (theosis) is, for Gregory, 'a dynamically fluid term that is descriptive of the creative and redemptive economy, as well as of the relation between God and creation'.[126] Not only does theosis speak of the abiding relationship between God and mankind, a relationship that is part of and determinative of our created nature, it also relates more fundamentally to the very purpose of creation, that pouring forth of the divine goodness 'to multiply the objects of its beneficence'.[127] The vocation of deification is peculiar to human beings, because of the image of God in which we were made, but the material creation, the arena in which the process of deification is undertaken, is also to be incorporated ultimately in the unfolding economy of God's love for all his creation. The goal of theosis marks man as the potential glory of the created cosmos, a potential realized when all creation is finally brought to God, when God will be all in all.[128]

An examination of the references to the concept of deification in the writings of Gregory of Nazianzus will enable us to see how far this notion was determinative for the whole of Gregory's thought, not only his doctrine of salvation, but also his ideas on anthropology, and ultimately his thinking on the whole scope of the divine economy.

Fundamental to Gregory's understanding of the nature of man is the notion that man is a composite being, a creature comprising both matter and spirit, and thus belonging to both the material (unstable) sphere of reality and the spiritual (stable) sphere. In one of his major expositions on creation, in Oration 38.9-11, he describes the act of creation as taking place in three phases, first the creation of the spiritual world of intelligent spirits, angelic and heavenly powers, ministers of the primary splendour, then a second world, material and visible, was created, the system and compound of earth and sky and all that is between them. Gregory postulates that this second creation was

to show that God could call into being not only a nature akin to himself, but even one altogether alien to himself. It was then after the creation of the intelligible (νοητός) world, akin to deity, and the sensible (αἰσθητός) world, 'entirely strange', that

> the creator Word, determining... to produce a single living being out of both - the visible and the invisible creations, I mean - fashions man; and taking a body from already existing matter, and placing in it a breath taken from himself which the Word knew to be an intelligent soul and the image of God, as a sort of second world. He placed him, great in littleness [a microcosm] on the earth; a new angel, a mingled worshipper, fully initiated into the visible creation, but only partially into the intellectual...; earthly and heavenly; temporal and yet immortal; visible and yet intellectual; half-way between greatness and lowliness; in one person combining spirit and flesh.[129]

For Gregory man is a compound being in whom the two realms, the spiritual/intelligible and the material/sensible, are brought together, but this bringing together is not to be understood in a literal way as a physical blending of two separate and distinct 'natures' or 'creations' in man. It is rather a uniting 'in principle' of the two natures in man; and furthermore it should be noted that according to Gregory's account, the human soul is not simply taken from the existing spiritual 'noetic' world, it is regarded as something completely new and additional to that which already existed, it is a breath from God himself making man 'a sort of second world', but with 'natural' affinity with the spiritual intelligible world of the angels, the 'first world' of God's creation.

Although man is called light and partaker of the light which originates with God, he has, during his earthly life, received only a partial share of it. Because he is beyond the sphere of the immaterial world of the angels, he is at a greater distance from God; but because of his affinity with the noetic world of light, he has an inclination to God,[130] and longs for the fuller light of the heavenly life. The locus of this inclination or orientation of man towards the divine is the soul, for the soul according to Gregory is divine and heavenly,[131] and 'partakes of the heavenly nobility and presses on to it, even though it be bound to an inferior nature'.[132] But while Gregory sometimes expresses the creation of man in the emanative language of the Neoplatonists, as when he writes about the human spirit as 'a piece

broken off the invisible deity',[133] or again when he describes human beings as 'a part of God',[134] in his formal teaching he is totally faithful to the biblical tradition, in speaking of human beings coming into existence out of non-existence,[135] and receiving a soul which is the breath of God.[136] He firmly repudiates any suggestion of consubstantiality between the divine Noûs and the human νοῦς - there is simply a relationship between them.[137]

It is by reason of this relationship that the soul reaches out towards God, to rise and be united with God, gazing on that to which it is related; for knowing gives rise to a desire and longing for God.[138] This inclination of man towards God,[139] and the turning of the soul upwards and away from the flesh, is a frequent motif in Gregory's writings, and underlines his conviction that the divine origin of the soul of man points to its destiny - to return to God.

In common with both the biblical account of the creation of man and the tradition of many of the fathers before him, Gregory teaches that human beings are created in the image of God.[140] And it is by virtue of this image received from God that we have that kinship with God mentioned above, and so, as we shall see, our natural desire for and inclination to God, when fulfilled, becomes the definition of what we were created to be. Gregory even goes so far as to suggest that it is actually the image of God which deifies us.[141] The most significant point to note in Gregory's use of this motif, however, is that he employs it, not to highlight man's station or status in this life, as steward of the material creation or ruler of other creatures, but rather to underline man's spiritual character, his high dignity and calling, and, more specifically, to point towards the destiny for which man was created, the goal of this life on earth and the very purpose of the incarnation:

> What is man, that thou art mindful of him? What is this new mystery which concerns me?... I share one condition with the lower world, the other with God; one with the flesh, the other with the spirit. I must be buried with Christ, arise with Christ, be joint heir with Christ, become the son of God, yea, God himself.... This is the purpose of the great mystery for us. This is the purpose for us of God, who for us was made man and became poor, to raise our flesh, and recover his image, and remodel man, that we might all be made one in Christ, who was perfectly made in all of us all

> that he himself is, that we might no longer be male and female.... but might bear in ourselves the stamp (χαρακτῆρα) of God, by whom and for whom we were made, and have so far received our form and model from him, that we are recognized by it alone.[142]

The divine purpose in creation is one with the purpose of salvation: namely, that we were originally created and have subsequently been recreated to know and be with God our creator in whose image we were made.

When we turn to what Gregory has to say specifically on the creation of Adam we find echoes of the teaching of earlier patristic writers, particularly the notion that Adam was created in a state of immaturity.[143] A 'compound nature', of spirit and flesh, Adam had not reached maturity and so was not ready to enter upon contemplation[144] - it was not good or appropriate for one who was 'still somewhat simple' and who had not yet received a full share of the divine light[145] - and although instructed in the secrets of the visible world and initiated into the little mysteries, he was not yet able to enjoy the full beatific vision of God. It was not that contemplation, the fruit of the tree of knowledge, was to be forbidden to man for ever; the fruit was to be made available, but only when man had been prepared for it. Adam and Eve were created with a desire for God and a desire to be like God, desires which were to have been satisfied in the fullness of time by the process of deification. However, beguiled by the serpent, Adam and Eve took the fruit of contemplation (the tree of knowledge) before they had been made ready for it. In breaking God's command they were grasping at divinity for themselves and attempting to advance too far too soon. Their very desire for God implanted in them by God himself was now distorted by Satan and became, paradoxically, the occasion of their falling away from God and from that very destiny for which, in his love, he had created them.[146]

But Gregory interprets this 'fall' of Adam and Eve not as a sin directly against God himself, but as a sin against God's law. Having given man free will, God also gave him the law 'as a material for that free will to act upon'.[147] Adam's sin, then, was an act of disobedience, a misuse of his free will; and the effect of such a transgression was not an absolute and irrevocable perversion of human

nature, but rather a 'set-back', a departure from the divinely ordered schema by which man would achieve his destiny. The body and soul are no longer in a relationship of creative tension that previously enabled both the 'lower' and 'higher' natures to aspire to things above. Now the body and the soul are in a state of conflict and opposition, the grosser materiality of the human condition acting as a fetter to the soul's progress, holding it back from pursuing its pilgrimage to God.[148] Inherent in the very nature of man as a 'composite' creature is the risk of inner conflict and disharmony,[149] and it is to this precarious state of instability and mutability that Gregory attributes the Fall. Man may have indeed disrupted God's plan, but since the very act of creation involved God in risk - the risk that his beloved creature, made in his own image, might choose evil rather than good - it is inconceivable to Gregory that such a God could abandon his fallen child. It would be contrary to the very nature of God.[150] Such a situation called for action of a significance and magnitude comparable with the initial act of creation. This action Gregory describes as an 'innovation' made upon nature,[151] a 'new creation',[152] whereby a 'new Adam should save the old, and the condemnation of the flesh should be abolished, death being slain by flesh'.[153] This mighty act was nothing less than God himself becoming man, 'that the incomprehensible might be comprehended'.[154]

Gregory's conviction that God is both creator and redeemer springs directly from his understanding of deification, which is so fundamental an element in his whole theological enterprise. God's original intention was that his creatures should realize their potential for growth by the increase of those qualities we share with the creator, a process which was to make them 'more Godlike',[155] in an increasingly more perfect reflection of his image in which they were made.[156] If this divine destiny towards deification, thwarted and interrupted by man's disobedience, is to be realized, the remedy called for must deal with the actual sin of Adam and with the results of that sin. Not only must man be restored to the state which Adam and Eve enjoyed with God before the Fall, but that original capacity for growth towards ultimate theosis must also be restored - and such a restoration could only be

effected by God.

The ultimate object of the redemption of man was that man should be brought back to his Godward pilgrimage, the goal of which was his ultimate deification. God's way of restoring man to this goal of 'becoming god' was to 'become man' himself and thereby to 'deify' human nature. For Gregory, this deification of human nature effected in Jesus Christ became the paradigm for the deification of man:

> ... for a cause [Christ] was born. And that cause was that you might be saved who insult him and despise his Godhead, because of this that he took upon himself your denser nature, having conjunction with the flesh by means of the mind. While his inferior nature, the humanity, became God because it was conjoined with God and became one [with him]. In this the higher nature [i.e. the Godhead] prevailed in order that I too might be made god (ἵνα γένωμαι τοσοῦτον θεὸς) so far as he is made man.[157]

Here we can see how Gregory's understanding of the deification of man influences greatly the way in which he develops his christological ideas, particularly his understanding of the incarnation itself.[158] It is precisely in the person of Jesus Christ that the deification of human nature is brought about. For Gregory, the incarnation had to be more than a mere taking of flesh by God, an incarnation (σάρκωσις). In answer to the Apollinarians, Gregory insists that in becoming man, God took on the whole of human nature - including the human νοῦς[159] - effecting therefore a full 'enmanment' or 'hominification' (ἐνανθρώπησις), for as he puts it in one of his letters on the Apollinarian controversy: 'that which he has not assumed he has not healed'.[160] To vindicate both the full divinity of Christ and his full humanity, Gregory uses again and again the motif of deification in speaking of the nature of Christ. It was the mission of Christ to bring together God and created nature - and this task was actually begun in Christ's own person which Gregory speaks of as a 'novel union', a 'blending' of God and man,[161] by which two natures, flesh and spirit, are united - the former deifying, the latter deified (τὸ μὲν ἐθέωσε, τὸ δὲ ἐθέωθη),[162] or again as he writes in his first letter to Cledonius:

> both [natures of Christ] are one by the combination, the deity being made man (θεοῦ μὲν ἐνανθρωπήσαντος) and the manhood deified (ἀνθρώπου δὲ θεωθέντος), or however one should express it.[163]

Just as in Christ the body became God by means of deification (τῇ

θεώσει),[164] and thereby humanity was sanctified,[165] so all who walk in the way of Christ, 'those who are lofty in a Godlike manner', will 'become god' (γένῃ θεὸς).[166] Christ, 'the image of the archetypal beauty',[167] partook of human flesh in order that 'he may both save the image and make the flesh immortal',[168] thus effecting a cure for man's condition and thereby making possible his return to his journey towards deification.

God's being born as man involved his coming down and participating in all aspects of human life and death,[169] he was, in words daring for a Greek theologian, 'made capable of suffering'.[170] For Gregory, the incarnation tells us who the incarnate Logos is, but it is the suffering and death that tells us of what the incarnate Logos does. The incarnation had salvation as its motive, but the fulfilment of God's saving act was the suffering and death of the God-man, Jesus Christ. In the incarnation, human nature was deified, but this does not mean that our deification is either immediate or automatic. The deification which was actually effected was the deification of Christ's human nature; our deification was only potentially effected; it remains for each individual to appropriate that deification for him or herself. The incarnation began the process of salvation, but it was the death of Christ which brought that process to its climax. It is by our participation in the death of Christ that we share in the salvation he won for us, but we also appropriate the deification which his incarnation effected for us. It is, for Gregory, the cross, the death of Christ, which brings about our salvation; that is the focal point of the economy of redemption, the point through which we are able to appropriate the ultimate benefits of all that the incarnation has made possible for us. Thus Gregory can say it is by the 'power of the incarnation' that Jesus Christ 'makes me god',[171] for that power was released and made available by the death of Christ. The incarnation alone did not and cannot effect salvation for the individual; what it did was to make salvation possible. Through the incarnation, God entered and participated in human experience, and deified human nature; but it is through the death of Christ that we enter upon our deification, for by that death we are given new life and a renewed

capacity for growth - growth to become more Godlike and ultimately to become god:

> Let us recognize our dignity; let us honour our archetype; let us know the power of the mystery, and for what Christ died.
>
> Let us become like Christ, since Christ became like us. Let us become gods (γενώμεθα θεοὶ)[172] for his sake since he for ours became man. He assumed the worse that he might give us the better... he came down that we might be exalted... he died that he might save us.[173]

We see in Gregory's understanding of God's economy of salvation that the death of Christ is central, saving mankind not only from the sin that brought about Adam's downfall, but also from the mixed blessing of mortality which resulted from it. After the Fall God took various measures[174] over the course of many generations in order to recall mankind and raise us up again to our original position.[175] And when all these gentle measures failed, he decided on a 'stronger remedy'. The Logos of God himself came to his own image, and was made man,[176] and as a perfect victim (since in him humanity was made one with deity)[177] was sacrificed for us, that we might be restored to our Godward pilgrimage, and that, justified by the passion of Christ, 'we might go back to God'.[178] The final provision God made for us is the gift of the sacrament of baptism whereby the salvation won by Christ for all is made available to any individual who will accept it. Baptism is the means of initiation not just into the church but into all the benefits of Christ,[179] it is the 'most magnificent of the gifts of God', for it sets us on 'the way to God', the way to deification. Gregory goes even further, and suggests that this sacrament is indeed the locus of the Spirit's deifying work, for it is a sacrament of new birth, of reformation, whereby we remain no longer what we are, but become what we were.[180] This sacrament, Gregory says to those about to be baptized,

> comes to the aid of our first birth, it makes us new instead of old, and Godlike (θεοειδεῖς) instead of what we now are.[181]

Time and time again Gregory attests to the Spirit's role in baptism as one of deification, in fact this assurance is for him one of the basic proofs of the Spirit's own divinity. In the oration 'On the Holy Lights', he writes:

> Baptism in the Spirit is the perfect baptism. How then is the Spirit not God, if I may digress a little, by whom you too are

made god?[182]

But as we have already observed, this sacrament does not confer mechanical immunity from post-baptismal sin, nor does it free the recipient from the responsibilities of taking an active part in his own salvation. So Gregory's advice to the faithful is to live lives which imitate the life of God-in-Christ, to imitate those features which most perfectly characterize his life-style: asceticism (or disengagement) and philanthropy (or involvement). But by whatever way the individual chooses to live his life, by the way of withdrawal from the world or of involvement in it, or perhaps, as in his own case, by a combination of both, Gregory finds the ultimate meaning of life solely in reference to the final goal towards which all life is directed - the goal that Paul described as 'the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus',[183] or in Gregory's words:

> the end, and that deification (τῆς θεώσεως) for which we were born, and to which we aspire, inasmuch as we cast a mental glance across the gulf between the two worlds, and have in expectation a reward commensurate with the magnificence of God![184]

This way of progress or ascent towards ultimate deification must be a co-operative effort on man's part, a free response to God's offer of salvation in Christ. Once this offer is accepted and the individual is initiated by baptism and sets out upon the way, the journey still lies ahead, a pilgrim's progress through trials and struggles, but it is at all times the combination of divine grace and human effort, 'a prize of virtue' and 'the gift of God'.[185] This life on earth is a pilgrimage to salvation, a paedagogical process of correction and training;[186] but always Gregory's attention is directed towards the goal of that process, the 'completion of the mystery' - our deification. 'Man', he tells us, is

> a living creature trained here, and then moved elsewhere; and, to complete the mystery, deified (θεούμενον) by its inclination to God (τῇ πρὸς θεὸν νεύσει).[187]

As we noted earlier, with reference to Gregory's teachings on creation, here in his understanding of the Christian life, the emphasis is on progress and growth, from a 'present and transitory' state of 'disturbance and confusion', to one 'spiritually perceived and abiding... firm and stable and divine and constant'.[188]

But baptism is not the only means of appropriating the gifts of the Spirit. The eucharist too, Gregory claims, is a means of our deification in a 'communion of God with men';[189] and in terms reminiscent of St Ignatius or St Irenaeus, he attests to the curative effect of the eucharistic elements, as 'medicine' for body, soul and mind,[190] to the efficacy of the eucharistic liturgy in remitting 'the darkness of sin',[191] and even more directly he speaks of the deificatory powers of the eucharist.[192] Likewise, ordination is a sacramental means whereby a man draws near to God and so brings others near, is himself hallowed and hallows others, and makes

> Christ to dwell in the heart by the Spirit: and in short to deify (θεὸν ποῆσαι) and bestow heavenly blessing upon those whose true home is in heaven.[193]

The major theological idea which the concept of deification elucidated for Gregory was that most fundamental biblical teaching of the relationship between man and God, a relationship based on man's divine origin: he was created in the image of God,[194] and given an inclination for God.[195] But this special relationship between man and God refers not only to man's origin, it relates also to his destiny. Created for a relationship with God, receiving the very life-breath of God himself,[196] man was not to be abandoned when that original relationship was broken by Adam's sin of disobedience; to abandon man in his plight would have been totally at variance with the very nature of God.[197] So it was, then, that God came to man's rescue and himself took on human nature, deifying it in the person of Jesus Christ, who was both definitive and determinative of what the God-man relationship was to be: definitive in that Christ was the perfect image of God,[198] and determinative in that the deification of human nature which was effected in him became the principle upon which our deification in him was to be based, a deification analogous to, but not identical with, that which took place in Christ.[199]

So far, then, we could say that deification describes that process by which the original relationship between God and man is restored. But that would be to suggest that deification was the equivalent of redemption, and we have already seen that such is not the case, for deification, when properly understood, takes us further, it includes

not only the restoration of the divine-human relationship, but the bringing of that relationship to its fulfilment. Salvation, by which each individual appropriates the deification of human nature effected by Christ, restores to man the capacity for growth and progress which was bestowed on Adam and Eve, and which they lost in the Fall. But it is the process of deification which enables us to exercise that capacity for growth, and to advance towards the perfection for which we were destined. And such a process of growth or advance, such a movement towards God, is precisely what we have described as a process of self-transcendence, the breaking through those barriers and limitations of our fallen (i.e. unfulfilled) human condition,

> altogether in a Godlike manner, that you may become a god (ἵνα γένῃ θεὸς), ascending from below, for his sake who descended from on high for ours.[200]

This growth and transcendence to which Gregory refers in all his teachings on anthropology points directly to the fulfilment of the purpose for which God created us. And since God is the origin, sustainer and goal of the whole process, it was most appropriate that Gregory should choose to express this principle of transcendence in terms of 'deification'. Time and time again Gregory draws upon this theme of transcendence or growth; it relates to every facet of human existence. Our physical material state, our intellectual capacity, and our spiritual pilgrimage are all subject to change, and God's desire is that the change should be one of growth to perfection, as we become more closely conformed to Christ, himself the image of the archetype:

> Travel without fault through every stage and faculty of the life of Christ. Be purified, be circumcised; strip off the veil which has covered you from your birth.... be crucified with him, and share his death and burial gladly, that you may rise with him, and be glorified with him and reign with him.[201]

And this process of imitation of Christ and conformity to him, this offering of ourselves ('the possession most precious to God'), becomes a restoration of the image in which we were made, a recognition of our dignity, leading to our deification:

> Let us recognize our dignity; let us honour our archetype; let us know the power of the mystery, and for what Christ died. Let us become like Christ, since Christ became like us. Let us become gods for his sake, since he for ours became man.[202]

But as Donald Winslow assures us, Gregory, in speaking of this process of self-transcendence, this process of deification,

> certainly does not mean an absolutization of the first primitive created state, no matter how elevated that state might be. Rather, he means growth towards God, that is a kind of growth which is a dynamic increase in us of those qualities which we share with our Creator, of those qualities which render us more and more 'Godlike'.[203]

In referring to the different aspects of human life involved in this process of self-transcendence and brought to fulfilment in the process of deification, Gregory draws on various sources of tradition before him. But the overall feature which governs all his theories of the human quest is the conviction that man was created and then recreated to know and to have fellowship with his creator: such was the original purpose of our life as creatures, such is the purpose of our existence now, and such is the ultimate goal of our life hereafter. The whole of life is a paedagogical process, of drawing us closer to God by degrees. We are brought to a deeper knowledge of God by 'the changing of our minds by gradual removals'.[204] Our transcendence from this fleshly cloud or veil to communion with God is achieved, according to Gregory, by true philosophy which can actually confer deification.[205] The ultimate goal of this transcendence, begun in this life but not fulfilled until the final limits of space and time themselves have been transcended,[206] is that we may eventually come to know God in nature and even perhaps in essence:

> What God is in nature and essence, no man ever yet has discovered or can discover. Whether it will ever be discovered is a question which he who will may examine and decide. In my opinion it will be discovered when that within us which is Godlike and divine, I mean our mind and reason, shall have mingled with its like, and the image shall have ascended to the archetype, of which it has now the desire.... But in this present life all that comes to us is but a little effluence...[207]

The overcoming of the passions by mortifications and discipline, another common element in patristic writings on deification, is advocated by Gregory for those who would 'approach near to God', for those souls who would escape before their time 'unto God'. To such pilgrims on the human journey 'belong the power of purifying others, and the being purified themselves'; theirs is an experience of almost limitless transcendence, for they 'know no limit either in ascending

(ἀναβάσεως) or in deification (θεώσεως)'.[208]

Although at times Gregory appears to deprecate our physical condition,[209] when he looks to our fulfilment he sees no difficulty in presuming that this is a fully personal experience involving the body and the soul,[210] and he is therefore faithful to New Testament teaching on the resurrection of the individual. Yet remaining loyal to the patristic as well as to the biblical tradition, he regards the deified person as one who attains to immortality.[211]

Gregory's incorporation of ideas influenced by Platonic elements within the patristic tradition is further exemplified when he takes the theme of transcendence from the personal individual scale on to the cosmic scale. He speaks of the new life of the kingdom as a 'transformation and changing of the universe to a condition of stability which cannot be shaken'.[212] That which is transient and unstable is transformed into the durable and immutable, we are delivered from the turmoil of the tempest to the calm of the haven.[213]

This gradual process of deification, the transcending of boundaries of knowledge, the passions, death, and even transience itself, also has an ethical element, for if we would reach our divine destiny, there is no better way to achieve our goal than by imitating, as closely as we are able, that deified human life through which God restored us to our heavenward path. By acts of discipline and self-giving love we not only co-operate with God's grace bestowed through the life of faith within the church, but we are actually enabled to participate in our own deification, which is both gracious gift and earned prize.[214]

The destiny of growing more and more into a truer reflection of God and divine things[215] became for Gregory of Nazianzus a consuming passion, and because the ability to reflect God was dependent upon knowledge of God, which was impossible in this life,[216] so the longing 'to transcend corporeal things, and to consort with the Incorporeal'[217] was all the greater. And although there are consolations on the way for 'those of us who are more like God and who approach God more nearly than

others',[218] yet the goal of the 'new creation' is 'diviner' and 'loftier' than the first.[219] The first creation gave only the potential, but the new creation makes possible the realization of the potential, and

> this is more Godlike than the former action, this is loftier in the eyes of all men of understanding.[220]

Participation in this new creation is a process of becoming more Godlike, it is a process which, as we have seen, Gregory describes as deification, a process which is but the ultimate realization of a potential and capacity bestowed by God in the initial act of creation. And the realizing of this capacity to become what God had intended his creatures to become is for Gregory best described as a process of growth, a process of transcendence, a mystery to be worked out by man, renewed by his participation in Christ:

> What is this new mystery which concerns me? I am small and great, lowly and exalted, mortal and immortal, earthly and heavenly. I share one condition with the lower world, the other with God; one with the flesh, the other with the spirit. I must be buried with Christ, arise with Christ, be joint heir with Christ, become the son of God, yea, God himself.[221]

The purpose of the creation was that God's creatures should know and enjoy their creator, and when this divine plan was thwarted by man's disobedience, God set in train a new order to bring man back on course. This new order came to its fulfilment in the incarnation, when in Christ God deified human nature and made it possible for man to regain his capacity for growth towards God, for 'that within us which is Godlike and divine' to mingle again with its like, and for the image in which we were originally made to ascend to its archetype.[222] This process of transformation realizes the purpose of creation itself: that all creatures might grow to the limits of their potential, transcend the limitations and impediments resulting from the Fall, and share an intimate communion and union with God himself, a communion which results in the sharing of his perfection and glory. For such a process only language which spoke of deification would do, because it was in God alone that all things would find their true end:

> But God will be all in all in the time of restitution; not in the sense that the Father alone will be, and the Son will be wholly resolved into him; but the entire Godhead... when we shall be no longer divided (as we now are by movements and passions), and

> containing nothing at all of God, or very little, but shall be entirely like God, ready to receive [into our hearts] the whole God and him alone. This is the perfection to which we pass on.[223]

It is the third of the Cappadocian Fathers, Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, who takes up the idea of this 'perfection to which we pass on', bringing together in a distinctive way our two major themes of self-transcendence and deification. As a speculative theologian of considerable originality and ingenuity, Gregory drew on the philosophy of the Neoplatonists but modified and ultimately transformed it to serve his purpose of defending and commending the Nicene tradition of Christianity as expounded by Athanasius and developed in the teachings of his fellow Cappadocians.

One of the basic theological affirmations to which Gregory of Nyssa returns again and again is that there is an infinite and irreducible distance between God, the uncreated, immutable creator, and created and mutable man. It is because of this very mutability of man that self-transcendence is also of the very nature of being human, for self-transcendence is the exercising of that capacity to change - for the better, in progress towards a fuller experience of humanness, or for the worse, in a regression further away from that image of God in which man was originally created. Gregory of Nyssa employs the 'image' motif, a fundamental presupposition of his anthropology, to emphasize that man, although created and by nature subject to change, also has an essential affinity with God. By bringing man into being, God (who always <u>is</u>) endowed man with freedom and rationality, an intelligible nature, part of the non-sensible order of the imperishable and immortal. But in order to take account of man's corporeality, Gregory postulates, somewhat awkwardly, a 'double creation' of man. He suggests there was initially an 'ideal' humanity, rational, imperishable, immortal, impassible and incorporeal, possessing a perfect resemblance to God,[224] and then subsequent to this 'first organization', humankind was 'divided' into male and female, the 'peculiar attributes of human nature', as Gregory describes them in his treatise <u>On the Making of Man</u>,[225] attributes which enabled the reproduction of the species so that it might eventually regain the original state of the image,[226] a state in which, however, the human race had never actually,

historically existed.[227] Not that Gregory believed embodiment as such to be evil, rather he regarded it as inappropriate to man's true nature; indeed, as created by God it was created 'good' and was created for a good purpose, but it is at best a second best.[228]

In the purpose of God, however, by this 'double creation' man still retained an affinity with God, able to partake of the good things in God, for

> it was needful that a certain affinity with the divine (συγγενὲς πρὸς τὸ θεῖον) should be mingled with the nature of man in order that by means of this correspondence it might aim at that which was native to it.... Thus it was needful for man, born for the enjoyment of the divine good, to have something in his nature akin to that in which he is to participate....
>
> He made man for the participation of His own peculiar good, and incorporated in him the instincts for all that was excellent, in order that his desire might be carried forward by a corresponding movement in each case to its like....[229]

Thus man, 'this composite being', bearing elements of the spiritual universe and having a fundamental connaturality with God and so sharing in divine attributes, is also of the material order, created, mutable, descended from unity to multiplicity. Endowed with (neutral) passions to enable him to exist and function within the sensible, material world, he is therefore a 'borderline' (μεθόριος) between the sensible and the intelligible realms of the created order.[230] But because historic man, in the person of Adam, by his own self-will lost mastery over his passions, he deformed and obscured the deiform beauty of his soul, and became enslaved by his corporeality,[231] and, stripped of his own resplendent divine garments, had to wear garments cobbled together from fig leaves and skins.[232] Therefore in order that he might be restored to the original splendour of the image of God, man needed a redeemer, one who 'is very power with an impulse to all good.... who is the Lord of his nature',[233] through whom the human race might be restored to communion with God. So

> He was transfused throughout our nature, in order that our nature might by this transfusion of the Divine become itself divine, rescued as it was from death, and put beyond the reach of the caprice of the antagonist.[234]

By the incarnation, by God taking on human nature in the person of Jesus Christ, man was given a true mediator, both God and man, and thus

'humanity was indissolubly united to God... the Lord, therefore, becomes a mediator once and for all betwixt God and men, binding man to the Deity by Himself.'[235] Gregory then develops this theme, using his own particular model of the unity of human nature.[236] He maintains that Christ, although assuming one individual human nature, did nonetheless restore the whole of human nature to communion with God, not simply by the incarnation alone, but by the incarnation involving the death and resurrection of Jesus.[237] Furthermore, this virtual reuniting of humanity with God has to be appropriated and incorporated by each individual who must take up, in faith, moral imitation of Christ[238] and sacramental union with him, by baptism[239] and the eucharist.[240]

The outcome of this divine offer of salvation, however, depends on the particular choice of each individual, exercising his or her God-given freedom, whether or not to retain the human character and so become part of the pleroma of redeemed humanity, or to forsake humanness and its potential destiny and fall into the state of the damned.[241] But the key to understanding Gregory's teaching on salvation is his notion of human participation in the divine perfections.[242] It is this notion which gives his theology and spirituality such a distinctive, dynamic character, and makes it particularly relevant to contemporary ideas about human transcendence.

How does this 'participation' take place? How does the creature actually participate in the nature and being of his creator? Here we come upon one of the major features of Gregory of Nyssa's teaching: it is in the pursuing of the life of virtue that we actually partake of God (θεοῦ μετέχει).[243] By the sacraments we are incorporated into the divine fellowship and blended with the divine, but for Gregory these are ultimately but elements within the larger context of a life of increasing conformity to the nature of God, a life of participation in the perfection that God <u>is</u>: it is in proportion to his growth in the good that man becomes more and more like God. This indeed was the purpose of our redemption: that we might have restored to us the possibility of being and doing good. It is by participating in God's goodness that man becomes more truly himself, in full control of

himself, in full possession of his true nature, the image of the divine beauty:

> There is in you, human beings, a desire to contemplate the true good, but when you hear that the Divine Majesty is exalted above the heavens, that Its glory is inexpressible, Its beauty ineffable, and Its Nature inaccessible, do not despair of ever beholding what you desire. It is indeed within your reach; you have within yourselves the standards by which to apprehend the Divine. For He who made you did at the same time endow your nature with this wonderful quality. For God imparted on it the likeness of the glories of His own nature, as if moulding the form of a carving into wax.... If, therefore, you wash off by a good life the filth that has been stuck on your heart like plaster, the Divine Beauty will again shine forth in you.[244]

Here we see how in Gregory's thinking, as G.B.Ladner observes,[245] the Platonic idea of assimilation to God is fully absorbed, into the biblical doctrine of creation and redemption according to the image of God, on the one hand, and on the other hand, into the biblical doctrine of God's transcendence and infinity. For this process of growth in virtue is, as Gregory explains it, a perpetual progress of self-transcendence. Because God is infinite, one grows greater in proportion to his growth in grace,[246] possession of perfection is impossible, and the whole process is therefore one of striving forward, never attaining;[247] it is in the continuing progress in virtue by participation in the divine perfections that true perfection consists:

> For this is truly perfection: never to stop growing towards what is better and never placing any limit on perfection.[248]

Our very mutability, our capacity for transcendence, is the counterpart of the divine infinity in providing the basis for our eternal progress. Not only do we become capable of receiving God,[249] we have the capacity for being assimilated to God,[250] of achieving likeness with God,[251] indeed, of being deified, becoming god:

> Man transcends his own nature (ἐκβαίνει τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φύσιν ὁ ἄνθρωπος), he who was subject to corruption in his mortality becomes immune from it in his immortality, eternal from being fixed in time - in a word, a god from a man. For if he is made worthy of becoming a son of God, he will possess in himself the dignity of the Father and be made heir of all the Father's goods.... Through his love of man He brings our nature, dishonoured by sin, to an honour that almost equals his own. For if He brings man into relationship with what He Himself is by nature, what else does He promise but a certain equality of honour due to such kinship?[252]

For Gregory of Nyssa, this process of perpetual progress in perfection

by participation in the divine perfections, leading to our ultimate assimilation to God in deification, is directly related to our natural mutability and our consequent capacity for transcendence. In fact, in so far as we have the capacity for transcendence by nature, we have the capacity for deification by grace. According to Gregory, 'Christianity is the imitation of God's nature',[253] and imitation of the divine nature is the process in which we are involved by our participation in the divine perfections, responding to the God-given desire to become like the God in whose image we are made. This is to effect that 'taste for the infinite' that we have identified as the source of our desire for self-transcendence. As John Macquarrie observes in one of his many references to this theme:

> The human existent transcends the mere instant, and the more human he is, the more he transcends it. He extends himself through a span of time.... This ability to transcend can already be interpreted as man's taste for the infinite... It is already a kind of eternity within time. And one could imagine the extension of the span to include all time, gathering up all the past in a perfect memory and anticipating all that is to come.... This would not be a finite human experience, but it is how people have sometimes tried to imagine the eternal consciousness of God.... But although this is not a human experience, there are analogies on the level of human experience.[254]

One such analogy is Gregory of Nyssa's interpretation of one who, having risen above desire in his quest for God, finds himself extended, yet still possessing the whole of his existence at once, no longer needing to face the implications (threats, expectations or regrets) aroused by the flow of time.[255] The more one transcends the various instances of time and space, by means of thought and action, the more human one becomes. But according to Gregory, the more humanity becomes like God, the more human it becomes, for it is of the very nature of humanity to be like God. The self-transcendence by which man becomes more human is that same capacity which enables him to become like God. Thus deification is in fact the process of humanization. The love that propels the soul towards God in continual self-transcendence is the love that makes humanity human, by drawing the individual soul nearer to the source of all perfection, and all being.

The culmination of this process of deification is reserved 'for the time to come', according to Gregory's teaching in his Great

Catechism.[256] When the generation of human beings (by procreation) is completed, time should cease together with the completion, and then the restitution of all things will take place, with humanity's transformation from the corruptible and earthly to the impassible and eternal.[257] This transformation will bring humanity to that absolute perfection which was intended at the initial creation, but first only those who have been purified already in this life will be able to enter into the full possession of the divine perfection.[258] The remainder will have to await the final ἀποκατάστασις, the restoration to that state of blessedness which God willed from the beginning for all reasonable creatures.[259] This suggests that there is a definite universalist element in Gregory's thought here, and there might also be a temptation to see in his vision of 'the time to come' a 'fixed' state of fulfilment. Against such interpretations, however, it is necessary to set the fundamental concept of dynamic participation as an essentially continuous and infinite progress by which man is brought to likeness to God, allowing the reflection of 'those ineffable qualities of deity to shine forth within the narrow limits of our nature'[260] for if a man is freed from all that comes under the dominion of evil

> he becomes, so to speak, a god by his very way of life, since he verifies in himself what reason finds in the Divine Nature.[261]

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CONCEPT OF DEIFICATION IN THE WRITINGS OF OTHER WITNESSES OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

For Athanasius and the Cappadocian Fathers, the concept of the deification of man occupied a central and fundamental place in their understanding of Christology and more particularly in their ideas of soteriology. But while these fathers employed the idea as an integral element in their theological expositions, there were many other theologians, from various regions of the church and representing different traditions within it, writing and teaching in the fourth century, who also made specific mention of the deification of man, but their references to this idea are only occasional and certainly do not appear as fundamental presuppositions upon which the writers concerned based their arguments.

The first of these fourth century writers in whose works we find mention of deification is the Syrian biblical exegete, Ephraem,[1] whose enormous literary output, most of it written in metrical verse form, included biblical commentaries, homilies, hymns, and polemical tracts. In the writings of Ephraem the notion of deification, and its related terms, 'participation in the divine life' and 'fellowship with God', appear in his expositions of the creation of man and the incarnation, in order to highlight God's beneficence in sharing with man his divine attributes. The greatest of these attributes was freedom, which Ephraem regards as itself the image of God in man. It is that capacity of rationality, to deliberate and make choices, which differentiates human beings, made in God's image, from animals, and so it is the very basis of human nature. In exercising this capacity, human beings manifest their freedom to develop and fulfil themselves by bringing into service their own will, and in so doing reveal their capacity for self-transcendence. But this freedom, as Ephraem understands it, is not only a matter of human self-determination; it is also associated with power and authority over creation. Absolute sovereignty and power belong to God, but God shared this responsibility with Adam in giving

him 'dominion' over all other creatures.[2] Thus, in his commentary on Genesis, Ephraem describes Adam as 'a second god over creation',[3] and again, in one of his hymns, he refers to Moses 'becoming god' because of the authority he exercised on behalf of God.[4] But although he ascribes such an exalted status to man, Ephraem is careful to emphasize that the gifts and attributes that Adam enjoyed and the blessings destined for him were gifts bestowed by God, they did not belong to man as of right. It is this theme that Ephraem develops at some length in his commentary on Genesis, where the fall of Adam and Eve is described as the direct result of their following the enticement of the serpent and their grasping at divinity (i.e. infallible knowledge and immortal life) for themselves. Thus they denied themselves those very blessings which God had destined for them:

> By what it promised them, the serpent did away with what they were to have had. It made them think they would receive it by transgressing the command so that it should happen that they would not receive it by keeping the command. It withheld divinity from them by means of the divinity it promised them and ensured that those to whom it had promised enlightenment from the Tree of Knowledge were not enlightened by the promised Tree of Life.[5]

Adam and Eve brought about their own downfall by taking for themselves that which belonged to God alone to give. But they did not lose the 'form' of divinity which they had already been given, that is, the image of God; what they lost was the promised likeness which they were to receive in the future, the likeness which Ephraem describes as 'divinity in humanity', a gift destined for them in their human state:

> ... they would have possessed divinity in humanity and had they acquired infallible knowledge and immortal life they would have done so in this body.[6]

Although it was their grasping at divinity for themselves by eating the fruit of the tree the serpent told them would make them 'become like God'[7] which brought about their downfall, Adam and Eve were not at fault, according to Ephraem, in desiring to become like God. The desire was in itself laudable; what was inadmissible was the way in which they sought to satisfy that desire. By their disobedience Adam and Eve were prevented from attaining their proper goal and thwarted in their attempt to satisfy their desire for fellowship with God.

But this desire, although hindered, was not destroyed; in fact Ephraem

saw the incarnation itself as God's answer to the human predicament of this unfulfilled desire:

> The Sublime knew that Adam wished to become god, and he sent his son who put on [the body of man] in order to fulfil his [Adam's] desire.[8]

And he takes up this same thought again in his commentary on Tatian's harmony of the four gospels, the Diatessaron:

> Why did the Lord clothe himself in flesh? In order that flesh itself might taste of victory, and that men might know and understand the gifts of God....
>
> Moreover, the Lord wanted to show that at the beginning he was in no way jealous of man becoming god (and he did not try to prevent him). For the man in whom the Lord humbled himself is greater than the man in whom he dwelt at the time of Adam's first glory. This is why: 'I have said: You shall be gods'. So the Word came, and he clothed himself in flesh, in order that what cannot be grasped (the divinity) might be grasped by what can be grasped (man), and that flesh might rise up against those who grasp it (demons), by means of that which cannot be grasped.[9]

In these two passages, Ephraem teaches that the incarnation was God's way of giving to man that which man was entitled to desire but which he was neither permitted nor able to grasp for himself - the gift of divinity. The same idea appears in the collection of Hymns on Virginity:

> Divinity flew down and descended
> to raise and draw up humanity.
> The Son has made beautiful the servant's deformity
> and he has become (a) god, just as he desired.[10]

For Ephraem, the very purpose and aim of the incarnation or 'hominization' of God was the deification of man. By his use of the literary device of parallelism he is able to highlight the contrast between the divine and human conditions and at the same time to emphasize the fact that the initiative and the activity always come from the divine, while the role of the human is one of receptivity and acceptance of what God offers. This is very simply expressed in one of the Hymns on Paradise:

> He clothed himself in the likeness of man
> in order to bring man to the likeness of himself.[11]

And again, in one of the Hymns on Faith, parallelism is employed, but this time with an interesting twist that suggests an element of reciprocity in the exchange, without however diminishing the notion of

God's priority and initiative:

> Praise him that brought a blessing;
> let him receive of us prayer.
> Because the Adorable came down to us,
> He caused adoration to come up from us.
> Because he gave us the divine nature,
> we gave him the human nature.[12]

God recognized that in man there was still the desire to fulfil the destiny offered to Adam, to enjoy full fellowship with God by partaking of the divine nature and becoming the divine likeness. And so in his great love God made it possible for man to find the way back to his proper goal. In the person of Christ he clothed himself in the likeness of man and not only called mortals gods through grace,[13] but actually transformed man's deformity and made him a god just as he desired. For when the original image given to Adam is restored, the gift of freedom can be rightly employed and human beings can by the exercise of their own will achieve that fulfilment that God intended for them, because their capacity for self-transcendence is now in total harmony with the divine purpose expressed at the original creation of Adam:

> (that) they would have possessed divinity in humanity and had they acquired infallible knowledge and immortal life they would have done so in this body.[14]

The next group of references to deification we shall consider occurs within the context of a traditional exposition of the faith, the Catechetical Orations attributed to Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem. They were intended for candidates preparing for Christian initiation, and are thought to date from the mid-fourth century.[15] While evidently not composed for the general populace, these lectures appear to steer clear of the more sophisticated doctrinal controversies of the period and concentrate instead on many of the standard elements of contemporary apologetic; and one such element is the notion of deification.

In the Procatechesis, the introductory lecture to the series, Cyril reminds the candidates of the great dignity to which baptismal consecration admits them, conferring upon them the 'name of god',[16] a claim justified on the familiar grounds of the popular exposition of Psalm 82:6. In one of the later lectures, employing this same model, he draws together the ideas of deification and divine filiation, but also emphasizes the distinction between the sonship of the believer, sonship

by adoption, and the sonship of Christ, sonship by nature:

> ... the scripture says: 'Ye are children of the Lord your God'; and elsewhere, 'I have said "You are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High"'. 'I have said', not, 'I have begotten'. They, in that God said, received the sonship, which they had not; he [Christ] was not begotten to be other than he was before, but was begotten from the beginning, the Son of the Father, being above all beginning and all ages.[17]

This distinction is made even more explicit in the next lecture, in which Cyril seeks to warn his hearers against the heretical factions in the church which undermine the full divinity of Christ. Here, employing the notion of deification, he contrasts the orthodox teaching that Christ was God incarnate with the claim of the opponents of the truth who claim that Christ was a deified man:

> ... others say that Christ was not God made man, but that a man was made God (ἄνθρωπον τινα τεθεοποιῆσθαι); for they have dared to say that it was not the pre-existing Word who became man, but that a certain man by advancement was crowned.[18]

Deification, for Cyril, is that which is appropriate for man, but in order for man to be thus made partaker of God it was necessary for Christ to be fully God, so that in taking a like nature with us he might give to humanity the 'greater grace'.[19] And this grace, made available because of the incarnation, is conveyed through the sacraments of the church, particularly in the eucharist in which the communicant, by partaking of the body and blood of Christ, 'might be made of the same body and blood with him'. By our participation in the eucharist we come to bear Christ in us because his body and blood are diffused through our members and we become partakers of the divine nature.[20]

But elsewhere, Cyril identifies deification as the work of the Holy Spirit, in support of his argument that the Spirit is to be honoured with the glory of the Godhead together with the Father and the Son:

> For there is one God the Father of Christ, and one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and one Holy Spirit, who sanctifies and deifies (θεοποιὸν) all, who spoke in the law and in the prophets, in the old covenant and in the new.[21]

In these scattered references to deification in Cyril's Catechetical Lectures, we find a cautious if not actually ambivalent attitude to the concept of deification. On the one hand Cyril is prepared to

acknowledge the legitimacy of the popular interpretation of Psalm 82:6 in designating men 'gods', but he makes it clear that this is quite distinct from the Godhead and sonship of Christ. And again the notion of a deified man is of a very different order from the reality of the God-man, the incarnate Word. Both the terminology and the concept of deification had to be used with care, and so Cyril confined himself to employing them in describing the sanctifying work of the Spirit and as a means of expressing the reality of union with Christ in the sacraments. But despite the muted tone of his references, Cyril was obviously aware of the language and the ideas associated with deification, and he provides another witness to the concept in the context of the fourth century church.

The chief concern of the scant remains that we have of the extensive writings of Apollinarius, Bishop of Laodicea in the later fourth century, is the doctrine of Christ. What he has to say on the doctrine of deification as it relates to man and human salvation, must therefore be extracted from works that are mainly Christological in emphasis. Basic to Apollinarius' assumptions about the human condition is the Platonic notion of the soul's natural affiliation with divine reason, although this is qualified by the recognition of its nature as begotten and mutable. Faithful to the biblical tradition, Apollinarius affirms the fundamental and essential distinction between God and creatures:

> ... man is a living being distinct from God, and not God, but the servant of God.[22]

But at the same time, and in this same passage, he has no hesitation in attributing to the rational element in the human constitution a heavenly origin and a 'divine' character:

> The flesh... has been put together with the heavenly governor, being conformed to it in virtue of its own passive nature, and receiving the divine (element), which has been made its own, by reason of (the latter's) active nature.[23]

Although the soul is not 'divine' in the same sense as its transcendent source, yet the creature does participate in the rationality which belongs to the divine Son as Logos:

> Men are of the same substance as the irrational animals in respect of the irrational body, but of a different substance in so far as they are rational (λογικοί). Thus also God, who is of one

> substance with man according to the flesh, is of a different substance inasmuch as he is Logos and God.[24]

The soul, being of heavenly origin, possesses not only a natural affiliation with the Divine but also an affinity of nature, but its divinity is derivative and by participation, it does not give the soul identity with the Divine.

Also fundamental to Apollinarius' doctrine of man is his belief in the essential organic unity of the two-fold nature of man; soul and body are two natures which are perfected only in their conjunction.[25] And yet Apollinarius taught that this relationship is not one of absolute equality, for he held that the flesh is essentially passive in nature and its role is one of submissive obedience to the superior partner, the soul, which moves and thus vivifies it:

> ... For thus out of mover [the soul] and moved [the flesh/body] one living being is constituted - not two, nor out of two complete and self-moving (parts).[26]

This unity, then, is not only a biological oneness (the divine Spirit endows the soul and flesh of the human person with a single life), it is also a oneness that preserves the distinctiveness of the component elements without confusion (the soul is 'mixed' with its body but is not altered in its own nature). When, however, he turns his attention to the issue of soteriology and analyses the fallen state of man, Apollinarius appears to contradict his earlier statements on the constitution of man, and to reveal his adherence to a form of dualism between the material and spiritual elements of human nature.[27] Here he no longer speaks of the flesh as passive, receptive and obedient to the directing of the spirit; he now presents the relationship as one of conflict in which the spirit is beset and becomes mastered by the actively irrational force of the flesh, the seat of the passions which are the fundamental source of sin.

In order to account for the responsible involvement of the human spirit in sin, Apollinarius stresses the natural and inevitable mutability of the will and so, by extension, the will's equally inevitable deflection from the good. But at the same time, and in obvious tension with that assertion, he is bound by his philosophical presuppositions to account for the fact that the human spirit is 'from God', and this he does by

affirming that the will is by its very nature drawn towards conformity with the divine purposes.

To explain how the human spirit participates in salvation, Apollinarius is forced to resolve this tension by qualifying the notion of the will's essential mutability. The human spirit appropriates the salvation which Christ the divine Logos offers by assimilating itself to Christ the divine νοῦς.[28] But this very process does not and indeed cannot take place apart from the flesh, for the very work of incarnation was completed

> in the flesh which can be moved by another and worked upon by the divine Mind,[29]

as he affirms elsewhere, in his short confessional treatise The Faith in Detail:

> The main point of our salvation is the incarnation of the Logos. For we believe that while the divinity remained unchangeable, the Word became incarnate for the renewing of humanity.[30]

And Apollinarius goes on to spell out exactly what this 'renewing of humanity' is, in terms of deification:

> We declare that the Logos of God became man for the purpose of our salvation, so that we might receive the likeness of the heavenly One and be deified (θεοποιηθῶμεν) after the likeness of the true Son of God by nature and of the true Son of Man according to the flesh, our Lord Jesus Christ.[31]

It is important to note here the emphasis that Apollinarius puts on the involvement of the flesh in this understanding of salvation. It was expressly for our salvation that God became incarnate, so that by our participation in the deified flesh of the Logos our flesh might be sanctified:

> His flesh vivifies us through the Deity which is substantially bound together with it. For it is the Divine which vivifies: so then the flesh is divine because it is conjoined with God. And this flesh it is which saves, while we are saved, sharing in it as food.[32]

Here Apollinarius links deification with membership of the body of Christ, the church, and with participation in the body of Christ in the eucharist - two themes which are similarly linked with the concept of deification in many other patristic writers. And because Apollinarius was so keen to preserve intact in his doctrine of Christ the

immutability, the impassibility, and the immortality of the divine Logos, he is claiming these 'divine activities' for those who by their union with God in Christ are vivified, sanctified, and so deified:

> If in being applied to iron fire reveals that iron to be capable also of the works of fire, yet does not alter its nature, then neither is the union of God with the body a change of that body, even though the body share in the divine activities in those that can partake of them,[33]

for as he claims in another passage

> the holy flesh [of Christ]... causes deity to be implanted (ἐνιδρύουσα θεότητα) in those who partake of it.[34]

Here we find the linking up of deification and transcendence in the idea of salvation as the enabling of the human spirit to be itself. By the work of the divine Logos, the flesh of man is sanctified and brought into obedience to the spirit which although mutable is ultimately perfectible when it functions in co-operation with the divine Spirit. Apollinarius is clear that salvation can take place only through Christ; the 'renewing of humanity' was after all the whole purpose of the incarnation. God took the initiative and took on human nature in Christ. For their part, human beings, in order to avail themselves of this salvation, must participate in and appropriate the divine life of the Logos by incorporation into the church and by partaking of the sacraments. Thus sanctified by identification and union with the deified flesh of Christ, the human body is no longer enslaved to irrational and unnatural forces, and so allows and enables the spirit to respond to the good and become conformed to the divine purposes to which it is by nature drawn. But while the original initiative is always God's, it is still the responsibility of the free human will to decide whether or not to avail itself of the salvation offered.

What perhaps is most significant for our purposes is the recognition, implicit in the doctrine of salvation presented by Apollinarius, that salvation is a process of deification, receiving 'the likeness of the heavenly One', whereby 'deity is implanted in those who partake of it'. And the corollary of this is that the human will, freed from the enslaving power of its corporeal partner, the seat of irrational passion and the source of sin, is enabled to be itself, to transcend

the limitations put upon it by the rebellious flesh, to follow its inherent tendency towards assimilation to the divine Logos, and to transcend itself in receiving the likeness of God in which it was created.

Didymus the Blind, head of a theological academy in Alexandria for over fifty years,[35] was a much respected teacher and churchman, renowned for his piety, the breadth of his learning and his remarkable memory. He was a generally conservative man of the Bible, noted more for the thoroughness of his scholarship than for his originality. It is no surprise, therefore, that what Didymus has to say on the subject of deification is an echo of what had already been set down by his contemporaries, Athanasius and the Cappadocians. The few references to deification in the fragmentary remains of his works that are available to us confirm that the concept was by the fourth century generally integrated into the contemporary understanding of salvation, in a way that gave salvation a dynamic thrust.

As Didymus speaks of it, salvation is a recreative process, involving more than our restoration to the condition of our first parents before the Fall. It is rather our admission to an even higher state of grace in which there is no longer room 'for anything that is unworthy of our love',[36] a state in which we are freed from sin and death and from earthbound things, a state in which we are made spiritual beings and 'sharers of the divine glory'.[37] Didymus links this 'renovation' with the sacrament of baptism which admits us to

> the familiarity of God in so far as the powers of our nature permit, as someone has said: In so far as mortals can be likened to God.[38]

There is therefore a likeness to God that is appropriate to the human condition, but it does imply a 'being in relation' to God, and it is this relationship which results in deification, the work of all three members of the Holy Trinity.

> If, just as the Father creates, sanctifies, judges and deifies (θεοποιεῖ) those in relation to whom he is, in the same way does the only-begotten and the Spirit of God; then fitly to the Son and also to the Spirit of God are applied the terms: 'only', 'true', 'wise', 'unseen God', and 'only possessing immortality', as they

are to the Father.[39]

Like Athanasius and Basil of Caesarea, Didymus makes this deifying work of the Trinity the basis for his argument establishing the divinity of the Holy Spirit:

> Since then all other scriptures agree in showing the divine nature to be one, and in giving one name to the all-honoured Trinity, and in placing [the Spirit] in such and so great graces either together with the Son, or making mention of him alone for his divine works and powers, and in calling him especially the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, and coming from God... and also they agree in bearing witness that he makes us sons of God and deifies (θεοποιεῖ), and frees, and creates...; how could he not be God who deifies (θεοποιῶν) us? and not the Lord who liberates us? [40]

And in another passage, making the same point, he follows Athanasius again in linking deification, our becoming gods, with our being made sons:

> If together with God the Father and his Son, the Holy Spirit renews us through baptism to the first image and so is responsible for our adoption as sons (υἱοθεσίας) and our becoming gods (Γίνεσθαι θεούς), and no creature has it within its power to make sons (υἱοποιεῖν) and to deify (θεοποιεῖν) in this way, then how can he (the Spirit) not be true God?[41]

Baptism, by uniting us with Christ, is thus the means whereby we become gods, for the life in God which constitutes the privileged condition of every baptized Christian, is a participation in the divine life and all its attributes. As Didymus insists again and again, it is only by living life in God that man can realize fully the divine plan of salvation. In fact he seems to go so far as to suggest that this divineness in man is an essential constitutive part of human nature, when he says of those who are restored by Christ to the image and likeness of God: 'these alone are truly men'.[42] Outside of God and his infinite perfections, therefore, the necessary condition of all existence is to participate in the divine essence, the plenitude of being.

Here in these few scattered references in Didymus of Alexandria we find another witness following the thinking of those among his contemporaries who had made major contributions to the development of the notion of deification. Didymus' indebtedness to the soteriological tradition of Athanasius probably disposed him favourably to the language and the notion of deification, but his particular interest in

the process of sanctification gave him the opportunity of making use of the doctrine to suit his own purposes, to present salvation as a process whereby human beings are taken into a deeper experience of life here on earth and are thus enabled to participate in the life of God to a degree that could only be described adequately in the language of deification.

So far in this analysis of writings on the subject of deification we have considered works that are doctrinal or at least inclined to intellectual expression and interest. We now turn to a collection of a very different character, the Macarian Homilies, a set of spiritual treatises traditionally ascribed to the spiritual luminary of the famous monastic colony of Scetus (Wadi-el-Natrun), Macarius the Egyptian. Scholarly opinion seems now generally agreed that these addresses are to be attributed to a mendicant pietist monastic movement known as the Messalians, the 'praying ones', who flourished in Syria from the end of the fourth century.[43]

These fifty homilies are simple, devotional and practical pieces intended to provide spiritual direction and encouragement for monks engaged in the task of bringing themselves into total subjection to God. The emphasis therefore is neither theological nor ethical; there is rather a direct appeal to experience and feeling, particularly the longing for God in the depth of the human soul. And this longing could only be satisfied, according to Messalian teaching, by prayer, incessant prayer, for prayer alone is the key in the process of man's salvation.

Tracing this quest of the soul for God, the Homilies establish at the very outset, in line with biblical teaching, that although the soul is beauteous and wonderful, bearing 'a fair likeness and image of God', yet it is not 'of the nature of the Godhead',[44] a point stressed again and again:

> He (the Lord) is God; the soul is not God. He is the Lord; it is a servant. He is creator; it is a creature. He is the maker; it the thing made. There is nothing common to his nature and to that of the soul.[45]

But having affirmed this fundamental principle, the Homilies set out to explore just what relationship there is between man and God and how that relationship can be deepened and brought to fulfilment.

Although God and man do not share a common nature, there is a kinship between them, a relationship of communion so close that 'there is no tie of blood or suitableness like that between the soul and God, and between God and the soul'.[46] The relationship is not one of substantial identity, but God 'through his infinite and inconceivable kindness' has made it possible

> to be united with his visible creatures, such as the souls of saints and angels, that they might be enabled to partake of the life of Godhead.'[47]

And the capacity for the soul to be thus united with God was bestowed in the very act of creation, when God made the soul 'a great and divine work':

> In fashioning her, God made her such as to put no evil in her nature, but made her after the image of the virtues of the Spirit.... He has put in her intelligence, divers faculties, will, the ruling mind.... Altogether he created her such as to be his bride, and capable of fellowship with him that he might be mingled with her, and be one spirit with her.'[48]

But by the disobedience of Adam, the soul's original image and likeness to God was lost,[49] sin entered the soul and became like a member of it.[50] But man was left with his will[51] and was able to live according to his own nature,[52] with residual capacity for good.[53]

In response to this predicament of man, God, impelled by his own charity, responds to the soul who turns to him, and, like the father who comes running to meet his lost son, comes to the lost soul and cleaves to it so that 'they become one spirit, one composite thing, one intention, the soul and the Lord'.[54] Thus salvation is a co-operative process, involving man's participation with God in realizing the soul's potential for 'fellowship with the Godhead'.[55] It is a process of restoration to 'the primal fashioning of the pure Adam',[56] whereby souls are 'altered and changed from their present condition to another condition, and a divine nature'.[57] This was indeed the purpose of the incarnation:

> to alter and create our souls anew, and make them, as it is written, partakers of the divine nature, and to give into our souls a heavenly soul, that is the Spirit of Godhead.[58]

And this gift of the Holy Spirit not only eradicates sin and all the 'natural' desires associated with it, it not only recovers the primal fashioning of the pure Adam, for as the Homilies remind us:

> Man... by the power of the Spirit and the spiritual regeneration... is made greater than he [Adam]. Man is deified (ἀποθεοῦται).[59]

In this twenty-sixth homily the author then goes on to explain just what this process of deification means. Deified human nature is still human nature, it remains in essence what it was before. What changes is that the will is given over to God, and in return the will is purified and sanctified, brought to participate in the divine nature, but that does not involve a change in its essential humanness. It is rather a rebirth of humankind from the divine nature,[60] restoring the soul to its original and intended fellowship with the Godhead.

Despite the use of the language of birth and inhabitation employed here, the Homilies clearly do not mean to suggest there is any consubstantiality between the human and the divine - that issue remains settled. What the Homilies are attempting to describe is a union which transforms man from a state of estrangement from his own human nature and from God to a state of 'communion with the Spirit of Christ's light, irradiated by the beauty of his unspeakable glory'.[61] But in order that such a transformation might take place, the soul must be brought into subjection by a process of abstinence and self-discipline. And once mastery over the passions has been established,

> this man is permitted to come to good measures of the Spirit and is rewarded through the power of God with the pure man, and is made greater than himself; for such an one is deified (ἀποθεοῦται) and made a son of God, receiving the heavenly stamp upon his soul.[62]

In this passage deification is associated with the two themes of ἀπάθεια and divine filiation which occur in many of the patristic sources we have examined, indicating that the tradition from which these Homilies arose was familiar with the general tenor of contemporary understanding of the concept. In addition to the specific terminology of deification, the Homilies employ a wide range of phrases

suggestive of the state of intimate union associated with deification: 'partaking of the life of Godhead',[63] becoming the 'unfalsified image of God',[64] taking up 'quarters with the Godhead',[65] 'inwardly filled with the Godhead',[66] and the oft repeated biblical phrase 'partaking of the divine nature'.[67] In some of these instances, particularly those associated with ἀπάθεια, in which the actual vocabulary of deification is used (and the Homilies confine themselves to the term ἀποθεόω rather than the form θεοποιέω usual in Christian writings), the experience is described as an immediate reward granted here in this life.[68] Elsewhere, however, when the goal of the spiritual life is related to the state of contemplation, it is suggested that the experience is known only as a foretaste in this life with the ultimate consummation awaiting us in the life to come.[69]

There is a similar tension in the teaching of the Homilies regarding the ultimate goal of the human spiritual quest itself. From time to time there are references to 'measures of perfection',[70] 'measures' which are left undefined, but Homily 45 mentions various 'gifts' received from the Spirit as an 'earnest' of what is yet to come. And that ultimate goal is then defined as

> the complete union, namely charity, which can never change nor fail, which sets those who have longed for it free from passion and from agitation.[71]

This 'highest point' of the spiritual pilgrimage, absolute and entire love of God for God's own sake, is a specifically defined state described in Homily 26 as the final 'measure' of perfection, 'the perfect love, wherein lies the bond of perfectness';[72] and one who reaches this state of perfect love is 'from thenceforth fast bound, and is the captive of grace'.[73] A little further on in the same homily we are told that when the Lord recognizes such a soul, one who offers himself completely in love,

> on a moment of time He snatches you out of the mouth of darkness, and translates you at once into His kingdom.[74]

This transforming experience is the goal of the soul's quest; it is the ultimate 'measure' when the soul is 'fast bound' in a state of perfect communion-in-love or, as the same homily puts it, in 'fellowship with the Godhead'.[75]

Prior to this consummation however the soul is in a state of constant flux 'still subject to fear, and war, and falling'.[76] And here we are warned of the dangers of misinterpreting intermediate measures as the final goal:

> In this way many have erred when grace came to them. They thought that they had attained perfection, and said, 'That is enough; we need no more'.[77]

This statement seems to be consistent with what has been described so far, but in the next sentence it is suggested that the quest for God is in fact endless, because we are told: 'the Lord has no end, and there is no comprehending Him'. This statement would seem to suggest that the search or quest for God is to be understood as timeless or at least as non-temporal, and this, as we have seen, is a perspective shared by Gregory of Nyssa, who speaks of the process of deification as being an endless (timeless/non-temporal?) process of the soul being drawn ever deeper into its relationship with God, a process of continuing enrichment, never knowing satiation but continuing in ever deepening satisfaction and being drawn on into even greater satisfaction.

But whereas for the most part the emphasis in the works of Gregory of Nyssa was on doctrinal exposition, in which he develops his ideas systematically, these apparent tensions in the Homilies remind us that their purpose was to describe varieties of mystical experience and to offer guidance and encouragement to people at various stages of spiritual growth. And while the author acknowledges that he has not yet seen a Christian who has arrived at the state of perfect union with God,[78] he assures his readers that the experiences of which he writes so enthusiastically belong in some measure to our existence in this present world. The ultimate experience which would set us in a state of spiritual rapture 'aloft and intoxicated' is kept free from us in order that we may be able to continue our life in this world 'free to take an interest in our brethren and in the ministry of the word'.[79] But such a person is deemed to be certainly on the way to deification. For the Messalians it would seem both views were held in tension, in much the same way as we find more than one view of eschatology in the New Testament.

Most of the church fathers whom we have discussed so far have come from schools of thought related to, dependent upon, or at least sympathetic to, the 'Alexandrian' tradition of early Christian scholarship. Whereas the scholarship of Alexandria was given to allegorical interpretation and mystical elaboration, particularly in its scriptural exegesis, the tradition of exegesis associated with the school of Antioch was inclined to a more literal and historical approach to biblical texts, emphasizing the message intended by the inspired writers rather than looking for meanings behind the written words. In the theological controversies which exercised the minds of the bishops and other scholars in the centuries under review in our present study, the Antiochene tradition, reflecting elements of Semitic influence, tended to lay great stress on the oneness of God, rejecting ideas that would compromise this fundamental principle. The historical interest of the school inclined it to emphasize the humanity of Christ, and to postulate a theology of incarnation that suggested a 'loose' union of the divine and human natures in Christ. In its soteriology it made much of human moral effort, a feature in which opponents detected traits of the Pelagian heresy and which gave its pastoral teaching a particularly moralistic tone. All these influences and distinctive characteristics are apparent in the theology of the two representatives of the Antiochene school whose works we shall now consider, John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia.

John, known to posterity as Chrysostom ('of the golden mouth') because of his great gifts as a preacher, became one of the foremost advocates of the Antiochene interpretation of the Nicene faith, manifesting all the characteristics we have outlined: antagonism to allegory, a strong historical and literal approach in exegesis, strict adherence to biblical patterns of thought and language, and an innate suspicion of extravagant theological speculations.

Of the vast literary legacy of Chrysostom, the great majority of his works are in sermon form ranging from occasional and seasonal addresses, through moral, social, and theological discourses, to his

famous exegetical homilies. One of the images of which he makes frequent use in his teaching on redemption is the concept of divine filiation, the adoptive sonship by which we are restored to that intimate relationship with God intended for us by God from the beginning,[80] and effected by the incarnation of Christ.[81] Chrysostom is at pains to emphasize that this relationship is an adoption by grace[82] and is of quite a different order from Christ's sonship by nature.[83] But although he exploits the full import of this relationship by which we are raised 'to glory unspeakable',[84] and removed 'from earth to heaven, and from a mortal nature to an immortal',[85] yet Chrysostom never goes so far as to employ the vocabulary of deification as does Athanasius, who on occasion used the terms for being made sons (υἱοποιῶν) and being deified (θεοποιῶν) synonymously.[86]

For John Chrysostom there were serious dangers in the terminology of θεοποίησις or θέωσις, in such common usage among his predecessors and contemporaries from the Alexandrian tradition, dangers such as the compromising of the oneness and uniqueness of the Godhead, the possibility of calling into question the distinction between God the creator and man his creature, and also the potential confusion with language and therefore ideas employed by pagans. In fact the only occasions when Chrysostom does use the terminology of deification are to refer to pagan notions and practices.[87]

But although he studiously avoided the specific terminology of deification, John Chrysostom gave considerable prominence in his preaching to the concept of resemblance to God, as in our original creation in the image of God[88] (which Chrysostom interprets as referring to man's dominion over creation[89]), and with reference to the true end of man: to regain the divine resemblance lost at the fall,[90] a resemblance manifested in that mastery over the passions, that incorruptibility, immortality, and intimacy with God and confidence in his presence with which Adam was originally endowed,[91] all of which was intended as but a prelude to an even better life to come.[92] And while taking great care as a faithful biblical exegete to give due priority to God's initiative and power to effect man's salvation,[93] Chrysostom

the moralist always exhorts his hearers to accept full responsibility for their part in their own salvation, by the exercise of their reason and free-will. It is here, in his persistent call for Christians to practise all the traditional virtues in their striving for human perfection, that John Chrysostom comes closest to the idea, if not the exact language, of θεοποίησις. In the earlier period of his life, when he himself sought perfection by withdrawing from the world and for a period of some eight years lived an eremitical life, Chrysostom the passionate rigorist saw perfection in terms of the ideals of detachment, disengagement and otherworldliness, but in later life, as a priest and then as a bishop involved in pastoral work, he realized the more complex demands of Christian perfection for the majority who had to work out their salvation 'in the world'. And so in directing his flock along the way of perfection, he encourages them to exercise virtue by engagement with their fellow men in works of φιλανθρωπία, because such 'love of mankind' makes us like God:

> And why should we rehearse particularly all the good effects of this art? For this teaches you how you may become like God (πῶς ἂν γένοιο θεῷ ὅμοιος), which is the sum of all good things whatsoever. Do you see how such work is not one, but many? Without needing any other art, it builds houses, it weaves garments, it stores up treasures which cannot be taken from us, it makes us get the better of death, and prevail over the devil: it renders us like God (θεῷ κατασκευάζει ὅμοίος).[94]

In equally explicit terms, Chrysostom urges his congregation to show mercy and philanthropy in almsgiving for, while other forms of self-discipline may be good in themselves, it is specifically in showing mercy and pity that 'we are able to resemble God (ᾧ ἐξισοῦσθαι δυνάμεθα τῷ θεῷ)'.[95] But it is not only philanthropy as exhibited in altruism that identifies us with God. Chrysostom also makes much of moral categories, particularly that form of <u>self</u>-regard by means of which we may glorify God and be made like unto him, that is in the exercise of mastery over our passions. By such control we imitate 'God the imperishable and unalterable Nature, the unchangeable and immovable Glory':[96]

> For men are in this respect made like unto God (ὁμοιοῦντα θεῷ), when they do not feel what is inflicted by them who would do them despite, and are neither insulted of others who insult them... nor made scorn of when they make scorn of them.[97]

But Chrysostom comes back again and again to the primary virtue in the

exercise of which we participate in the virtue of God: it is love above all

> which draws us near to God; all other virtues are inferior to her, being proper to men, such as the combat that we wage against concupiscence, the war which we carry on against intemperance, avarice or anger. To love, on the other hand, is something we share in common with God.[98]

It is clear that in these passages John Chrysostom is expressing the idea of communion with God and participation in the divine attributes in a way that comes very close to the forms which his contemporaries within the Alexandrian tradition were employing in expounding the concept of deification. He comes even closer to the understanding of what others would express in the language of deification as the ultimate goal of human destiny, in a passage in one of his expository homilies on the Psalms where, in terminology which can be matched many times in the writings of fathers we have already considered, Chrysostom says:

> Here is the highest peak of virtue, and that which brings us to the very summit of all good things: to become as like to God as is possible for us (τὸ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὁμοιωθῆναι, κατὰ τὸ ἐγχωροῦν ἡμῖν).[99]

This notion of 'likeness to God' as the goal of man's pilgrimage is echoed in equally explicit terms when Chrysostom is speaking of the sacraments. As one might expect from the distinctive method of interpretation favoured in the Antiochene tradition, John Chrysostom regards the sacraments as more than merely symbolic representations of the mysteries of God; the sacraments <u>are</u> what they also point towards. Baptism therefore is more than a symbolic washing away of sins and a grafting into Christ. It is for Chrysostom an actual 'melting down and remoulding',[100] it is a real union with Christ. As he says in his exegesis of Galatians 3:27 ('For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ'):

> If Christ be the Son of God, and you have put on Him, you who have the Son within you, and are fashioned after His pattern, have been brought into one kindred and nature with Him.... (St Paul) does not stop there, but tries to find something more exact, which may serve to convey a still closer oneness with Christ. Having said 'you have put on Christ', even this does not suffice him, but by way of penetrating more deeply into this union, he comments on it thus: 'You are all one in Christ Jesus', that is, you have all one form and one mould, even Christ's.[101]

More graphic still are his references to our union with Christ by our partaking of the eucharistic elements. The vivid realism of his language brings to mind the mystical lyricism of Gregory of Nyssa, who spoke of God in Christ infusing himself into perishable humanity, and blending himself with the bodies of believers, that mankind might at the same time be deified.[102] So John Chrysostom says of the eucharistic communion:

> with this we are fed, with this we are commingled, and we are made one body and one flesh with Christ.... With each one of the faithful does he mingle Himself in the mysteries, and whom He begat, He nourishes by Himself.[103]

And even more explicitly, writing as though Christ were addressing the communicant, he says:

> I not only am mingled with you, I am entwined in you. I am masticated, broken into minute particles, that the interspersion and commixture and union may be more complete. Things united remain yet in their own limits, but I am interwoven with you. I would have no more any division between us. I will that we both be one.[104]

As a representative of the Antiochene school he remained at all times faithful to its insights and attitudes. In his teaching on the consummation of the human destiny, expressed by so many others in the fourth century in the terminology of θεοποίησις, John Chrysostom, while attending unequivocally to the reality of communion with God and assimilation to the divine likeness, was always careful to express it in ways consistent with the teachings of his own tradition. He therefore found he could with integrity express the deepest insights to which deification bore witness by using the terminology of divine sonship by adoption and grace, and so respect all the essential aspects of Antiochene theology which might have been prejudiced by the language of deification. Whereas others used such language to speak of the experience of deepening communion and participation in God, John Chrysostom preferred to describe it in his own terms as 'the very summit of all good things: to become as like to God as is possible for us',[105] so preserving always the essential distinction which separated man the creature from total identification with God the creator to which his tradition committed him.

In his study of the development of the concept of deification in the

Greek fathers, Jules Gross justifies the inclusion of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the grounds that 'the theme of deification occupies a considerable place in the writings of the Bishop of Mopsuestia',[106] but he goes on to qualify this statement by first admitting that the idea is only 'implicit' in the vast work of Theodore,[107] and then conceding that when the theme does occur it is concealed 'under the blanket of divine filiation'. Gross then adds to these rather contradictory statements a completely negative assessment of Theodore's presentation of the concept, claiming that it is 'completely disfigured' and departs from the traditional teachings of the Greek fathers.

In a number of the more recent studies reflecting the renewed interest in and controversy over the writings and teachings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, particular mention has been made of his disapproving attitude towards the idea of the deification of man.[108] If, as Frances Young tells us, 'Theodore's theological presuppositions meant that he could not countenance θεοποίησις',[109] is there any point in his works being considered in a study of the concept?

There is perhaps a natural fascination surrounding a man who, after a lifetime of assiduous biblical scholarship which earned him the accolade 'the Interpreter', died in peace and communion with the church, and yet just over one hundred years later was condemned as a heretic by a council of that same church and had his works systematically confiscated and destroyed by ecclesiastical authority. However, it is Theodore's thinking and writings that we are presently interested in rather than his reputation or fate, and in what has been salvaged in fragmentary remains or quotations or in more recently discovered later versions of his works in Latin and Syriac, there is much of interest to throw a somewhat different light on our study of deification, providing a contrast to the assessment in the fathers so far discussed.

Theodore of Mopsuestia, fellow student and life-long friend and colleague of John Chrysostom, can be justly described as 'the greatest exponent of the Antiochene tradition in the specific field of biblical

scholarship',[110] and it is as such that we shall assess his teachings. Despite the general consensus that Theodore was not only one of the most prominent Antiochene theologians in the patristic period but also perhaps the most typical, in that his writings embody all the specific characteristics of Antiochene theology, R.A.Norris seems to make a good case in support of his opinion that Theodore was also under the influence of the Platonism which dominated the philosophical schools of his day, and therefore 'was not the product of any particular school or sect of philosophical thought'.[111] This opinion is borne out by the appendix with which Rowan Greer concludes his study of Theodore, suggesting that Theodore's ideas bear elements of both the Origenist and Irenaean traditions current in the fourth and fifth centuries, and that he is dependent also upon the Cappadocian synthesis of doctrine, as well as the sober exegetical tradition of Antioch.[112]

What then does this controversial character, drawing from such a wide variety of theological opinions, have to contribute to our study of deification? The specific terminology of deification, θεοποίησις, in any of its forms or parts of speech, does not appear in what we have of Theodore's works, neither does he seem to have addressed himself specifically to the doctrine as such in any of his works. But then there were no 'systematic' treatments of the concept in the early church anyway; the notion was simply part of theological currency in the patristic period, generally accepted as one of the ways of describing the mystery of redemption.

Theodore does, however, in a number of his works take up one of the favourite texts used in contemporary writings on deification, Psalm 82:6, in order to make the point again and again that where in this psalm men are referred to as 'gods', there is no justification whatsoever for thinking this means they are 'transformed into the divine nature'.[113] The fundamental issue behind Theodore's insistence on this point is his total commitment to the idea of the absolute transcendence and uniqueness of God as unbegotten, immutable, and immortal. From this conviction it followed, for him, that between God the creator and the creature of his creation there was a chasm that

could not be bridged and a distinction that could not be compromised.[114] Thus in developing his doctrines of man, of Christ, and of salvation, Theodore rejects outright any account that does not do full justice to man's creatureliness, and to the radical difference between soul and body and their separateness even in union - the issue which was to bring his Christology into question.

On the specific issue of human salvation, whereas the pagan Platonists postulated a redemption <u>from</u> the body and the Christian Platonists sought a redemption <u>of</u> the body through its deification, Theodore studiously avoids the notion of natural or original kinship between God and man, arguing against any idea of a relationship between God and man which implies an intermingling of the two, and which would undermine the divine transcendence. He denies that salvation can involve the injection of the uncreated into man or the escape of the soul from the tomb of the body. Instead he talks of salvation in terms of the fulfilment brought about by Christ, the perfect image of God. Here Theodore is able to make full use of biblical imagery and terminology, and thus makes much of the theme of 'sonship' into which believers are received by grace in baptism, being thereby assimilated to the glorified humanity of Christ in whom there exists the perfect union 'as in a Son', that total participation of the Logos and the 'Man Assumed'[115] initiated in the incarnation and brought to its consummation in the resurrection.[116] Theodore will even go so far as to speak of this adoptive sonship being effected by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in man, similar to, but to a different degree from, that in the incarnate Christ.[117] But he will not accept that this divine indwelling means that God inhabits the human soul substantially. There is no substantive union that could be said to effect any ontological deification in man even by grace for, as he makes plain, grace does not change nature, even in the case of grace given to Christ:

> The man Jesus is similar to all men, differing in no way from men connatural with him. Although [the Father] gave grace to him, the grace did not change his nature.[118]

He makes this point again with equal firmness in the case of men, who even in Scripture might be termed 'gods' but do not thereby become other than creatures:

> for men are not changed into the divine nature, but by the grace of God they receive that appellation.[119]

But as Greer explains, although Theodore tries to avoid the whole Stoic-Platonic way of looking at man and to speak of salvation in biblical terms such as sonship, he does not altogether succeed, for he remains influenced by if not tied to a Platonic frame of reference. He expresses man's salvation in the usual Platonic sense of overcoming mutability and mortality,[120] but with certain significant modifications: primarily by linking mutability, moral freedom, and rationality; whereas in the thinking of others in that period man's rationality was associated with his possession of an immortal soul, something which made him akin to the divine.[121]

Theodore does not think of man in terms of a mortal body and an immortal soul, but as a whole, as a creature, whose dignity (that is, his rationality, his highest faculty) is dependent upon his being mutable and responsible for freedom of choice. By virtue of his rational functioning and freedom of will, man's life becomes a divine παιδεία (training) in preparation for the perfect obedience and immutability of the age to come. There is therefore a purpose and a positive dignity in mutability. It provides man with the freedom to exercise his God-given capacity and potential; he can experience himself as a dynamic entity, a being who wills and acts in self-formation within the ambience of divine grace.[122] Theodore is thus interested in the redemption of man as a creature implicated in the life of the created world, as a creature who is essentially dynamic, emergent, or as we have already suggested 'transcendent', extending himself in time and space, in via towards the age to come, the age of the new creation in Christ, the kingdom to come in which Christians begin already to participate through the mysteries of the sacraments:

> While still on earth we have been inscribed in that awe-inspiring glory of the future world through these mysteries, but we (ought to) live as much as possible a heavenly life in spurning visible things and aspiring after future things. Those who are about to partake now of these awe-inspiring mysteries are inspired to do so by the grace of God. They do not do this in order to partake of small and ordinary gifts, but to be transformed completely into new men...[123]

Like his fellow-Antiochene, John Chrysostom, Theodore believed that the

sacraments perform and effect the very events which took place in the life of Christ, so that what happened to him will also happen to those who participate in these mysteries.[124] By baptism we are admitted to the fellowship of the age to come, we recover the image of God which Adam received at the creation,[125] we are given the earnest of the ineffable good things which will be ours at our second birth into the new age at the resurrection:

> renewal, immortality, incorruptibility, impassibility, immutability, deliverance from death and servitude and all evils, happiness of freedom, and participation in the ineffable good things which we are expecting.[126]

So also the eucharist enables us to have a real participation in the future life, for the eucharistic bread is 'to be sown for its eaters to the happiness of immortality'.[127] Just as the newly baptized possess potentially the faculties of immortality, so for its recipients the eucharistic species are a type of the heavenly nourishment we shall receive after our new birth.[128]

For Theodore our participation in the sacraments unites us to Christ. By our union with him who is in himself the supreme and ineffable union of the 'Man Assumed' and the Logos we attain to communion with God, and through the sonship of the Man Assumed we are made sons of God. Christ is thus the earnest of our own participation in the age to come; he is the pledge, the first fruits of the good things to come, things which here and now we can experience only by anticipation in faith and hope. But that very experience by anticipation is itself a participation which somehow transforms our present life:

> because Christ came, pointing out and directing through His resurrection those things which are future, He offers indeed to us, too, the promise of these things. All of us who in this present life believe in Christ are, so to speak, in the middle of this present life and of the future one...[129]

By our life within the church, the body of Christ, a life of faith, obedience, and participation in the sacraments, we share partially in that total sonship which is Christ's, and participate in a state of anticipated familiarity with God. But for Theodore, the sonship in which we have that partial share is the sonship not only of the Logos, but also of the Man Assumed by the Logos, just as the new, superior nature into which we are born at baptism is a 'new and virtuous <u>human</u>

nature'.[130] He will not countenance any suggestion that the work of grace in the life of man brings about an assimilation to God, or any form of participation in the divine nature. The assimilation which the Holy Spirit effects in the life of the Christian is a likeness to Christ, through whom there is a gradual 'move to the honour of relationship with the divine nature'.[131] But as Theodore makes clear, it is a likeness, not to the divine nature itself, but to the Man Assumed, to the resurrected humanity,[132] and the progression is to a relationship <u>with</u> the divine nature not a participation <u>in</u> the divine nature. The fellowship and communion with God enjoyed by the baptized is through assimilation to the glorified humanity of Christ, the Man Assumed:

> The body which he assumed from us, and which is so high and sublime, He made it so by uniting it to Himself for our benefit, when he raised us and made us sit with him in heaven in Christ... so that we might be glorified in Him and reign with him, after having been fashioned like unto his glorious body.[133]

Theodore's strict adherence to the biblical concept of God as transcendent creator forced him to make a definite distinction between redemption as communion with God (which he could accept) and union with the Godhead (which he could not accept). It would appear that in his estimation the doctrine of deification as taught by his contemporaries of the Alexandrian tradition, postulating the idea of presence of God to man, implied an intermingling of created humanity and uncreated divinity, and to this he could not assent. Although he fully accepted the biblical concept of God dwelling with man, he argued that there were different kinds of divine inhabitation and only in the case of Christ could the indwelling be said to be total, effecting not merely a communion of will but a unique union 'of benevolence'.

For mutable creatures there could be no inhabitation such as this; because of their sinfulness human beings can never in this life be totally united to God. In fact Theodore regarded the very desire to be assimilated to the divine as a temptation as disastrous as that which brought Adam to his ruin. So he distanced himself from those who spoke of θεοποίησις as a union of God and man that effected a fundamental change of nature. But were the fathers of the fourth century suggesting that deification as they understood it effected a change of nature in

man? On the contrary, as we have seen, they were all deeply concerned to affirm the biblical doctrines of the transcendence of God and the createdness of man, and to ensure that whatever they said did not compromise the distinction between God and man. Granted the tradition from which Theodore came, it is to be expected that he would be suspicious of the terminology of deification; but we must also take into account his particular and peculiar Christology in order to appreciate why the concept of deification was so unacceptable to him.

Having made those allowances, when we consider the positive way in which he treats the notion of human mutability, as linked essentially with human rationality and freedom of will, enabling the human existent to act in self-formation but within the ambience of divine grace, we can detect in Theodore an appreciation of the human capacity for transcendence. He acknowledges that man can satisfy his legitimate taste for the infinite, not by a vain striving to become God, but by striving for conformity to the divine will through practice of the virtues and participation in the Christian mysteries, bringing about a union with Christ and a fulfilment of communion and fellowship with God. The foretaste of this fulfilment is available to the baptized follower of Christ here in this life but the realization, as Theodore himself describes it, is

> that we shall be transferred to heaven from whence Christ our Lord will come and change us at the resurrection from the dead and make us like the form of his body and take us up to heaven so that we may ever be with him.[134]

And again he writes in his commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians:

> For great is the generosity of God towards us if indeed by the abolition of death [we are] constituted in incorruptibility [and] we will no longer be able to sin; but we will dwell in a certain great brilliance, perpetually united to God.[135]

This vision, so very similar to what the advocates of the concept of deification were trying to express in their writings, seems to be Theodore's way of expressing the ultimate destiny of the human quest in Christ, that quest which he saw as dependent upon the fundamental element of mutability in human nature. It is this very mutability, we would suggest, that gives man that desire to participate in the life (the 'good things') of God which we have termed the capacity for

transcendence and which some fathers of the early church referred to as the process of deification. Perhaps therefore Jules Gross was justified (for our purposes at least) in including Theodore of Mopsuestia in his survey of deification in the writings of the early Greek fathers, not because the theme occupied a considerable place in Theodore's writings ('implicit' or 'concealed'!), since Theodore seemed genuinely suspicious of the idea, but rather because, expressing the human quest in terms of self-formation within the ambience of divine grace, he gives us the hint of a model by which the concept of assimilation to and participation in God can be expressed within the terms of his Antiochene tradition. In the next chapter of this present work we shall explore the possibility of using such a model to express that quest in terms of human transcendence.

The last of our studies of 'minor' witnesses in the fourth century to the notion of deification examines a curious, little known apologetic treatise, the work of an author of whom we know even less! The treatise, entitled the Apocriticus ('Answer Book'), also known as Monogenes ad Graecos ('The Onlybegotten, to the Greeks'), is attributed in its present form to Macarius Magnes, about whom nothing is known with certainty. Current scholarly opinion seems generally agreed that he is to be identified with Macarius, Bishop of Magnesia, who was present at the Synod of the Oak at Chalcedon in 403 at which John Chrysostom was condemned and deposed.[136] The Apocriticus was probably written in answer to a detailed attack on Christianity entitled Philalethes ad Christianos ('The Friend of Truth, to the Christians'), the work of the Neoplatonist philosopher Hierocles, Governor of Bithynia about 300. The apology is composed in dialogue form (probably no more than a literary device), allegedly reporting a dispute over five days between Macarius and his pagan adversary who draws heavily on the thought of the third century Neoplatonist Porphyry. As an apologist Macarius is not very successful, he is no real match for his opponent. But a recent study by Robert Waelkens suggests that the work was in fact written as a popular handbook, not to convince pagans, but for Christians, to turn them away from the spurious attractions of Judaism and current pagan philosophy.[137] Read in this light, Macarius' apology

can be re-evaluated for what it is, a work of popular teaching, arguing against certain perfidious opinions current amongst lay Christians of the fourth century, and presenting a Christian interpretation of scripture based on a commonly accepted faith and drawing on theological insights in general currency in the period under review in our present thesis. On these terms, Macarius is for us a valuable witness, not to the elevated and technical dogmatic controversies of bishops and doctors of the church, but to the common faith of ordinary Christians who tried to get on with the business of living their faith in the somewhat competitive religious and philosophical climate in which the church in the fourth century found itself.

It is in the third book of his apology that Macarius makes particular reference to the notion of deification in relation to the precarious nature of our human condition, as it is subject to temporal and physical fragmentation, corruptibility, and ultimately, dissolution. By the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, the events and the effects of which Macarius brings together in the term 'the economy of death', the human condition was transformed and raised to the security of eternity. It was by virtue of these unique events that God, in Jesus Christ,

> broke the sceptre of death and conquered the order of the corporal condition, significantly exchanged the corruptible for the incorruptible, made the corruptible henceforth inaccessible to corruption, adorned the temporal with his own beauty, dispersed all apprehension about future dangers, transformed the mortal into the immortal, transfigured the terrestrial from terrestrial into immaterial, snatched the kingdom of liberty from the servitude of tyranny, raised precarious existence to an elemental condition, in effect, made man to become god (τὸν ἄνθρωπον θεὸν ἐργασάμενος).[138]

But this capacity for transformation, according to Macarius, belongs to the very nature of creation. Inaugurated by a passing from nothingness into being, creation is forever marked by this original becoming (γέννησις), it is in a state of constant transformation.[139] Mutability, then, is the essential property of created nature, and it is this mutability that allows man, as Theodore of Mopsuestia suggested, the freedom of will to exercise his rationality, his highest faculty, the mark of his God-given dignity. And with the development of his rational functioning by education in the knowledge and love of God, divine

παιδεία, man as a dynamic entity begins to participate in a process of self-transcendence by which his precarious existence is gradually raised 'to an elemental condition', and he is ultimately 'made to become god'. Macarius develops this theme at some considerable length in the chapter of his apology in which he discusses the resurrection. There he reaffirms that change is of the essence of created nature, not as a handicap or punishment, but as a potential benefit:

> for creation it is suitable that it should suffer change and alteration... the present life and order is our guide... preparing us to face the glory that will lead us upward....[140]

He acknowledges that mutability is normally regarded negatively but suggests that it is rather

> the beginning of immortality and the starting point of salvation. For a second beautifying of life will make it a success, when rational nature shall a second time receive in the resurrection the word of a beginning which will be indissoluble. It is for the sake of man that the whole suffers change, seeing that it was also for his sake that at the outset it was deemed worthy of a beginning.[141]

But this change which man undergoes is not a change of nature, it is a renewal, which like the refurbishing of a building leaves the original transformed but still recognizably itself. Thus man in this process does not become other than a creature; he becomes a creature who participates in the life of God until he is deified by that life. It is in fact, says Macarius, a process of self-transcendence in which man enters an ever closer partnership with God, thereby effecting his own salvation:

> Thus a man who believes in God and trusts in him, who may be termed the divine light of the mind, is found to be a partner of God in whom he believes, shunning the darkness of ignorance and want of knowledge, and nourished by the brightness of heavenly doctrines, being himself aware of salvation beforehand through beholding the divine, and having in his own possession, as a great and sufficient preservation of his faith, the remedy of salvation.[142]

This transformation leading to salvation is a process of assimilation to God which Macarius understood as a form of self-transcendence, a process of humanization by which man is raised to that elemental condition akin to eternity which he terms deification. As he suggests elsewhere in the Apocriticus the deification of man is a movement symmetrical with the humanization of the Logos.[143] But it is equally

true to say that this process of deification is also symmetrical to man's own humanization.

For Macarius, then, deification is to be understood as that process whereby human nature is transformed, not by becoming itself divine nature, but by self-transcendence, participating in the blessed condition of the Logos who became man for that very purpose:

> He mingled (κατέμιξεν) himself with us, sharing our state (συμπαθήσας), and by this communion called back our nature to share, as we might say, the excellence of his condition.[144]

Drawing on a common stock of theological anthropology which we have noted in the works of numerous other fathers, the Apocriticus presents man as a composite creature, part of and one with the material creation,[145] but having, among corporeal beings, a dignity of his own,[146] because of his participation in the intelligible nature, making him λογικός with the angels and other intelligible creatures.[147] Although he had the capacity to turn equally to the good and the evil according to his desires and will,[148] man was deceived by the cunning reasoning of the serpent,[149] and he renounced his God-given dignity and fell victim to the conditions of mortality: sickness, corruptibility and death. It was into this situation that the Logos came to restore sick humanity to health, not by a quasi-magical display of almighty power, but according to a schema often referred to as an 'exchange', whereby the Logos himself came to man's rescue identifying with mortality:

> as a doctor healing the infected sick ones, as a just man encouraging sinners not to commit injustice any more, as God Logos deifying the intelligible (τοὺς λογικοὺς θεοὺς ἐργαζόμενος), as Christ transforming them into Christs, as the incorruptible delivering them from corruption, now he himself, immortal, led mortals to immortality: he called the whole race of men to unqualified prosperity and blessedness, and still he calls them to it today.[150]

Continuing the same theme of healing, Macarius speaks of the eucharistic species conveying the 'life-giving medicine of the divinity',[151] which 'enrols [men] in the celestial condition of the angels... showering them with immortality'.[152] And further on in the same chapter he tells us:

> the body which the bread is, and the blood which the wine is,

> drawing immortality from the unchanging divinity, communicate it from there to the communicant: by this means they lead him to the indestructible dwelling of heaven.[153]

Again we note the emphasis Macarius places on the transformation of man being effected, not by his becoming divine, but by his receiving, in this case in the elements of the eucharist, the condition or attributes 'drawn from the unchanging divinity'. This aspect of participating or communicating in divinity is taken up once more by Macarius in what at first sight appears to be a puzzling statement about deification. The general context in which this next passage appears is the proposition that the cosmos was created by God solely for man's benefit. But Macarius goes further: even when man praises God for that creation, the praise itself benefits man rather than God. Just as the poet who celebrates the splendour of the sun is not thereby bringing happiness to the sun but to himself,

> so in the same way,the man who honours his creator procures no advantage for him, rather, by so communicating in the divinity he deifies himself (ἑαυτὸν δ'ἀποθεοῖ κοινωνῶν τῇ θεοθήτι); and in the same way he who draws near to the fire receives its heat without giving any to it, but by being warmed from it, so he who confirms the principle of his being with sincere praises fills himself with glory and abundant gifts.[154]

Interpreted within its context, this is not a statement suggesting that man, by pretending to do honour to his creator, can in fact elevate himself to divine status and usurp God's position. Rather it employs an image also used by Gregory of Nyssa, that of man, in his privileged position at the summit of the material creation, having a mission of cosmic praise, praise of the creator being in itself the goal of human activity.[155] Creation thus has no other end than to serve man, and it reaches its completion in the human praise of the glory of God. As Waelkens explains in his commentary on the above passage, the emphasis is not on ἀποθεοῖ, as if man were the author of his own deification, but on ἑαυτόν, man as the sole beneficiary.[156] The point Macarius is making is that just as creation is the work of God alone, so deification also is the work of God alone, but it is for the exclusive benefit of man, and even the expression of his gratitude for all this turns to his own advantage. And this is in line with the general trend of Macarius' thesis, that the divine economy is entirely oriented towards usefulness: the creation and all that is in it was created and

exists for the sole use and enjoyment of man, and in praising God for it all man simply 'confirms the principle of his being' and thereby is deified, but it is all within the divine economy, it is all God's work.

This last point Macarius makes again and again in all his references to the concept of deification. It is a process that is entirely the work of God, but it also 'confirms the principle of man's being'; it is not therefore to be understood as the transformation of man into a divine being. Macarius goes to considerable lengths to exclude such an interpretation from what he means when he speaks of man being deified. He insists that only God is and can be God.[157] Other beings may sometimes be termed 'gods', but this can only be by analogy, in a derivative sense. Even the angels, close as they are to God as intelligible spirits, only derive their radiance from God like objects illuminated by the sun[158] or warmed by fire.[159] To speak of man being deified is, for Macarius, to refer to the return of man to his natural condition as a rational intelligible creature, as he was originally created by God.[160] As we have already indicated in our analysis of Macarius' writings, he never speaks of man assuming, or even being assimilated to, the divine nature. Just as Gregory of Nyssa made much of the image of man's participation in God's perfections, so Macarius favours the idea of the schema of exchange: the Logos descending to the condition of man so that man might be raised to the condition of the Logos. There is no question of man being or becoming divine. It was just such a 'formula of exchange' that Eric Osborn examined in his discussion of deification, pointing out that if x became y, that y might become x, then original identity or community is explicitly denied: if x becomes y, then it was not y originally. And neither do x and y become coextensive: man does not acquire all the attributes of God, any more than God assumes all the attributes of man.[161] All this we find spelled out with equal clarity by our fourth century apologist, Macarius, for whom it would appear that the most appropriate way to speak about deification was in terms of exchange of condition or, more particularly, to use the concept of transcendence in the ways we have indicated.

For Macarius, as for the other fathers we have considered in this chapter, the concept of deification was not something to which he specifically addressed himself in his defence of the faith; there is no particular exposition of it as a doctrine. It is rather a general presupposition upon which he draws from time to time in his apology, knowing that it would be understood and appreciated by the Christian audience for whom he was writing. Furthermore - and this is to our benefit - he explains what deification is not, along the lines of the distinction we made at the outset of this thesis: deification is the participation of man in the life of God; it is not to be confused with the assumption by man of the nature or status of God.

The divine economy, by virtue of which man's deification is acquired, has not yet been realized in fact for living men. They are still on the journey towards deification, and for them the divine economy is operative through the sacraments which Christ the incarnate Logos left to his church, that men might here and now participate in his condition. The fact that deification, as Macarius understands it, is totally gratuitous in no way dispenses us from personal involvement by participation in the sacraments and by striving for conformity to the will of God:

> He who does the will of my Father... in so doing both brings me forth as a mother does, having conceived me in doing the Father's will, and he also is brought forth along with me, not by coming into personal subsistence, but by being made one in grace and will.[162]

Deification, while preserving the essential nature of man, restores and renews him to his original dignity as he for his part lives and acts according to the insights and demands of his spiritual nature. The culmination of the process for Macarius is in the resurrection understood not as something entirely new, but as a renewal of the present order; a renewal in which ultimately the entire universe, in solidarity with man, participating in God's perfections, will be deified.

Our survey of the development of the concept of deification in the writings of the Greek Fathers to the end of the fourth century is brought to a fitting conclusion with a consideration of the

contribution of Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria from 412, because what we find on the subject in his works - and it seems to have formed a major element in his theology - is a consolidation of much of what had been written before, and especially since Athanasius in the earlier years of the fourth century.

Essentially conservative, and distrustful of innovation and originality, Cyril approached theology by a straightforward appeal to tradition. He operated within very much the same framework as Athanasius, by whose works he appears to have been greatly inspired, and he drew upon the Alexandrian allegorical tradition as it was developed by Clement, Origen, Didymus, and the Cappadocian Fathers. In his exposition of the concept of deification, he makes considerable use of the biblical texts to which reference was often made in the early patristic period. We thus find in Cyril's writing frequent mention of the divine likeness of Adam and his succumbing to the temptation to acquire divine status. He also refers often to the concept of divine filiation as developed in both Old and New Testaments, to the Pauline image of the two Adams, and to the exposition of the mystical union of the Christian disciple with the Lord and with his Holy Spirit and his eventual assimilation to the glorified Christ, as it is worked out in both the Pauline and Johannine writings.

But when we come to later doctrinal developments in the concept of deification, although Cyril obviously knew the Alexandrian tradition well,[163] it is not so easy to identify specific patristic sources in his writings. There are some striking similarities to Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa in particular, but there is no clear evidence of dependency, and as for traces from other sources, from any of the other fathers we have studied in our survey, we can say no more than that he seems to have been well aware of the various ways in which, up to his time, deification was applied to different aspects of the dynamic of the divine-human relationship and to the ultimate destiny of man, and that he made full use of the idea, as appropriate, in many of his major works.

One of the primary categories in the essential distinction between God and man is that of incorruptibility, ἀφθαρσία, that blessed condition which figures so prominently in the teachings of both Clement of Alexandria and Athanasius, as that which is proper to the reality and glory of God, as that mode of existence which has in itself no reason for ever ceasing to be. The significance of this term for Cyril is not so much that it relates to the preservation or even restoration of biological life; he is much more concerned with the theological implications: that it denotes eternal life, the very life of God, and is therefore the fundamental element of the image of God in man. Created originally in incorruption and immortality (both gifts bestowed by God and not inherent in the human condition), man in paradise was very much like God (θεοειδέστατος),[164] possessing in various characteristics the divine image, but that which was 'far the most manifest of all was his incorruptibility (ἄφθαρτον) and indestructibility (ἀνώλεθρον)'.[165]

In common, however, with so many fathers before him, Cyril affirms that man is a composite creature, a blend of the mortal and corruptible (that which is of his nature as a creature) and the immortal and incorruptible (that which he receives as gift from God beyond the exigencies of human nature). Man bears therefore a double divine resemblance: the image given with his very humanness, a possession in consequence of his participation in the Word who is life, and then a superior likeness added by the gift of the Holy Spirit, enabling him to share in the divine ἀφθαρσία, which in itself constitutes a kind of initial deification, in which man was adopted unto sonship and made god by grace.[166] But when by his own disobedience Adam fell from grace, he fell from union with the Son, a union which had been maintained by the Spirit. Losing the Spirit he lost all that he did not possess by his own nature: most particularly that blessed incorruptibility which had given him his special likeness to God, a loss in which all the descendants of Adam still share.[167]

For Cyril, therefore, redemption is principally that process by which man is restored by God to his former condition, raised up in Christ to

that dignity above his natural (mortal and corruptible) state,[168] admitted by divine grace to adoptive sonship, and made partaker of 'the life-giving power which comes from God'.[169] Much of Cyril's teaching on redemption was hammered out in his polemical writings against the two great doctrinal debates of his day: prior to 429 with the Arians, against whom he insisted that the incarnate Christ must be both God and man, and after 429 with Nestorius and his supporters, to whom he stressed the unity of the divine and human natures in Christ and the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father. Fundamental to all Cyril's Christological convictions was the belief that in the incarnation there was a union of the spiritual and material worlds. By taking on a human nature and a body subject to mortality and corruption, the Son of God introduced that nature into a divine relationship in order that he might overcome the power of death and destroy the dominion of corruption,[170] and restore human nature to its primal state.[171]

But Cyril also accepted the principle of Platonic realism, affirming the radical unity and solidarity of human nature. He therefore believed that all human nature was in Christ, and that in him the whole human race is refashioned to incorruptibility,[172] and the soul of man 'dyed with the stability and unchangeability of his own nature'.[173] The humanity of Christ served as an instrument by which divinity was made manifest, that is to say, by the Word becoming flesh human nature was deified.[174] But how was this deification effected? Here Cyril draws out the fully Trinitarian scope of his theology generally and of his understanding of deification in particular. Salvation, he says, is brought about by the three persons of the blessed Trinity[175] because all divine action is the work of the Trinity. But in a special way sanctification (and so, as we shall see, deification) is the work of the Holy Spirit, as he explains again and again in his two major anti-Arian polemical works, the Thesaurus on the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity and the seven Dialogues on the Holy Trinity. By the operation of the Holy Spirit the humanity of the Logos was sanctified, and in him all human nature was sanctified. It is on the basis of this sanctification that all individuals incorporated into

Christ are sanctified, not by any created intermediary, but by the Spirit himself uniting them directly, physically, to himself and so to the divine nature:

> In order that our soul may be enriched by the presence of God it is not sufficient that we should receive a Spirit foreign to the divinity and substantially different from it: it has to be his own Spirit.[176]

And in graphic imagery Cyril explains how this sanctification comes about:

> This same sanctifying power which proceeds physically from the Father, which perfects the imperfect, we have said it is the Holy Spirit. It is superfluous to imagine that the creature could be sanctified by some intermediary, since the philanthropy of God does not disdain to bend down to the smallest of beings to sanctify them by the Holy Spirit, all of them being his work.... So it is through himself that the Holy Spirit acts in us, truly sanctifying us, uniting us by contact with himself and making us partakers in the divine nature.[177]

In the Commentary on the Gospel of John Cyril explains this 'sharing in the divine nature' as an actual divine indwelling:

> We are rendered partakers of the divine nature, and are said to be begotten of God and are therefore called gods, not by grace alone winging our flight to the glory that is above us, but as having now God too indwelling and lodging in us.[178]

But it is in the seventh of the dialogues on the Trinity that he specifically identifies the Holy Spirit's work with deification:

> Now since we are formed according to Christ, and he himself is truly engraved and reproduced in us by the Spirit, as by someone who is physically like him, the Spirit is God: He who makes us like to God, not as by a ministerial grace, but as giving his very self to the just man in a sharing in the divine nature....
>
> We are temples of the Spirit who exist and subsist; because of him, we are equally called gods, insofar as by our union with him we have entered into communion with the divine and ineffable nature. If the Spirit who himself deifies (θεοποιοῦν) us is truly foreign and separate as to his essence from the divine nature, then indeed we have been disappointed of our hope, assuming I know not what vain glory.[179]

This deification by the Holy Spirit is for Cyril an actual communication, a mutual compenetration. It cannot be explained in terms of a simple local juxtaposition; it is rather a full mutual participation and communication, which he expresses in such graphic images as the soul being imprinted like a seal.[180] It is a physical inhabitation which he describes, a dwelling in substance, effecting a

transformation of the creature into the creator's image.[181] It is a sanctification (ἁγιασμός) by participation (μέθεξις) bringing about a divine resemblance (ἐξεικονισμός).

Thus we can detect in Cyril's exposition of the central theme of sanctification a two-fold understanding of holiness: an ontological holiness whereby man, participating in the Spirit's holiness, becomes one with God and is thereby fashioned to the Son (for it is his Spirit) and to the Father (whose image the Son is). But there is also a dynamic facet to this holiness, because man's refashioning is a process of reformation by conscious imitation of God through virtue, by the genuine following of Christ 'through perfect, unfailing love'.[182] This involves both right belief and holy living, for only so can man's nature become like God, as Christ the renewer

> refashions us once more to his own image, so that the distinctive marks of his divine nature are conspicuous in us through sanctification and justice and the good life according to virtue.... The beauty of this most excellent image shines forth in those of us who are in Christ, as long as we have played the part of good men through works themselves.[183]

Cyril seems to have difficulty in dissociating the ontological and the dynamic aspects of his teaching on sanctification; in fact in his tenth Eastertide Letter, it appears that it was rather his intention to blend the two.[184] His way of linking the two may give us yet another insight as to how we might understand the dynamic aspect of deification in terms of self-transcendence, that dynamic movement of progressive participation in the life of God which we have described as overcoming the transitoriness and fragmentation experienced at the ordinary level of human existence. For this process to bear fully upon the individual, it must surely be related to an appropriation and exercise of virtue. If it is to have any relation to 'something approaching the eternal consciousness of God' and if that 'consciousness' is understood as an awareness motivated, controlled and fulfilled in the exercise of divine love, then that must be seen to be operative in the life of the individual. There will therefore be a gradual assimilation to that character of the Father to which man is, according to Cyril, reformed by the Spirit, in conformity to the image of the Son, himself the image of the Father.

As we have outlined Cyril's doctrine of deification so far, we see that within a basically Trinitarian framework he makes much of the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing about, through his indwelling in the human soul, that transformation which enables the individual to participate in the Son and by filial adoption to partake of the character and nature of the Father, the source of all life and goodness. This model, so closely related to Cyril's doctrine of the incarnation, is what we have identified in earlier fathers as the so-called 'physical' theory of deification - referring to the effect of the Word 'in contact' with humanity. Cyril however does not overlook the role of the sacrifice of Christ in the salvation of man, and so also in the deification process, expressing himself in terms similar to those employed by all the major contributors to this tradition.[185]

The concept of deification was for Cyril an integral part of his doctrinal synthesis whether he was expounding the doctrine of man, the incarnation, soteriology, or the more practical, pastoral issues of discipleship and personal sanctification. In his polemical writings, especially on the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, where his adversaries would not appreciate the import of the doctrine, he resorts to other more traditional arguments, but where appropriate he uses the standard arguments of θεοποίησις as common ground in which to substantiate his expositions of the divinity of both the Son and the Spirit: in order that the Son may deify us, he must be God, and likewise in order that the Holy Spirit may deify us, he too must be God.[187]

The dynamic element in Cyril's exposition of deification to which we have just referred is apparent in his teaching on the relation of the sacraments to deification, for it is by participation in these means of grace that the Christian is progressively deified. To appropriate the deification made available by the presence of the creative Word in the life of created being,[188] one must be in union with Christ, united not only by faith and conversion of heart, but also by the actual incorporation effected by the grace of baptism and the illumination of

the spirit, indispensable for 'full participation in him'.[189] It is this Christian initiation which makes us images, by grace, of the natural Son of God; we share in his sonship by adoption.[190] The sanctifying action of the sacrament, according to Cyril, extends to both body and soul: the Holy Spirit sanctifying the soul, the body being vivified by the baptismal water (which is of course itself sanctified).[191] In equally graphic terms Cyril describes the eucharist as the instrument of our sanctification and deification:

> The purification which is in the Spirit is brought to its fulfilment by the sanctification which puts into us the body of our saviour carrying the energy of the Logos who dwells in him.[192]

In terms which bring to mind the teaching on the eucharist of Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom, Cyril writes:

> Since the flesh of the saviour has become life-giving (as being united to that which is by nature life, the Word from God), when we taste it, then have we life in ourselves, we too united to it as it to the indwelling Word.... It will surely transform into its own good, i.e. immortality, those who partake of it.[193]

And so he goes on in a similar vein to speak of the life-giving flesh of Christ, in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, imparting the divine life to those who partake of it.[194] Ultimately, in his Thesaurus, he specifies that it is by such contact with the Word, through whom divine grace descends to us, that the Christian is deified:

> (The Word) raises, sanctifies, glorifies and deifies (θεοποιοῦσα) human nature in Christ in the first place.[195]

Through the eucharist, then, the Christian comes to share the divine nature and is thereby restored to the primaeval state, to incorruptibility and life,[196] making a connection with the saviour comparable to the inhabitation of the Logos in the human nature of Christ which he assumed. But of course there is an essential difference in that the indwelling of the Logos in the incarnation brought about the unique incarnate nature of the God-Logos, whereas the eucharistic communion is a union by relation - physical, but leaving intact and distinct the two persons therein united.

Apparently aware of the possibilities of misunderstanding the concept of deification, as were most of his fellow theologians of the fourth century, Cyril of Alexandria takes considerable care to explain exactly

what deification means and also to make clear what it is not. He spells out in bold terms that the redeemed soul, united to Christ, sanctified by the Spirit and adopted by grace by the Father, bears within itself the image of the entire Trinity[197] like an imprint of divinity, so real that it can be said to be a participation in the divine nature.[198] But Cyril asserts with equal vigour that while it is correct to say that by this process we are deified, we become gods by God's grace, we do not of course become God;[199] though we participate in the divine nature, receiving in our human weakness something divine by which we transcend our nature,[200] we do not become the divine nature.[201]

A further distinction which Cyril makes is the difference, when speaking of deification, between hope and its realization. By the incarnation, incorruptibility has been communicated to human nature, and by the extension of that gratuitous act of God it is communicated to redeemed humanity.[202] The full realization of our hope however is reserved for the consummation of the world. There is therefore a sense in which the actualization of our resemblance to divinity is temporarily withheld.[203] Cyril also makes a distinction between the universal resurrection in ἀφθαρσία with the Lord,[204] and a selective resurrection in δόξα, based on a mystical relationship of oneness with Christ for those who have become conformed to the image of God's Son.[205] As Walter Burghardt contends, the heart of this distinction is Cyril's stress on the significance of the moral implications of φθορά and ἀφθαρσία.[206] Corruption is not just physical death, but death's hold over us, separating us from God, to be contrasted with the life of sanctification and incorruptibility (the most remarkable part of our likeness to God[207]). That life is true life indeed, because it is life deified. It is the true end of man: participation in the blessed incorruptibility of God.

This concept of incorruptibility is fundamental to Cyril of Alexandria's understanding of deification. As we have already observed, much of what he wrote on deification had been anticipated by many of his predecessors: Theophilus of Antioch, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa and Didymus, and

all of these in some way related ἀφθαρσία to kinship with God, assimilation to God, and deification. The basic insight which links them is that while ἀφθαρσία obviously has reference to biological life, its real significance is as a theological term relating to the life of God and so to the divine image in man. Another term which was important for Cyril in his exposition of deification was υἱοθεσία, divine sonship, the consequence of sanctification and the basis for incorruptibility. By virtue of the incarnation, which established a relationship of solidarity between the enfleshed word and all humanity, we are recipients of a relationship of brotherhood with the Son of God and of a new relationship of adoptive sonship to the Father by the sanctifying operation and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This process is for the Christian an experience of transforming union, it is an infusion of grace by which he is assimilated to God, in solidarity with Christ, by the power of the Spirit. The personal moral requirement here is that the individual be prepared to transcend his imperfect humanity in order to become one with a greater humanity in which the incarnate Word, having purified him, transformed and raised him, may live again.

In this present life, in which we begin this process of self-transcendence, because we are <u>in via</u>, we can lose our momentum if not our way. Our deification, which, according to Cyril, is effected by the substantial presence within us of the Holy Spirit, can be lost. The process of deification will only attain its ultimate perfection after the universal physical resurrection,[208] when for the faithful there will be that mystical resurrection in glory. Then there will be 'no need of parable or figure' but a 'seeing face to face',[209] a 'perfect knowledge of God',[210] a 'divine knowledge overwhelming us with delights',[211] a leaving behind of corruptibility and all other infirmities of the physical body,[212] and a 'participation in the life and glory of Christ by which the body of our low estate will be conformed to the likeness of his glorious body'.[213]

Always faithful in his adherence to the tradition as he had received it, the essentially conservative Cyril had a considerable 'ability to systematize and represent the well-worn arguments',[214] never by slavish

copying, but by thoroughly working over, sifting and re-ordering his sources with an astute judgement to meet the needs of the immediate situation, be it pastoral, educational, polemical or political. His teaching on deification is firmly embedded within the Alexandrian tradition: he stresses the saving initiative of God in setting in train that economy of salvation whereby the Logos became incarnate, deifying human nature and so restoring to it that original incorruptibility lost at the fall. By the life of faith, exercised in virtuous living and participation in the sacraments, the individual is enabled to share again the true life of God,[215] that is, 'deiform' life, human life at its most truly human.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NOTION OF HUMAN TRANSCENDENCE IN THE WRITINGS OF PHILOSOPHERS AND THEOLOGIANS FROM THE NINETEENTH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT

In the introductory chapter of this thesis we suggested that there was a correspondence between the concept of deification and the process of self-transcendence, in that both are related to that experiment in or quest for 'truly human living' which is the experiment of living by faith.

We have considered the various ways in which some of the fathers of the early church understood this experience, as a process of bringing to fulfilment the potential divineness in man, derived from his creation in the image of God and developed by his growth 'in Christ' into God - a process the fathers called 'deification'.

We must now look to another way of understanding that quest for truly human living as it has been investigated by philosophers and theologians nearer our own day, specifically those thinkers who have seen it in terms of the notion of human self-transcendence, that process by which man emerges from what he is at present in pursuit of the 'more' that exceeds his current possession. We suggested that this quest is inherent in the very nature of man, related to the very experience of being in existence, of being aware of and open to being itself, and of being propelled by a sense of 'dissatisfaction' to which Gabriel Marcel referred, that sense of disenchantment and disquiet that stirs the heart of human beings causing them to question the very nature of their existence and the quality and conditions of their human experience.

This dissatisfaction is rooted in what is termed the 'contingency' of human experience, the awareness of the breach between the way things might be (or might be conceived to be) and the way things are. This contingency denotes a state of finitude, the state of a being that

might or might not exist at any given time, because its essence did not of necessity involve its existence. This condition of being in discontinuity or disorder was for classical philosophers that which distinguished creaturely beings from the creator, the Absolute, who existed necessarily, and whose existence was by definition non-contingent and non-accidental. But is this disorder to be simply accepted as an inescapable fact, an integral aspect of our human existence as the Aristotelian tradition taught? Or is there a way in which this contingency can be overcome? Is there any hope of bringing some order out of the apparent disorder of our condition - as those in the Platonic tradition suggested?

Prior to the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, the various attempts to produce a viable solution to the problem of human contingency were based on the proposition that the essence of human nature lies outside empirical human life, and even outside humanity altogether. Soteriology for man was thus taken to be not a 'return to himself' but rather a 'realization of the Absolute in which the particular character of humanity disappears without trace',[1] in other words, the progress of humanity towards fulfilment was dictated by and dependent upon the Absolute as preceding empirical human nature.

In the immediate post-Enlightenment period, as a result of the naturalistic philosophy which had by then emerged, there was a more general acceptance of the fact of human finitude, but this was held along with the conviction that Nature herself provided the necessary information on both the essence of authentic human existence and the way to attain the state of perfection. From this line of argument the progress of humanity towards fulfilment was dictated by the essence of humanity as preceding actual human existence.

In neither of these two theses is actual human existence regarded as rooted in itself as a natural form of being, for the realization of human fulfilment is dependent for its instruction and actualization on an antecedent Absolute Being, ultimate and wholly 'other'. And this means of course placing the locus of transcendent and transcending

reality in a superbeing over against whatever may be termed human existence. But we have suggested a break with such ways of thinking and proposed that transcendence be 'relocated' into the realm of human experience, into actual human existence as a natural form of being. For on this latter understanding, actual human existence, humanness as it is experienced, is the realm in which transcendence is experienced as the experience of both transcending and being transcended; it is what Roger Hazelton described as 'the acknowledgement of the "presence" of being other than my own, including my presence to myself in being'.[2] And by such an acknowledgement of the presence and being of other people and things, I am not only admitting that they are, I am acknowledging that they are transcending me and I am transcending them. With transcendence thus relocated in the human existent, the process of human fulfilment is no longer dependent upon any antecedent Absolute; it is the realization of visions of possibility by a process of self-transcendence motivated by that 'presentiment that salvation while not identical with our present stance is nevertheless at hand'.[3]

The emergence of just such a philosophical hypothesis, the relocating transcendence in the human existent, and its corollary, 'the conception of humanity self-present as an Absolute in its own finitude',[4] can in fact be traced back to the writings of Karl Marx, one of the first philosophers to suggest a radical reassessment of how we attempt to resolve the age-old problem of human contingency.

Fundamental to Marx's understanding of human nature was the idea that man is a self-creative being, who develops the capacities peculiar to his species through his living, his working, and particularly through social interactions, and so builds up his own (i.e. man's) ideas of himself and the world around him. Marx emphasized the priority of this belief in The German Ideology, a work written in collaboration with Frederick Engles, in which they laid the foundation of their materialist interpretation of history:

> The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals. Thus the first fact to be established is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature.... [Men]

> themselves begin to produce their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organization. By producing their means of subsistence men are indirectly producing their actual material life.[5]

As producers therefore of their 'actual material life', human beings create not only their own history, they actually create themselves - for as they create their own history, so they change within the course of that history, they are transformed as the products of history:

> The whole of what is called world history is nothing but the creation of man by human labour, and the emergence of nature for man, he therefore has the evident and irrefutable proof of his self-creation, of his own origins. Once the essence of man and of nature, man as a natural being and nature as a human reality, has become evident in practical life in sense experience, the quest for an alien being, a being above man and nature (a quest which is an avowal of the unreality of man and nature) becomes impossible in practice.[6]

Here also we see Marx firmly establishing the idea that human existence is rooted in itself as a natural form of being, and is not at all dependent upon or subject to any antecedent absolute being. The unfolding of history is thus for Marx the process of man's self-realization through his work and his production and by this process of existence his very essence is realized. And this process Marx actually refers to as self-transcendence:

> But man is not merely a natural being; he is a human natural being. He is a being for himself, and therefore a species-being; and as such he has to express and authenticate himself in being as well as in thought.... Neither objective nature not subjective nature is directly presented in a form adequate to the human being. And as everything natural must have its origin so man has his process of genesis, history, which is for him, however, a conscious process and thus one which is consciously self-transcending [sich aufhebender].[7]

This concept of 'transcendence' [Aufhebung] is in fact one of the central features of Marx's understanding of man, and according to a prominent scholar of Marxism, Istvān Mēszāros, it is also the key to understanding Marx's theory of alienation [Entfremdung or Entausserung].[8] Whereas those before him saw alienation in theoretical and philosophical terms as a fundamental dimension of human history and as an irreducible tension inherent in the very nature of man, Marx's primary interest was practical, and he concentrated his attention therefore on the overcoming of this condition.

For Marx the solution of this problem of human contingency, identified in terms of alienation brought about by capitalism, demanded decisive action once a careful analysis of the whole situation had been made. The ultimate goal for Marx, working from the basic premise that 'man is the supreme being for man', is the overthrow of all that contributes to man's alienation and stands in the way of his full emancipation. It is a programme of emancipation which involves the dissolution of all classes, the repudiating of any claim to particular rights or historical title, and ultimately the total loss of humanity, for only so will it be able to usher in what he saw as 'the total redemption of humanity'.[9] It is to this programme of redemption by the supersession and transcendence of alienation that we must now turn.

The word Marx used for this process of transcendence or supersession is Aufhebung. There is no exact English equivalent which brings out the two distinctive meanings implicit in this term, the one negative: abolishing, reversing, breaking off, doing-away-with (suggesting a process of elimination), and the other positive: raising, transcending, superseding, neutralizing, putting aside for, preserving (suggesting a process of resolution). For Marx, as for Hegel before him, there was a duality of meaning here which could be exploited to good effect, conveying the idea that there was in the concept of transcendence a movement of rising above and going beyond which involved at the same time the supplanting, doing away with, annulling whatever stood in the way of ultimate resolution.

The root of all alienation, all that which stood in the way of the ultimate resolution of human contingency, was, according to Marx's analysis, the capitalist economic system. The resolution proposed by Marx for this situation of dehumanized existence was a process of emancipation, the raising of the human being above this debased form of existence by neutralizing, transcending, superseding the system of relationships and behaviour patterns by which man is debased to the level of a commodity. But this process is nothing short of (and here Marx exploits the duality of meaning of the verb aufheben) the abolition, the overthrow, and thereby the elimination of the system

that engendered and sustained those relationships and behaviour patterns, making the way clear for the 'emancipation of society from private property, etc., from servitude',[10] an emancipation which will ultimately involve the emancipation of humanity as a whole. The ultimate goal of human development for Marx was unquestionably and simply man, truly free, rational, active and independent; and socialism created the means whereby this goal could be achieved.

Marx believed that in a truly socialist society man would find himself emancipated from alienating modes of production and consumption, that his main concern would be living rather than producing the means for living, and that he would thereby become truly the master and creator of his own life. And for man to become the creator of his own life he must be independent and free:

> A being does not regard himself as independent unless he is his own master, and he is only his own master when he owes his existence to himself. A man who lives by the favour of another considers himself a dependent being. But I live completely by another person's favour when I owe to him not only the continuance of my life but also its creation; when he is its source.[11]

But this independence which Marx considers to be one of the essential characteristics of emancipated and transcendent man is, as might be expected, not an anti-social form of isolatedness. It is, rather, intimately related to the freedom to which Marx refers in the same context - a freedom which allows man to affirm his individuality, a freedom from, which is also a freedom to, freedom to affirm himself in his social relationships with other human beings and with the world around him - although it is important to note here that this freedom, when seen in the wider context of Marx's thesis as a whole, is not and cannot be absolute.

Marx's concept of socialism is essentially a protest against all that would deny man his freedom and rob him of his independence, it is a protest against exploitation, domination, and all forms of oppression. It is a protest which he believed must eventually (and inevitably) erupt, bringing about the overthrow, by a process of transcendence, of the capitalist system that perpetrated and perpetuated those forms of subjugation and alienation. And this process not only brings about the

supersession of private property, it also brings about the relocating of transcendence in man himself, so that

> man produces man, himself and then other men; ... the object which is the direct activity of his personality is at the same time his existence for other men and their existence for him.. Similarly, the material of labour and man himself as a subject are the starting point as well as the result of this movement. Therefore, the social character is the universal character of the whole movement; as society itself produces man as man so it is produced by him.... The natural existence of man has here become his human existence and nature itself has become human for him. Thus society is the accomplished union of man with nature, the realized naturalism of man and the realized humanism of nature.[12]

Here we see that for Marx, as for some of the more recent theorists of this concept of transcendence, there is a dialectic of the human experience of transcendence being a process of 'transcending and being transcended' ('the object which is the direct activity of his personality is at the same time his existence for other men and their existence for him'). It is a social process in which 'society itself produces man as man', it is a 'conscious process of becoming',[13] and this latter phrase emphasizes the essential openness of Marx's theory at this point. Marx was, however, essentially a pragmatic and materialistic thinker, and therefore, as Kolakowski points out, as he 'became more closely acquainted with political realities he took more interest in organizing the revolution than in portraying the ideal society, let alone planning the details of communism in action'.[14]

An adequate assessment of Marx's understanding of transcendence must give due weight to both these elements in his thinking, the theoretical and analytical as well as the materialistic and practical. As he himself makes clear in the Paris Manuscripts:

> In order to supersede the idea of private property communist ideas are sufficient but genuine communist activity is necessary in order to supersede real private property. History will produce it, and the development which we already recognize in thought as self-transcending [selbst aufhebende] will in reality involve a severe and protracted process. We must however consider it an advance that we have previously acquired an awareness of the limited nature and the goal of the historical development and can see beyond it.[15]

Transcendence is thus understood as that process common to thought (the analysis of ideas) and to genuine action (produced by history,

involving a 'severe and protracted process'), which enables us to 'see beyond' the goal of historical development. Man is the object being created by this process, but because it is a process of self-transcendence he is also at the same time the self-conscious subject:

> As everything natural must have its origin, so man has his process of genesis, history, which is for him, however, a conscious process and thus one which is consciously self-transcending [sich aufhebender].[16]

This emphasis on transcendence as dynamic creativity common to both thought and action is brought out again when Marx writes:

> The whole historical development, both the real genesis of communism (the birth of its empirical existence) and its thinking consciousness, is its comprehended and conscious process of becoming....[17]

a passage which is vividly reminiscent of the open-endedness of the biblical understanding of the human quest as it is expressed in one of the Johannine letters: 'it does not yet appear what we shall be'.[18]

But when writing of the situation which must exist in order for that process of becoming to be effected, that is, the situation in which communism had become established, Marx is quite clear and specific. When the crippling and dehumanizing structures of capitalism have been overthrown and man's self-alienation has been transcended, man will be enabled to 'return to himself'. As the positive abolition of private property and human self-alienation, communism is

> the real appropriation of human nature through and for man. It is therefore the return of man himself as a social, i.e. really human, being, a complete and conscious return which assimilates all the wealth of previous development.... It is the definitive resolution of the antagonism between man and nature, and between man and man. It is the true solution of the conflict between existence and essence, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is the solution of the riddle of history and knows itself to be this solution.[19]

Transcendence then for Marx is that process of overcoming and reaching beyond, inherent in the nature of the human existent, which not only brings about 'emancipation', emancipation which ultimately extends to the whole of humanity,[20] it also brings about a new manifestation of human powers and a new enrichment of the human being.[21] This process

Marx described as 'the total redemption of humanity'.[22] And yet, for all the profound and important insights which Marx gives us about the concept of transcendence, there are considerable flaws, ambiguities and inadequacies in his thinking on the subject and it is to these limitations that we must now turn.

On the specific issue of transcendence, there is a major inconsistency in Marx's thinking, in that whereas he asserts that any form of dependence, whether it be in relation to another human being[23] or even more particularly in relation to God,[24] is alienating and inherently destructive of human freedom, yet he also acknowledges that there are circumstances (i.e. in the experience of socialism) in which the experience of another 'as need' can in fact be an experience of 'greatest wealth'.[25] For as Marx himself points out, an individual's own sense experience 'only exists as human sense experience for himself through the other person', and the fully enriched ('wealthy') person is at the same time 'one who needs a complex of human manifestations of life, and whose own self-realization exists as an inner necessity, a need'.[26] These circumstances in which need of and dependence upon another are experienced as non-alienating are of course circumstances in which alienation has already been transcended, and they are, for Marx, situations where socialism is established. Marx could have avoided the apparent contradiction in his thesis, however, if he had been prepared to acknowledge that there is in fact a two-fold dynamic of transcendence whereby one's self-realization, experienced as transcendence (expressed in freedom and independence), is only fully achieved when one is open to being transcended (expressed in the recognition of dependence). As this applies on the human level, so it also applies at the level of man's relationship with God understood as a relationship of dependence upon a God who is love, love which man experiences in transcending himself and in being transcended. Such an experience of dependence would in fact be the expression of the establishment of human freedom and autonomy, because the basis of the relationship is love, and such love is, as David Jenkins describes it: 'an energy of relationships in which mutual dependence grows stronger than the unrelated or non-relating activities of independence'.[27]

But because he believed that man must always be an end in himself, Marx regarded religion and the recognition of God or any antecedent absolute being as essentially alienating, an opinion obviously based on his own personal (mis)understanding of the requirement and effect of religion: 'the more of himself man attributes to God the less he has left in himself'.[28] Marx's conviction that man's spiritual aims are inseparably connected with the transformation of society led him to the conclusion that man's spiritual needs could be satisfied by social transformation, and that the transcendence of alienation and 'all circumstances in which man is a humiliated, enslaved, abandoned, contemptuous being'[29] necessitated the overthrow of religion and the rejection of all ideas of God. Here Marx is obviously the victim of his own misconceptions, because, whereas he was able to correct Hegel by drawing a definite distinction between objectification and alienation in relation to labour and economics, here in the religious context he himself totally confuses the two and is therefore unable to recognize that it is <u>not</u> the objectification of the products of man's religious 'labour' (his adoration of and aspirations towards God) which are in themselves alienating, but the dominance which some religious symbols and images, which have acquired a life and power of their own over and above that to which (and to whom) they refer, have come to exercise over man, as alien and alienating powers. Furthermore, as Nicholas Lash makes clear in his analysis of this aspect of Marx's thought, when Christian theology is true to itself (and this, it must be admitted, is not always the case!) it actually repudiates and seeks to annul all attempts to identify God with particular objectifications, for it can never justify any form of idolatry.[30]

In our earlier examination of transcendence, in referring to the 'relocating of transcendence', we raised the question of the subject/object model for interpreting experience, and recognized that transcendence is in fact constitutive of our experience rather than being an object of it. There is obviously a need for theology to be willing to release its hold on God as Object, and on all its attempted objectifications of God, and, by recognizing the co-inherence of the

transcendent and the immanent, to relocate the transcendent in man. This is an enterprise of which Marx would have strongly approved, in fact it appears that he was attempting to do as much himself; but he saw the solution as requiring much more drastic action. He did not stop at releasing hold on God as Object and relocating transcendence in man (as subject); he believed it necessary to eliminate the Object altogether! For Marx, then, there is no God to be immanent to man, and certainly no God to be transcendent over man; there is therefore no question of man being able to be transcended. Marx's man, as an end in himself, can only transcend, he is his own measure, which brings us finally to our examination of the most damaging flaw in Marx's understanding of man, the flaw which exposes the inadequacy of his thinking on transcendence.

In Marx's view of the world, economic and material factors are the ultimate determinants of history and, consistent with this perspective, he defined man wholly in social terms. In so doing, however, he took little or no account of the actual physical givenness of even the most basic physical limitations of human existence: of the fact that people are born and die, that some are old and others young, some sick, others healthy, that there are genetic inequalities and that some people are the victims of sheer perversity - others' or their own! As Kolakowski observes:

> Marx did not believe in the essential finitude and limitations of man, or the obstacles to his creativity. Evil and suffering, in his eyes, had no meaning except as instruments of liberation; they were purely social facts, not an essential part of the human condition.[31]

Despite his rejection of any theories of human destiny which incorporated utopian dreams, we find here that Marx's own thesis is woefully inadequate and unrealistic because of its failure to give serious consideration to the implications, for his understanding of transcendence, of the facts of human egoism and perversity on the one hand, and individual and social mortality on the other. When Marx speaks as he does in the Paris Manuscripts of the positive supersession of private property as 'the appropriation of human life... the positive supersession of all alienation',[32] as though this were the immediate and automatic consequence of the overthrow of capitalism, he reveals an

almost blind optimism which is not supported by any evidence in his analysis, of man's history up to this point, or of the 'essence of humanity' which will be enabled to emerge when the socialist revolution has established the communist system. To imagine that, simply by the supersession of private property, man will begin producing man, himself and then other men,[33] and that this will issue in the 'complete emancipation of all the human qualities and senses'[34] and reveal 'a new manifestation of human powers and a new enrichment of the human being',[35] is to take no account whatsoever of the reality of human egotism and self-interest, and to oversimplify grossly the process of moral transformation that such a state of affairs implies.

The other factor which Marx chose to ignore was the reality of death, death not simply as the termination of the life of an individual but also as an integral component of the process of human history. His failure to consider seriously the implications of this inescapable fact of human existence not only renders his 'solution' to the problem of human contingency inadequate, it so qualifies his claims about 'the definitive resolution of the antagonism between man and nature' and 'the true solution of the conflict between existence and essence'[36] as to make them relative, and ultimately illegitimate. When all Marx's analysing and restructuring of human society is done, his 'man' who is an end in himself is still faced with the 'barrier' of death, and the emancipation to which his transcendence has brought him is not the absolute and limitless condition that Marx claimed it was; it is relative, and ultimately coincident with and limited to mortality. For the Christian, however, there is the belief that death, rather than presenting a barrier, gives way to another threshold; death itself is transcended in resurrection, that release of new life which emerges from death as the ultimate resolution of the conflict between existence and being.

This element of unreality in Marx's vision of the goal of transcendence does not however totally invalidate his thesis; it simply reveals that, despite his assertions to the contrary, there was an element of the abstract and utopian in his account. Likewise his description of the

state of affairs after the overthrow of capitalism and the inauguration of genuine communism as an inevitable and irreversible achievement indicates the presence of a definite eschatological element in his understanding, even though some of his followers and commentators are at pains to qualify or deny such a judgement.

Despite all these reservations about Marx's understanding of the concept of transcendence, his contribution still stands as the first serious attempt to relocate transcendence in the human existent. The fact that his thesis appears inconsistent and unduly optimistic at times does not mean it is thereby invalidated or falsified. Many of its difficulties are shared, as we shall see, by other accounts of the concept, both secular and Christian. Karl Marx wrote about, and involved himself in the practical business of working for, the liberation of mankind, the total redemption of humanity. Much of what he wrote and did runs counter to the Christian approach to that same task, but there are numerous points where his thought can provide a helpful critique of Christian theory and practice.

Basic to Marx's approach was the concept of transcendence, the transcendence of all that kept man alienated and impoverished. His commitment to this cause extended from theoretical analysis to direct practical action to initiate and inaugurate the social, economic and political changes necessary to realize his vision. While taking full account of the limitations in his approach, we should also take note of the Marxist criticisms of Christianity's record in working for the same ultimate goal. The major contribution Marx makes to our understanding of redemption is the way in which he relates redemption to transcendence, and particularly transcendence <u>relocated</u> in the human existent. We shall now trace that same train of thought as it appears in a selection of writers, neo-Marxists, existentialists and theologians, all of whom have made significant contributions to the 'search for transcendence'.

The first of the neo-Marxist writers on the subject of transcendence whom we shall consider is the German-born political philosopher,

Herbert Marcuse. Writing more as a social critic totally disenchanted with contemporary society, he used the terms 'transcend' and 'transcendence' to designate

> tendencies in theory and practice which, in a given society, 'overshoot' the established universe of discourse and action toward its historical alternatives (real possibilities).[37]

The 'established universe of discourse and action' which Marcuse attacks so vehemently is advanced technological industrial consumer society, particularly as it is manifested in the U.S.A. This society, he argues, has become a repressive and restrictive system, swallowing up or repulsing all alternatives. And what has emerged, by efficient means of control, is a society which has become able to contain and thereby neutralize social change. It is this containment of social change that Marcuse believes is the most singular achievement of advanced industrial society, and that has resulted in what he calls 'one dimensional man'. By a successful process of social organization and administration of the mind, critical reflection has been abolished, the capacity to develop human capabilities destroyed, ideas, aspirations and objectives have been repelled or surrendered.

Language, literature and art, traditionally vehicles for critical reflection and protest, the 'Great Refusal', become incorporated into the established order, the antagonism between culture and social reality is stifled and restrained, challenge or disturbance is depreciated and deprecated, and ultimately all oppositional, alien, and what Marcuse calls 'transcendent' elements are obliterated. All that which constituted another alternative dimension of reality is liquidated, leaving 'one dimension' only.[38]

What solution does Marcuse propose for the grim state of contemporary society which he describes? Somewhat tentatively, because he cannot guarantee either the possibility of the outcome or its success if it were possible, he suggests, despite the fact that advanced industrial society is capable of containing qualitative change for the foreseeable future, that 'forces and tendencies exist which may break this containment and explode the society'.[39] Such 'transcendent' tendencies and forces promote the real possibility of historical alternatives

which will haunt the established society and subvert it and ultimately bring about social change. Marcuse bases this hope on his conviction that human life is worth living, or rather can be and ought to be made worth living, and his judgement that 'in a given society, specific possibilities exist for the amelioration of human life and specific ways and means of realizing these possibilities'.[40] Among the areas of human activity to which Marcuse looks for specific possibilities for transcendence, special prominence is given to art and literature, which bear and articulate the consciousness of the incompatibility between that which is authentically human and the repressive character of developing society, offering a glimpse of what might lie beyond - 'the conscious transcendence of the alienated existence'.[41] Language too can serve a transcendent function by revealing the qualitative difference between the way things are and the way they might be, and opening up a qualitatively different universe, the terms of which may even contradict the ordinary one.[42] Likewise critical philosophy becomes transcendent and fulfils a therapeutic function to the degree to which it frees thought from its enslavement by the established universe of discourse and behaviour.

From consideration of these theoretical possibilities, Marcuse turns to a proposal he terms 'the transcendent project'[44] which, while being 'in accordance with the real possibilities open at the attained level of the material and intellectual culture', yet demonstrates its own higher rationality and so falsifies the established totality, bringing about the dissolution of the prevailing system and the humanization of the struggle for survival. It also involves the 'pacification of existence', the amelioration of the human condition, making it possible for life to be lived with freedom and dignity and offering concrete indices for what it means to exist humanely and rationally in a new society. This 'pacification' presupposes the mastery of nature, the reduction of misery, violence, and cruelty, and the end of the brutalization of man. The ultimate aim is the self-determination of the individual, who is thereby free to seek his or her own human, transcendent objectives.

The realization of these potentialities means first, tension and contradiction with the prevailing universe of discourse and behaviour, but ultimately, the subversion and overthrow of the established order. The recognition and seizure of these liberating potentialities is a dialectical process, the dialectic of the determinate negation. Elaborating on this idea of dialectic, Marcuse explains:

> Transcendence beyond the established conditions (of thought and action) presupposes transcendence within these conditions. This negative freedom - i.e. freedom from the oppressive and ideological power of given facts - is the a priori of the historical dialectic; it is the element of choice and decision in and against historical determination. None of the given alternatives is by itself determinate negation unless and until it is consciously seized in order to break the power of intolerable conditions and attain the more rational, more logical conditions rendered possible by the prevailing ones. In any case, the rationality and logic invoked in the movement of thought and action is that of the given conditions to be transcended.[45]

The advanced stage of industrial civilization which the fulfilment of Marcuse's hope presupposes would be the terminal point of scientific rationality and the mechanization of all socially necessary but individually repressive labour.[46] This stage would mean the break, the turn of quantity into quality. This would be on Marcuse's own terms, 'the historical transcendence towards a new civilization',[47] and to attain such a life is 'to attain the "best life": to live in accordance with the essence of nature or man'.[48]

When one begins to examine more closely the solution which Marcuse proposes for the problems of contemporary society it becomes clear that his analysis of social and political realities is seriously impaired by generalizations and superficiality. He frequently invokes the Marxist tradition but what he offers is a distorted reflection of the original Marxist message. There is no historical perspective, the proletariat is dismissed as ineffectual, and greater value is given to the pleasure principle than to creative and purposeful labour. Technological progress comes in for heavy criticism as a major contributory factor in the emergence of spiritually impoverished, one dimensional man, and yet it is to technology that Marcuse looks to supply the 'transcendent force' which will facilitate the pacification of existence and ultimately bring about the new humanized society to which he looks

forward. Another transcendent concept to which Marcuse gives particular prominence is reason or scientific rationality, which he regards as the normative human category, and yet at the same time he wishes to affirm that authentic human nature is characterized by the negative and contradictory character of life challenging the status quo. If man's very nature is involved with ambiguity, contradiction and confusion, can this 'reason' be elevated to the status of the purely rational? It is an illusion therefore to suggest that there is such a transcendent category which will elevate man above his authentic nature and above the absurdities of life, least of all reason itself, which inevitably participates in those absurdities. This is surely taking the idea of the transcendent into the realm of the impossibly utopian. Likewise, when it comes to actually describing his utopian, liberated world, Marcuse pleads that it is impossible to give an account of it in advance, except to say that it must completely transcend existing society and civilization. We are not told how we are to determine the 'true essence' of humanity, nor which models and normative concepts are the 'right' ones, nor on what basis we are to judge one particular intuition as better than another.

What scant information we are given does not appear very hopeful or attractive. Marcuse's basic understanding of transcendence appears to be a revolutionary process whereby ultimate control is taken out of the hands of the materialist proletariat and vested instead in an 'enlightened' group who have achieved a higher wisdom untainted by logic and the rigours of empiricism, and are thereby entitled to use whatever measures they deem appropriate, violence, intolerance or repression, to ensure the 'transcendence', that is, the overthrow, of the existing corrupt world of capitalism and all those of its victims who have become one dimensional and so impervious to enlightenment. Tolerance as the mark of repressive democratic institutions responsible for the present totalitarian system must be eliminated, and similarly all democratic structures and institutions destroyed. And all this is to be achieved in the name of 'deeper' intuition, 'higher' justice, and 'superior' spiritual and intellectual insight. But such a claim makes transcendence, not a programme of tendencies which, in a given society,

'overshoot the established universe of discourse and action toward its historical alternatives', but rather, a brief to impose a tyrannous form of dictatorship by a privileged enlightened élite and the establishment of a totalitarian state where choices for the many are made by the few who believe they know better. Historical alternatives have become particular predetermined decisions, and the intuition of normative essences that reveal the true essence of humanity and the means for its attainment has become totalitarian obscurantism that transcends the present universe of discourse and action only to impose a system which would prove more oppressive and destructive of true humanity than that which it is claimed to 'transcend'. Clearly there is transcendence and transcendence!

Another writer whose thinking is directly influenced by Marx's analysis of alienation and reification, and who makes a great deal of the concept of human transcendence, is the American psychoanalyst, sociologist and philosopher, Erich Fromm. In his book, The Sane Society, Fromm relates transcendence to the very essence of what it is to be human. Whereas animal existence is one of harmony between the animal and nature, human life is that which emerged from the 'unique break', when, in the evolutionary process, action ceased to be essentially determined by instinct, the adaptation of nature lost its coercive character, and action was no longer fixed by hereditarily given mechanisms.[49] Fromm regards this point in animal evolution as the birth of man:

> When the animal transcends nature, when it transcends the purely passive role of the creature, when it becomes, biologically speaking, the most helpless animal, man is born. At this point, the animal has emancipated itself from nature by erect posture, the brain has grown far beyond what it was in the highest animal.[50]

However, this 'point' at which human life emerges was a long process, lasting perhaps for hundreds of thousands of years, 'but what matters is that a new species arose, transcending nature, that life became aware of itself'.[51]

But this birth or emergence of man is what constitutes the 'problem of human existence', because in the very act of birth, man 'has fallen out

of nature, as it were, and is still in it; he is partly divine, partly animal; partly infinite, partly finite'.[52] The only solution is for man to emerge fully from his natural home and create a new one - a human world in which he becomes truly human himself. And so the process of human history becomes the process of man's birth: the initial physical birth is but the change from an intrauterine into an extrauterine existence, but the process of birth continues by an on-going process of transcendence. By mastering the art of bodily movement the child becomes mobile, it learns to speak and so to relate itself to others, and as its learning becomes more sophisticated, the growing person learns to love, to develop reason, to acquire a sense of identity and to develop an integrated life. The whole of life is in fact a process of giving birth to oneself, a process of exploration and discovery, determined by the inescapable alternative between regression to animal existence and progression to human existence. Having been projected out of the animal harmony with nature, man cannot live statically because his inner contradictions drive him to seek for an equilibrium, a new harmony.

Here Fromm develops the notion of transcendence a stage further, suggesting that this 'drive' that man experiences is a primary need to affirm his humanness by stepping out of his state of the passive creature thrown into this world without his knowledge, consent or will only to be removed from it eventually, again without his consent or will. Because man is endowed with reason and imagination,

> he is driven by the urge to transcend the role of the creature, the accidentalness and passivity of his existence, by becoming a 'creator'.[53]

This miraculous capacity, to create life, is of course common to all living beings, but what is different in the case of human beings is that they alone are aware of being created and of having the capacity to create. And furthermore this capacity and the awareness of it extends beyond the process of reproduction of the species, to such creative operations as planting seeds and producing material objects, to other acts of individual imaginative creativity: the creation of ideas, art, and personal relationships, in all of which acts man transcends himself as a creature and projects himself into the realm of

purposefulness and freedom.

But there is also another side to this need for transcendence. For if man finds himself incapable of creating, he can satisfy the need to transcend himself as a creature by the equally transcendent act of destroying life, for by this too, man sets himself above life. The power to destroy is, like the capacity to create, rooted in the very existence of man and has the same intensity and power. It is, however, not an independently existing instinct, it is but the alternative to creativity; both are legitimate answers, but answers to the same need, for transcendence, 'and the will to destroy must rise when the will to create cannot be satisfied'.[54]

Transcendence, then, for Fromm, whether it be expressed positively and creatively promoting fulfilment, or negatively by destruction leading to suffering, most of all for the destroyer himself, is rooted in the very nature of the human existent. Part of nature, subject to her physical laws and unable to change them, man nonetheless transcends the rest of nature.

> He is set apart while being a part; he is homeless, yet chained to the home he shares with all creatures.... Having lost paradise, the unity with nature, he has become the eternal wanderer (Odysseus, Oedipus, Abraham, Faust); he is impelled to go forward and with everlasting effort to make the unknown known by filling with answers the blank spaces of his knowledge. He must give an account to himself of himself, and of the meaning of his existence. He is driven to overcome the inner split, tormented by a craving for 'absoluteness', for another kind of harmony which can lift the curse by which he was separated from nature, from his fellow men, and from himself.[55]

Here Fromm brings together in sharp contrast the two basic ideas from the Marxian analysis of the human situation, namely that, although man is by his very nature the victim of alienation, yet by that very same nature he has the capacity to transcend that alienation. Marx, however, emphasizes the corporate, historical, material and economic factors which determine man's alienated condition and then explores the ways in which those factors can and ought to be superseded. Fromm's analysis leads him, in contrast, to explore the more individual aspects of the process of transcendence, the quest for 'a radical inner human change'[56] stressing the more specifically personal elements in the

bringing about of a more human society. He concentrates particularly on the idea of the human potential for growth, that potential for change and transformation which develops each person's individual givenness by a process of self-creation and self-realization. This way of considering human development and the striving for the realization of individual fulfilment bears some resemblance to the thinking of some of the patristic writers we have discussed, who expressed the concept of individual givenness in terms of the 'image' of God in which each person is created and then considered the process of self-realization as a gradual transformation into the 'likeness' of God for which each is ultimately destined. But whereas for the patristic authors this process is the working of the grace of God, for Erich Fromm it is, as it was for Marx, a process of human self-realization: 'it is nothing but the self-creation of man through the process of his work and his production'.[57]

Developing Marx's concept of the essence of human nature as 'that in man which exists as a potentiality and unfolds and changes in the historical process',[58] Fromm suggests that the 'normal individual' has an 'inherent drive for growth and integration'.[59] And this inherent drive or capacity for transcendence follows from the principle 'that the power to act creates a need to use this power and that the failure to use it results in dysfunction and unhappiness'.[60] This power, however, can be and has been frustrated and thwarted by 'the rise of the industrial and cybernetic religions'[61] which emphasized material abundance, acquisitiveness and the inevitability of progress. But this 'having mode'[62] of existence does not promote an alive, productive process between subject and object; for whereas being allows for participation, having simply objectifies, reducing life to 'one dimension', as Marcuse describes it, confining ideas and actions to the established materialistic order and thus rendering man incapable of transcendence.[63]

Fromm's solution to this debilitating condition which he sees as ultimately threatening the very existence of the human race, is to bring about 'a profound change in the human heart'[64] which he regards

as the pre-requisite for a new society of being, the model for which must be determined by the requirements of the unalienated, being-orientated individual, a society in which the economic and political spheres are to be subordinated to human development. But as Fromm himself recognizes, in any programme of transformation the individual personal dimension and the corporate social dimension are inextricably interrelated and interdependent, and the 'change of heart' he envisages is possible only to the extent that drastic economic and social changes occur that give the human heart the opportunity for change and the courage and the vision to achieve it. The programme for transformation on the individual personal level he outlined in his study of the psychology of ethics, Man for Himself, first published in 1947. In this study he maintains that our moral problem is man's indifference to himself, and that the solution to this problem is to be found in 'humanistic ethics', a system of ethics developed from the principle that 'man's aim is to be himself and that the condition for attaining this goal is that man be for himself'.[65] Humanistic ethics refuses to acknowledge any antecedent power or purpose transcending man and instead relocates transcendence within man himself. To be alive is to be productive - but for oneself, in order to make sense of one's existence, to discover what it is to be fully human. Fromm applies these ideas about the individual to society at large in his later works, The Sane Society, The Revolution of Hope and To Have or to Be?

In common with Marx and other neo-Marxists, Erich Fromm believes that transcendence is the key to human salvation - or 'self-realization' as he would probably rather have it. Transcendence is the process by which human beings overcome their alienation from nature, from one another, and ultimately from themselves; it enables the unfettered development of the essentially human powers of creativity, productivity, and brotherly love. There is, however, a fundamental ambiguity in Fromm's understanding of human nature, for while on the one hand he accepts that 'human nature' is a normative concept, that is, it establishes a norm in itself, yet he claims at the same time to derive his ideal of what human nature will be when fully realized from what it is at present, in its 'unrealized' state. Furthermore, his optimism as he

looks to the future, his unshakeable faith in human adaptability, resilience and good will, and his conviction that man must achieve his fulfilment unaided because 'there is no power transcending him which can solve his problem',[66] all suggest that Fromm has not taken sufficiently seriously his own acknowledgement that the urge to transcend the role of the creature can manifest itself in destructiveness as well as in creativity, and although this destructive impulse is a secondary potentiality and the alternative to creativeness, it is nonetheless rooted in the very existence of man and has the same intensity and power as any other passion.

In the writings of Marx and the two neo-Marxists which we have examined, human transcendence was understood in terms of the self-creating activity of man, a process in which economic and material factors were regarded as being major determining factors. Moving now to the philosophers of the 'existentialist' school, we find a shift in emphasis to a more 'subjective' analysis of human existence itself with particular attention being given to the peculiar human awareness of existence as 'ex-sisting', standing out, which involves by its very nature a process of emergence, a becoming <u>more</u>, a going beyond whatever and wherever one may be at any given moment.[67]

The first representative of this school of thinking we shall consider is the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, one of the nineteenth century pioneers in the demolition of accepted ways of thinking and conventional moral prejudices. Fundamental to Nietzsche's revolutionary programme was the abolition of religion and the proclamation that 'God is dead'. He saw religion as inhibiting human development by undervaluing the individual, the particular and the present, subsuming them in a grand over-view termed 'salvation history', and by exalting such ideals as humility, charity and submission as virtues - all of which Nietzsche regarded as repressive characteristics responsible for the most radical negation of authentic human existence. The proclamation of the death of God, then, was an essential preliminary to human liberation. But this rejection of religion and the elimination of God meant also the nullification of the religious way of looking at the

world, the obliteration of all metaphysics, and the necessity of fixing new norms and determining values solely in terms of the human and phenomenal world. This realization brought Nietzsche initially to a state of dismay and despair which he expressed in a powerful metaphor of quitting land and going off on board ship into the ocean which stretches out as silk and gold, but which is also infinite, and the infinite can be dreadful.

> Oh, the poor bird that felt free and now strikes the walls of this cage! Woe, when you feel homesickness for the land, as if it had offered more freedom - and there is no longer any 'land'.[68]

This state of profound alienation at the realization that the known universe is destroyed brought Nietzsche to the brink of nihilism, but by a gradual process of 'revaluation of all values', he began to see that man 'on his own' is thus freed to emerge into new possibilities. But this discovery is not available to everyman. It can only be appreciated and appropriated by 'philosophers', those 'free spirits' who feel themselves 'irradiated as by a new dawn by the report that the "old God is dead"'. And using the same metaphor of the open sea, he looks forward not with dread but with a tentative hope, albeit with the frank acknowledgement that the way ahead will almost certainly not be easier or more pleasant:

> ... our heart overflows with gratitude, amazement, premonitions, expectation. At long last the horizon appears free to us again, even if it should not be bright; at long last our ships may venture out again, venture out to face any danger; all the daring of the lover of knowledge is permitted again; the sea, our sea, lies open again; perhaps there has never yet been such an 'open sea'.[69]

It was at this point in his thinking that Nietzsche began writing Thus Spoke Zarathustra in which he attempts to account for what is distinctive in human existence without recourse to the supernatural or to metaphysical systems. Analysing the full range of human emotions, Nietzsche came to the conclusion that the single motivating principle for all human actions was 'the will to power', and when this will operates on the (enlightened) individual it brings about self-mastery, the overcoming of self, the transcending of self, resulting in a new creature to whom Nietzsche gives the name 'Overman' or 'Superman' [Übermensch].

The proclamation of the 'death of God' was thus only half of Nietzsche's message, the other half was to announce that that event not only gave man the opportunity but actually laid upon man the obligation to realize his potential, to exalt all human powers to their highest level, particularly the will to power itself, and so by such a process of self-overcoming [Selbstüberwindung] to give birth to the Superman who is 'the meaning of the earth':

> I teach you the Superman. Man is something that should be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?
>
> All creatures hitherto have created something beyond themselves: and do you want to be the ebb of this great tide, and return to the animals rather than overcome man?[70]

But Nietzsche rejects any suggestion of systematic inevitable 'progress' of the human species, for such a notion was to him simply the old religious way of thinking in a new guise.

While prepared on the one hand to accept to a limited degree the notion that the human species as we know it has developed from more primitive life forms, Nietzsche refused to accept any notion of historical process, a leading somewhere which would 'make sense' of life. He denied that empirical facts indicated that ever greater values developed in the course of history, and asserted to the contrary:

> The goal of humanity cannot lie in the end but only in its highest specimens.[71]

There is however a further distinction to be made. Man as he is constituted stands 'poised', capable of advancing to the Superman, but elsewhere, Nietzsche admits that those who hear his message but do not understand, those who believe they have discovered happiness, will emerge as the 'Ultimate Men', the most contemptible of men, those who are so despicable that they are no longer capable even of despising themselves.[72] It is the Ultimate Man

> who makes everything small. His race is as inexterminable as the flea; the Ultimate Man lives longest.[73]

But for Nietzsche man is not to be preserved for longevity, he is something to be overcome.[74] Just as the ape is a laughing-stock or painful embarrassment to man, so is man a laughing-stock or painful embarrassment to the Superman.[75] The question is not 'How may man still be preserved?' - that is the obsession of the cautious people.

Zarathustra asks rather 'How shall man be overcome?.'[76]

> The Superman lies close to my heart, he is my paramount and sole concern - and not man: not the nearest, not the poorest, not the most suffering, not the best.
>
> O my brothers, what I can love in man is that he is a going-across and a going-down. And in you, too, there is much that makes me love and hope.[77]

It is thus apparent that Nietzsche's sympathies are not with 'man' as he is but rather with man as he might be, with those who by the exercise of the will to power go beyond the normal and the average, those who 'stand out' and master themselves. Nietzsche's Superman is not the end product of a natural selective process, he is the one who by the exercise of his own choice, his own will, overcomes himself. This internal drive which enables some to go beyond the norm and so master themselves as to overcome themselves is however a capacity which Nietzsche acknowledges to be inherent in all human beings:

> Where I found a living creature, there I found will to power; and even in the will of the servant I found the will to be master....
>
> Only where life is, there is also will: not will to life, but - so I teach you - will to power![78]

This will to power is fundamental to being human, and the exercise of this will, the mastering of self, requiring the greatest power, is what we have been describing as self-transcendence, the process of becoming. As Nietzsche himself puts it, in his chapter on 'self-overcoming': 'You put your will and your values upon the river of becoming',[79] and again in that same chapter: 'And life itself told me this secret: "Behold", it said, "I am that which must overcome itself again and again".'[80] It is a process whereby man is transformed from creature into creator (a concept we have also noted in the writings of Erich Fromm), not only giving rise to the Superman, but giving birth to his true self:

> Could you create a god? - So be silent about all gods! But you could surely create the Superman. Perhaps not you yourselves, my brothers! But you could transform yourselves into forefathers and ancestors of the Superman: and let this be your finest creating![81]

And later, addressing the Higher Men, Nietzsche says,

> You creators, you Higher Men! One is pregnant only with one's own child.[82]

But what is this Superman [Übermensch], the 'end product' of this process of self-overcoming [Selbstüberwindung] or self-transcendence?

Is it a 'new creature' which is no longer recognizably 'human', or is it a form of 'perfect man'? For all the emphasis Nietzsche puts on the notion of overcoming, transcending and going beyond, it is significant that he still refers to the one who does so overcome himself as the super-man. What has been overcome is that which is identifiable with 'the animals'. The one who transcends himself, sublimating his (animal) impulses, consecrating his passions and giving style to his character, becomes truly human, his true self, the meaning of human existence, he becomes super-human.[83] He has overcome his animal nature and become a type not of superior breeding, but of supreme achievement. This interpretation would seem to be corroborated by Nietzsche's own subsequent writings, The Antichrist,[84] and Ecce Homo.[85]

With the death of God and the destruction of the religious universe, man is on his own, alone to create, order and judge himself and his world. Man finds himself in the place of the God he has eliminated,[86] and the way is clear for man to become more than he has ever been or imagined he might become - the goal for humanity,[87] the meaning of the earth.[88] Few of course will ever recognize this new situation, and even among those who do, many will prefer to be made into the Ultimate Man rather than the Superman,[89] leaving only a small minority to realize their potential and become 'Higher Men', those who are on the verge of becoming Supermen.[90] In fact Nietzsche goes so far as to admit:

> There has never yet been a Superman. I have seen them both naked, the greatest and the smallest men.
>
> They are still all-too-similar to one another. Truly, I found even the greatest man - all-too-human![91]

As we found with Marx and the neo-Marxists, so with Nietzsche, such theories of human transcendence are developed from a desire to liberate human beings from all that is deemed to be life-denying and frustrating to human development. Atheism is a fundamental pre-requisite for the understanding of human liberation and redemption. That this was so underlines the fact that much of the theology that has been influential in the west has represented the Christian God in a thoroughly oppressive and life-denying way. And for that reason it is too easy to say that these thinkers have 'misunderstood' Christianity. What is required on the part of Christian thinkers is a frank acknowledgement

that the theology against which these 'atheistic' thinkers have (justifiably) reacted is itself a caricature of genuine Christian theology. And furthermore we may find that the attempts of these thinkers to proclaim the liberation and redemption of man by using the model of human transcendence give us some useful guides in our attempt to 'relocate' transcendence in the human existent, and also to make our way towards a deeper understanding of the concept of deification. In both these areas the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche deserve careful consideration.

The next representative of the existentialist style of philosophizing, the German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, rejects the label 'existentialist' and also refuses to be categorized as either an atheist or a theist. His major work, which established him as one of the leading exponents of existentialist thought, is Sein und Zeit, published in 1927, and translated into English in 1962, as Being and Time.

Heidegger's main interest is the mystery of being, that is, being in general. It is from that primary interest that he gives particular attention to human existence, for it is human existence that provides Heidegger with a way into the question of being itself. As he explains, man is the locus where being becomes illuminated and disclosed.[92] And man, or rather the human existent (and any other beings who may share the same ontological constitution), is unique in this capacity because he not only has being but has some understanding of being, in that his being is disclosed to him in his very mode of being. This way of understanding being philosophically is, as Rudolph Bultmann observed, 'not a speculative philosophy, but an analysis of the understanding of existence that is given with existence itself'.[93]

Right at the beginning of his exposition of the meaning of being, Heidegger acknowledges that one of the fundamental characteristics of being is transcendence [Transzendenz], and that this understanding, prominent in mediaeval ontology, dates back to Aristotle:

> The 'universality' of 'Being' is not that of a class or

> genus....The 'universality' of Being 'transcends' any universality of genus. In medieval ontology 'Being' is designated as a 'transcendens'. Aristotle himself knew the unity of this transcendental 'universal' as a unity of analogy in contrast to the multiplicity of the highest generic concepts applicable to things.[94]

The way into the wider question of being in general was provided, for Heidegger, by an examination of the human existent which he designates by the term Dasein.[95] Dasein is existence as it is experienced in being human, it is that manifestation of Being whose manner of being is existence. And when Heidegger goes on to examine the fundamental characteristic of transcendence as it relates to Dasein, he observes that

> the transcendence of Dasein's Being is distinctive in that it implies the possibility and the necessity of the most radical individuation. Every disclosure of Being as the transcendens is transcendental knowledge.[96]

This transcendence, peculiar to Dasein's Being, is distinctive because it is precisely that which gives rise to the peculiar mode of being that we ourselves, as human beings, know at first hand, the specific, unique being of the individual human person who fulfils his being precisely by existing, by standing out, in 'radical individuation', over against the crowd, and against the public conscience as articulated by the 'they'.[97] But this experience of standing out, of ex-sisting, of reaching beyond, which for Heidegger characterizes what he means by existence, is that same process which we have described earlier as self-transcendence. Here Heidegger comes very close to the understanding of Friedrich Nietzsche, because like Nietzsche he gives a prominent place to the role of the will, 'resoluteness', which is required if one is to achieve 'self-mastery' (Nietzsche), the pre-requisite for what Heidegger calls 'authentic selfhood'.

In giving closer, specific attention to this process towards the attainment of true selfhood, Heidegger reminds us that we are disclosed to ourselves as existents who in expressing ourselves are actually making ourselves. But in this process in which we are presently engaged and stepping at each moment into a future, we are also leaving behind the world in which we have been in the past. Heidegger sees this complex time-relationship brought together in the human capacity to

'care', to have concern for, and in the exercise of that capacity we achieve authentic selfhood, a process bringing us to 'perfection':

> Man's perfectio - his transformation into that which he can be in Being-free for his ownmost possibilities (projection) - is 'accomplished' by 'care'. But with equal primordiality 'care' determines what is basically specific in this entity, according to which it has been surrendered to the world of its concern (thrownness).[98]

Thrown thus into his or her own particular existential situation, each person is faced with possibilities, possibilities which include of course the threat of being frustrated and thwarted in the quest for an authentic selfhood, but possibilities which also include the opportunity of achieving, by a process of self-mastery, a truly actualized self, and so experiencing 'the ecstatic standing-in in the truth of being'.[99] Man then, for Heidegger, has no fixed essence given in advance, but rather man comes to himself in the fulfilling of his existence. At any one moment, man is 'as yet' unfinished, incomplete, and the opportunity before him is to exercise that responsibility peculiar to him as a human being, to be aware of his being but also to be responsible for his being. This does not mean for Heidegger (as it did for Marx) that man is the measure of all things, for, as Heidegger explained in his 'Letter on Humanism' written in reply to Sartre, man does not create being, human life is set within the wider context of being, and man receives his existence from being, and is therefore, in a sense, responsible to being.[100]

Heidegger, in contrast to the atheistic existentialists, would therefore look for 'clues' or guidelines given in existence itself, that point towards human fulfilment, and he would also therefore acknowledge that existence comes to maturity as it responds to the call of being, that call to each individual existent which comes from the depths of one's own being, from the authentic self struggling to be born.[101] Man, whose mode of being is 'being-there' [Dasein], not only is, but he also has his being disclosed to himself, he ex-sists, standing out from the world of entities, and thus becomes aware of his being and of his responsibility for his being. As Heidegger puts it: 'only as long as Dasein is, "is there" Being',[102] which means, as John Macquarrie tells us, 'that man is the only entity (so far as we know)

to which Being gives itself, makes itself open, manifests itself. So man becomes the guardian of Being, the entity to which Being entrusts itself'.[103] Man has thus become open to the transcendence of Being that meets him in this situation, and himself becomes the locus of transcendence, thus fulfilling his being.

But this is no automatic, inevitable process. Heidegger is careful to bring out the full implications of the notion of responsibility we have already alluded to. As each individual seeks to realize his own potentiality for being, so there is required an act (or rather, continuous series of acts) of will or decision, for only by deliberate resolution can one pull the self into a coherent unity - to become oneself. Here Heidegger introduces the notion of existence as being-towards-death, and as such it has the potential of illuminating life, that we might understand all living as a dying, and by transcending the triviality of 'everyday' existence, we achieve meaning and unity within temporality. And this transcending of the triviality and successiveness of existence brings together the past, present and future, into a moment of eternity within time, so that we can speak of a kind of 'eternal life' in the midst of temporality. The resolute self has given rise to the resolved self in whom has been awakened the wonder of Being and the realization that 'man is more than a mere something endowed with intelligence'.[104] This realization Heidegger attributes to the 'idea of transcendence' which is, as he acknowledges, rooted in Christian dogmatics. It is significant, for our purpose, that in the two quotations he then gives from Christian dogmatics (from Calvin and Zwingli), both should incorporate ideas not just of transcendence ('ascending beyond', 'looking up' to God)[15] but also of deification ('even unto God', 'draws him to God'), indicating that for Heidegger the notion of transcendence, so fundamental to the nature of Being, is the very characteristic that brings man not only to authentic self-hood, but also to a qualitative transformation that we have dared to term 'deification'.

We come finally, in our examination of human self-transcendence, to the consideration of the contribution of two representative theologians who

in their respective ways have sought not only to relocate transcendence in the human existent, but also to relate it to the underlying theme of our thesis, the issue of redemption, understood as a process, a process of emergence whereby man realizes his potential divineness in a relationship of union with the transcendent divinity of God.

The first of these thinkers is the Canadian philosopher and theologian, Bernard J.F.Lonergan, who claims that the immanent source of human transcendence is the 'detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know'.[106] It is because of the emphasis on the intellectual drive in his writings that Lonergan is termed a 'transcendental Thomist', and while it is true that he does give a central place to cognitional activity in his understanding of transcendence (and he makes a special point of stressing that his interest is the recurrent structure and function of knowing, rather than that which is known[107]), yet he makes it quite clear that this transcendent process of knowing must be understood within a larger context:

> present knowing is not just present knowing but also a moment in process towards fuller knowing, so also present reality is not just present reality but also a moment in process to fuller reality.... Indeed, since cognitional activity is itself but a part of this universe, its striving to know being is but the intelligent and reasonable part of a universe striving towards being.[108]

Lonergan indicates the complex process of human knowing, explaining that it is both cyclic and cumulative. It is cyclic in that it advances from experience through enquiry and reflection to judgement and so to experience, only to recommence its ascent to another judgement, and it is cumulative, not only by the storing of individual experiences and accumulation of insights, but also in the forming of judgements into what we term 'knowledge' or 'mentality'.[109]

Turning his attention specifically to the notion of transcendence, Lonergan first rejects the mistaken supposition that knowing consists in 'taking a look'. Knowing occurs within the knower, and involves understanding and judging, and so establishes the conditions for, and actuates a 'going beyond' to, the 'universe of facts, of being, of what truly is affirmed and really is'.[110] Thus the pure 'desire to know'

gives rise to human intellectual development, revealing a universal order in which individual desires and fears are but infinitesimal components in the history of mankind. There is also the open invitation and opportunity for man

> to become intelligent and reasonable not only in his knowing but also in his living, to guide his actions by referring them, not as an animal to a habitat, but as an intelligent being to the intelligible context of some universal order that is or is to be.[111]

Knowledge is, in itself, transcendent in that it goes beyond the domain of proportionate being. It opens up the way for individual human advancement, by that cyclic and cumulative process, beyond what one happens to be at any given moment, carried on by his own higher spontaneity 'to quite a different mode of operation'."[112] But this process of human development also requires stages of assimilation and integration, because new patterns of willing and thinking, of perception and feeling, and new modes of outward behaviour and interrelationships necessitate complementary adjustments and sometimes complex reorganizations, without which the initiated development recedes and atrophies in favour of already established patterns, or else the individual's psychosomatic unity is sacrificed and disordered, and he becomes bewildered and disoriented by a confusion of unrelated and unassimilated ideas and modes of behaviour.

This development inevitably involves, however, a tension between limitation and transcendence, for while on the one hand the development is in the subject and of the subject, on the other hand it is from the subject as he is and towards the subject as he is to be. In opposition to the upwardly directed dynamism of proportionate being, bringing about changes, new laws governing behaviour, new motivations to spontaneity, the overcoming of acquired habits, resulting in alterations to existing schemes of recurrence, all directed against the subject's remaining as he is, there is the strong undertow of temptation to inertial repetition of the tried and familiar habits and patterns. Such is the inescapable consequence of development.

Thus, Lonergan concludes, transcendence, 'despite the imposing name, is the elementary matter of raising further questions',[113] it is that

process which finds man 'involved and engaged in developing, in going beyond what he happens to be',[114] facing at one and the same time his incapacity for sustained development and his need to go beyond the established patterns of the dynamic of his being. Transcendence, on this understanding, is not the going beyond a known knower, it is rather a 'heading for being',[115] it is a 'development in man's knowledge relevant to a development in man's being'.[116]

At this point we find Lonergan beyond the limit of strictly cognitional activity, he has moved beyond the intellectual to the realm of being itself, and is prepared to recognize that living itself is a process of developing,

> for the very structure of man's being is dynamic. His knowing and willing rest on inquiry, and inquiry is unrestricted. His knowing consists in understanding, and every act of understanding not only raises further questions but also opens the way to further answers.... His sensitivity and his intersubjectivity are, like his knowledge and willingness, systems on the move.[117]

It is by understanding his own developing that man is able to grasp it, to affirm it, accept it and actually execute it, by extrapolating from his past, through the present, to alternative ranges of the future - a process which Lonergan describes in terms almost echoing Teilhard de Chardin's theory of evolution, as not only horizontal but also vertical, 'not only to future recurrences of past events, but also to future higher integrations of contemporary unsystematized manifolds'.[118] Teilhard comes to mind again, as Lonergan pictures this process as 'a series of emergent leaps',[119] a creative response, motivated not only by precepts and maxims, but also by inner impulses and external circumstances, in which there is a gradual emerging from the relative dependence of childhood to the relative autonomy of maturity.

But what is this 'higher integration' to which Lonergan refers? Although he regards the process of transcendence as grounded in the human existent and related to the very nature of the human being, he nonetheless raises the question whether human cognitional activity, as part of that universal striving towards being, is to be confined to the universe of proportional being,

> or goes beyond it to the realm of transcendent being; and this transcendent realm may be conceived either relatively or absolutely, either as beyond man or as the ultimate in the whole process of going beyond.[120]

If this passage is read in the light of other passages in which Lonergan refers to the self 'carried by its own higher spontaneity to quite a different mode of operation',[121] manifesting attributes of detachment and disinterestedness in the context of some universal order, and the pure desire of the mind as a 'desire of God',[122] and again, the goodness of man's will consisting in a 'consuming love of God',[123] it becomes clear that he himself did allow for such a realm of transcendent being. This is made more explicit in his discussion of what he terms 'special transcendent knowledge',[124] where he states that his thesis of progress never places man on the pinnacle of perfection, but on the contrary it asserts that human knowledge is incomplete, human willingness imperfect, and human sensitivity and intersubjectivity are in need of adaptation.

And if, as he claims, that to which the unrestricted act of understanding leads is God, and the goodness of man's will consists in a consuming love of God (in its essential detachment from the sensitive subject and in its unrestricted commitment to complete intelligibility), then 'the world of sense is, more than all else, a mystery that signifies God as we know him and symbolizes the further depths that lie beyond our comprehension'.[125] Human perfection thus becomes itself a limit to be transcended, in that the supernatural solution involves a new and higher integration of human activity, fostering the proper unfolding of all human capacities, allowing human excellence to enjoy a vast expansion of its effective potentialities, although it also

> possibly, complicates the dialectic by adding to the inner conflict between attachment and detachment in man the necessity of man's going quite beyond his humanity to save himself from disfiguring and distorting it.[126]

So Lonergan has taken us from the realm of the cognitional, through the ontological, and brings us finally to the supernatural, that realm the measure of which is the divine nature itself, for

> the realization of the solution and its development in each of us

> is principally the work of God who illuminates our intellects to understand what we had not understood and to grasp as conditional what we had reputed error, who breaks the bonds of our habitual unwillingness to be utterly genuine in intelligent inquiry and critical reflection by inspiring the hope that reinforces the detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know and by infusing the charity, the love, that bestows on intelligence the fullness of life.[127]

That process of illumination, breaking and recreating, realized by inspiring hope and infusing love that bestows fullness of life, is most adequately expressed in the one word which incorporates all these elements and dimensions: deification.

Much of the writing of the second representative theologian in our study, the German Jesuit, Karl Rahner, is concerned with how we understand theology and the appropriating of what we have understood. If we are to understand and so to believe, we must comprehend within the total content of our spiritual being, so that we can make our own what we believe. This concern led Rahner to insist on the need for continuing re-examination of traditional theological formulations, and for such historically conditioned statements, and the presuppositions upon which they were based, to be interpreted afresh, so that they might continue to be made present and acquired anew, and open the way to the - ever greater - Truth, God himself.

It was in this rigorous pursuit of more adequate and appropriate ways of expressing Christian doctrines that Rahner developed what he termed the notion of 'transcendental anthropology', a method of theology which

> enables the Christian to understand and correlate the Christian mysteries in a way which relates them to the fundamental a priori structures of his own experience.[128]

The first premise of Rahner's anthropology is that man is to be understood as spirit, that is, 'as transcendence towards being pure and simple',[129] reaching unceasingly for the absolute, in openness towards God:

> Only that makes him into a man: that he is always already on the way to God, whether or not he knows it expressly, whether or not he wills it. He is forever the openness of the finite for God.[130]

Following the line of the transcendental Thomism we found in Bernard Lonergan's notion of human transcendence, Rahner gives fundamental

importance to human cognitional activity, describing man as the first of 'finite knowing subjects'[131] and his openness is the very condition of the possibility for his knowledge. Furthermore, all knowledge of being becomes the actualization of his infinite potentiality and thus the unfolding of his own infinity. As we are so oriented towards God, and God is always and absolutely beyond us, our knowledge of God constitutes the very essence of our transcendence. But in his reaching beyond his finiteness towards God, man experiences himself as a transcendent being, always still on the way.

> Every goal that he can point to in knowledge and in action is always relativized, is always a provisional step: Every answer is always just the beginning of a new question. Man experiences himself as infinite possibility because in practice and in theory he necessarily places every sought-after result in question.[132]

By this complex process of knowing and acting (cyclic and cumulative, as Lonergan described it), by his absolute openness for being, man becomes the place of possible revelation, to hear any word that comes from the mouth of God. In fact Rahner goes further and actually refers to man as 'the event of God's absolute self-communication',[133] and it is on the basis of this conviction that he constructs his theology of incarnation, that act of unification of humanity with the Logos:

> Human being is a reality open upwards; a reality which realizes its highest perfection, the realization of the highest possibility of man's being, when in it the Logos himself becomes existent in the world.[134]

This unique incarnation event constitutes the highest form of God's self-communication offered to all. It is the express revelation of the word, coming to us not from without, entirely strange, but, because of the experience of self-transcendence common to all, coming as

> the explication of what we already are by grace and what we experience at least incoherently in the limitlessness of our transcendence.[135]

But not only is the incarnation the high point of God's self-communication, it also becomes the point of reference for our understanding of transcendental human nature, that indefinable nature which, when assumed by God as <u>his</u> reality, has

> simply arrived at the point to which it always strives by virtue of its essence. It is its <u>meaning</u>... to be that which is delivered up and abandoned, to be that which fulfils itself and finds itself by perpetually disappearing into the incomprehensible.[136]

And from here, Rahner continues, taking us on to the ultimate goal of the fulfilment of human nature in deification:

> This is done in the strictest sense and reaches an unsurpassable pitch of achievement, when the nature which surrenders itself to the mystery of the fullness belongs so little to itself that it becomes the nature of God himself.[137]

For Rahner, then, there is an intrinsic unity between the event of the incarnation of God on the one hand and the self-transcendence of the whole spiritual world into God through God's self-communication on the other:

> the intrinsic effect of the hypostatic union for the assumed humanity of the Logos consists precisely and in a real sense only in the very thing which is ascribed to all men as their goal and their fulfilment, namely, the immediate vision of God which the created, human soul of Christ enjoys.[138]

Although Rahner insists, in line with orthodox doctrine, that the incarnation is a unique event, he is neverthless equally insistent that because of the fact of God's self-communication through grace (a conviction to which he comes back again and again), it is also an intrinsic moment in the whole process by which grace is bestowed upon all spiritual creatures. And keen as ever to prove himself faithful to the church's deposit of faith, he explains this self-communication of God in terms that could almost be lifted from numerous passages of the fathers:

> In this self-communication a human reality is assumed so that the reality of God is communicated to what is assumed, to the humanity, and in the first instance that of Christ. But this very communication which is the purpose of the assumption is a communication in and through what we call grace and glory, and this is what is intended for everyone.[139]

In this event, God brought the movement of creation to its goal, in that he achieved 'both the greater proximity to and distance from what is other than he',[140] objectifying himself in an image of himself as radically as possible, and thereby giving himself with the utmost truth, making most radically his own that which he has created.

So with Karl Rahner we have been brought full circle. From man, understood as spirit with a desire for absolute being and the event of God's absolute self-communication, a being of 'divinized (sic) transcendence',[141] he has led us to the incarnation of the Logos, that

'concrete moment within the process by which the divinization of all spiritual creatures is realized',[142] and finally back to man, but man as spiritual creature in whom the process of deification has been realized. According to Rahner's transcendental anthropology:

> As soon as man is understood as the being who is absolutely transcendent in respect of God, 'anthropocentricity' and 'theocentricity' in theology are not opposites but strictly one and the same thing, seen from two sides.[143]

At its highest and ultimate, this self-transcendence of man becomes identical with an absolute self-communication of God, only signifying the same process seen from God's side. The climax of that self-transcendence is, at one and the same time, ultimate assimilation to God in Christ, and deification by the working of grace:

> the unfolding within human nature of the union of the human with the Logos, and therefore, and arising thence, something which can also be had by those who are not the ek-sistence of the Logos in time and history but do belong to his necessary environment.[144]

CHAPTER SIX

THE DRAWING OUT OF SOME PARALLELS BETWEEN THE CONCEPTS OF DEIFICATION AND SELF-TRANSCENDENCE AS TWO WAYS OF SPEAKING ABOUT THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF HUMAN EXISTENCE

The French existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre writing of the fundamental project of human reality described man as 'the being whose project is to be God.... To be man means to reach toward being God'.[1] He then went on to conclude that such a project is self-contradictory and the ultimate foolishness, confirming the claim made at the outset of his study that 'human reality is its own surpassing towards what it lacks.... [it] is a perpetual surpassing toward a coincidence with itself which is never given'.[2] Sartre regarded this enterprise as pointless because it involved, he claimed, impossibility and contradiction, and he therefore wrote off man himself as a 'useless passion'.[3] Similar misgivings about the human project of wanting to 'become God' are expressed by the German theologian Hans Küng, who asks in his major work On Being a Christian: 'But does a reasonable man today want to become God?... Our problem today is not the deification but the humanization of man'.[4]

In both these cases the writers have quite the wrong idea of what the concept of deification means when it is understood in the way the fathers used it. First of all, in Sartre's statement, there is the misleading suggestion that deification means man becoming God. On these terms, he is right in seeing such a project as self-contradictory and foolish. But that is not what deification means when it is properly interpreted, even though Sartre does describe it in terms of self-transcendence. For Sartre, man is fundamentally 'the desire to be',[5] and therefore self-transcendence is of the very essence of human existence, even though that desire is inevitably frustrated and indeed incapable of fulfilment. On his understanding, the process of human self-transcendence is a reaching into nothing, and man himself is nothing but a useless passion in his desire to be not only that which he never can be, but also that which does not even exist! But Sartre's whole argument seems to hinge on what he understands that reality to be

towards which imperfect (human) being surpasses or transcends itself, that impossible, self-contradictory ideal to which he gives the name 'God'.

For Sartre's conception of God, we would substitute the notion of God as understood in contemporary Christian existentialism, that God is not a being, or even Being-in-itself, but rather Being-itself. Then the human project of self-transcendence 'towards that which it lacks' becomes a process of self-realization because it is a process of gradual participation in Being-itself involving the acquisition of being, the finite transcending the horizons of its finitude, drawn on by the taste for the infinite which is the very element of 'desire' that Sartre regards as fundamentally human.

On this understanding, man's 'desire to be' is not the vain and useless desire 'to be God' as Sartre claims, it is not a quest for self-aggrandizement, to arrogate to himself the place of God. It is rather man exercising the will to answer that 'upward call' to participate in the divine life of Being-itself by a process of deepening communion, and so to realize that image in which he was originally created. And in this process human self-transcendence is met by divine self-giving or immanence; it is the experience of transcending and being transcended, discovering signs of God's immanent activity in man and recognizing in man the capacity for God.

Hans Küng's observation reveals a similar misunderstanding of deification, as though it were antithetical to the process of humanization. Küng also appears to be overlooking the ambiguity of the word 'humanization'. The humanization of man cannot possibly mean simply leaving man in his present state. It requires some ideal of humanity to which man can aspire. Furthermore it is a mistake to suppose that the human disappears when it comes into association with the divine. Rather the human comes to its fullness in the process of deification, as the contemporary Orthodox theologian John Meyendorff makes clear:

> Deified human nature, human nature having come into communion with

> the divine nature, is not 'modified as to its natural characteristics', but restored to the divine glory to which it was destined from the creation. Human nature, at the contact of God, does not disappear; on the contrary it becomes fully human, for God cannot destroy what he has made.[6]

The confusion and misunderstanding in these observations of Sartre and Küng would seem to arise from the failure of both thinkers to appreciate the particular nature of the divine-human relationship that we have been postulating throughout this thesis: that it is by examining human experience, particularly the most characteristic human experiences of 'transcending and being transcended', that we discover signs of God's immanent activity in man and recognize in man the capacity for God.

This recognition of man's capacity for God is one of the foundation blocks of our thesis, because it is fundamental in accounting for what the fathers meant when they spoke of deification, and it is essential for an understanding of human reality that takes full account of the fact that the human project is incomplete and unfulfilled until it has found its goal in the realization of the image of God in which man was originally created. And that realization is a relationship of union with the uncreated and transcendent divinity of God himself, involving a gradual process of assimilation of man to God leading ultimately to the possession of man by God.

We shall now attempt to draw out from our analysis of the two concepts of deification and self-transcendence some of the features common to both, in order to show that there are reasonable grounds for speaking of man as divine and for describing the quest for human fulfilment as a process of deification, and to show that those grounds are illuminated for us by what we have discovered about contemporary notions of the transcendence of man. We have defined human self-transcendence as that process by which man emerges from what he is at present in pursuit of the 'more' that exceeds his current possession, but we have also insisted that if the goal of this pursuit is 'truly human living', then the quest itself will become an experiment into God in whom alone the very principle of humanity's being can be confirmed.

The particular expositions of human transcendence that we have examined have tended to focus on three basic elements in the notion: first, that self-transcendence is fundamental to the human condition, it is inherent in the very nature of man; second, that because it describes the fact of being in existence it involves an awareness of, and a being open to, being itself; and third, that the quest for transcendence involves liberation and expansion of the self to new levels of experience, affirming the creative freedom of man and opening up a richer understanding of the way in which we relate to God and he relates to us.

Taking each of these three elements of human transcendence in turn, we shall now see what light they shed on the various facets of the concept of deification which have emerged in the process of our study.

First: that self-transcendence is fundamental to the human condition and inherent in the very nature of man. In the exposition of G.F.Woods, the vocabulary of transcendence was used to describe the fact of being in existence: 'To be is to transcend. To be transcended is to lose being'.[7] And Woods suggested that in our experience of beings which come into and pass out of existence, we are given a sense of the unchanging beneath the changes which we see, and we are gradually driven towards an awareness of pure, absolute, transcendent being itself.[8] But it is this 'awareness' that constitutes what Eric Fromm calls the 'problem of human existence'. Relating transcendence to 'the very essence of what it is to be human',[9] Fromm reminds us that human life emerged from the 'unique break' in the evolutionary process, when man fell out of nature while still remaining in it. The only solution then for man is to emerge fully from his natural home and create a new one, in which he can become truly himself. The process of human history becomes the process of man's birth, an on-going process of self-transcendence by which man gives birth to himself, overcoming the 'accidentalness of and passivity of his existence by becoming a creator',[10] and thus transcending himself as a creature and projecting himself into the realm of purposefulness and freedom.

This is the distinctive characteristic of transcendence which Heiddeger associates with that which gives rise to the peculiar mode of being that we ourselves, as human beings, know at first hand, that 'radical individuation' which he describes as 'standing-out' or 'ex-sisting', the pre-requisite of authentic selfhood, the experience of self-transcendence.[11] It is that internal drive which Nietzsche called the 'will to power' fundamental to being human, and which Karl Rahner refers to as the complex process of knowing and acting which becomes the actualization of man's infinite potentiality and thus the unfolding of his own infinity. But for Rahner, by this absolute openness towards being, man becomes the place of possible revelation from God, indeed Rahner regards man as 'the event of God's absolute self-communication'.[12] At its highest and ultimate, therefore, man's self-transcendence becomes identical with an absolute self-communication of God.

This first of the three elements in our understanding of self-transcendence finds its parallel in and illuminates for us the patristic idea, based on the image of God motif, that there were built into man at creation certain resemblances to God, resemblances that enabled man to be 'the locus for a divine self-revelation and a divine presence, a disclosure of God in the world'.[13] And it was this idea of man as locus of a disclosure of God that the fathers developed in terms of the text from the Second Letter of Peter on man partaking of the divine nature.[14] Origen related this participation of man in the attributes of God to the emergent character of human nature, the soul's capacity, by virtue of its mutability and freedom, for attaining perfection through purification and education,[15] a process which brought the soul to 'likeness to God'.[16] This same element appears in the theological anthropology of the Cappadocian Fathers, and particularly in Gregory of Nyssa, where it is again related to man's natural mutability, by means of which he has the capacity for self-transcendence and for participation in the divine virtues.[17] But to participate in the divine virtues means one has the capacity for receiving God,[18] for achieving likeness with God,[19] being assimilated to God,[20] and ultimately being deified, becoming god.[21] Thus by the

exercise of the capacity for self-transcendence inherent in his very nature, man ultimately reaches that degree of perfection which came to be termed 'deification', because it was a perfection arrived at by participation in those 'energies' through which God offers himself to man in union and communion. But in the fathers this participation in the divine energies is always related back to that capacity in man which was fundamental to his human condition, the capacity for self-transcendence derived from his natural mutability, his God-given freedom of will, expressed in his rationality, his capacity for being-in-relation, primarily in relation with God.

This leads us on to the consideration of the second element in the concept of transcendence as it relates to the human existent: that because self-transcendence describes the fact of being in existence, it involves an awareness of and a being open to being itself, that is to say, it involves a relationship between beings and being itself. This aspect of transcendence arises from the approach of Roger Hazelton,[22] which we described as a fresh and radical analysis of the notion of transcendence, in which he sought to extend the scope of the meaning of transcendence by describing human experience of the transcendent in terms of presence. Hazelton suggests that by examining human experience, particularly our experience of the transcendent, we come to recognize 'the transcendent' not as 'a distinct sensible feature', but as the experience of presence: 'the presence of being, other than my own, including my presence to myself in being'.[23] One of the conclusions resulting from this realization is that we ought not to think of transcendence without thinking of immanence nor of immanence without transcendence, and that man's self-transcending capacity might properly be expressed as God's immanent activity in him. While it is clear that the implications of this idea would not have been expressed by the early fathers in the way in which we have developed them, it does seem that some ideas of the fathers point us in the general direction of stressing the coinherence of the transcendent and the immanent, inviting us to examine the notion of human transcendence as revealing for us the most basic if not the most central meaning of transcendence in general, and opening up a richer understanding of the

way in which we relate to God and he relates to us.

Martin Heidegger gives considerable prominence to this interrelationship of individual human existence and being itself, for he regards human existence as the locus where being becomes illuminated and disclosed.[24] In this, man is unique, for he is the only entity (so far as we know) to which being manifests itself and gives itself. Man thus becomes open to the transcendence of being and in becoming the locus of transcendence fulfils his being. Karl Rahner makes the Christian implications of this viewpoint more explicit in claiming that in his reaching beyond his finiteness man is in fact reaching towards God, whether he knows it expressly or not, whether or not he wills it.[25] But in his reaching out in his absolute openness for being, man is in fact met by the self-revelation of God, as humanity was penetrated by God in the incarnation, the highest form of God's self-communication. Thus the incarnation, 'the realization of the highest possibility of man's being',[26] becomes the point of reference for our understanding of transcendental human nature.

This motif, of God by his self-communication assuming human reality and thereby communicating his reality to that which is assumed, involves God, the 'object' of man's knowledge, becoming the 'subject', offering himself, in his energies, to be known and apprehended by man, although unknown (and unknowable, according to the fathers) in his essence. As 'object' of man's knowledge, God is both transcendent and immanent, known and unknown; he is the 'object' who becomes the 'subject' objectifying his image in man, for the image, far from being merely an external, static representation, is in the Eastern tradition the very instrument of knowing God. And this instrument of knowing God is the means of entering into personal relationship with God, of being in communion with him, and ultimately making him present in the life of man.

Here the 'knowledge' of God becomes experiential knowledge, a knowledge of actual participation, transforming man into the object of God's knowing, drawing man into assimilation with him by whom man is known.

In his act of knowledge, man becomes possessed by God, and the subject becomes, paradoxically, the object, while still, however, remaining the subject. Because God, the object of our knowing, is transcendent, it is impossible for us to have an immediate grasp of him in his essence, but it is nevertheless possible for us to obtain a partial knowledge of him through his creation in which the invisible wonders of God are manifested to us. As we contemplate these wonders we gain a deeper knowledge of the invisible perfections of God, a knowledge by contemplation in faith, a knowledge which gradually transforms us into resemblance to the known object so that we become as objects of the knowledge of God. We are known by God, as recipients of his grace participating, in a proportionate measure, in those attributes or energies by which we have come to know him, 'recognizing likeness through likeness'.

The idea of relationship between beings and being itself in this second of our three elements in the understanding of human transcendence highlights for us further aspects of the patristic concept of deification, in particular, perhaps, the difficulty in describing a relationship of this kind. As we noted at the outset of our examination of the patristic witnesses, there have always been difficulties, both conceptual and linguistic, in portraying this idea of relationship between humanity and divinity in which humanity participates in and appropriates attributes of divinity. The earliest patristic writers expressed the concept with noticeable awkwardness, and it was only towards the end of the second century that terminology was found which gave appropriate expression to the reality that humanity could indeed be the locus for divine presence, not only in the definitive instance of Jesus Christ, but also in those who became 'one with him' by incorporation into the church.

Taking the incarnation as the doctrinal basis for this notion of the divine-human relationship, the early fathers incorporated numerous biblical motifs, such as man's creation in the image of God, man's being inspired by the spirit of God, participating in the wisdom of God, being adopted into divine sonship, and being incorporated into the

divine community of the church. And they employed various other linguistic and conceptual resources available to them, often from contemporary philosophy, in order to express this reality in terms that were both meaningful to their audiences and yet faithful to the biblical tradition.

Sometimes this relationship of harmonious co-operation was expressed as a continuous participation in the transcendent being of God, a participation in the infinite transcendent Noûs, affirming the intellectual nature of the embodied soul of man and also affirming that the true nature of the rational soul is revealed in its participation in divinity, a participation through which it is able to transcend its finite limitations in striving towards the vision of God. By stressing this notion of participation, the fathers were able to demonstrate the fact of the soul's affiliation with the divine without asserting any simple identity between them. And by holding to the essential mutability of the created soul, they were able to make it clear that despite its participation in the divine Noûs, the soul never becomes one with uncreated Mind, it is rather always involved in becoming, in a process of 'constantly being created'. But this possibility of self-transcendence implied in the participation of the soul in the divine is not understood correctly unless it is seen as an essential given attribute of the soul itself, given in the soul's very mutability, and in its rational autonomy, its self-determination, and its capacity for both virtue and vice. It is, however, as R.A.Norris points out in his consideration of Gregory of Nyssa's treatment of nature and of the freedom of the soul, by virtue of this very freedom, which derives from his character as an intellectual being, that man is constituted in the image of God, and therefore 'to alienate itself from its own nature as a creature which shares in the divine perfection cannot be the work of the free human will'.[27]

By his participation in the divine perfections of rationality, free will, impassibility, purity and immortality, by which he is constituted 'in the image' of God, man can be said to be a 'copy' of the divine nature, participating in its properties as far as is possible for human

beings; but he can never attain to complete identity with God who is by nature the fullness of the perfections in which by grace man is enabled to participate. Therefore, in that God is himself transcendent Being, the condition of continuous participation in transcendent Being, a state of perpetual self-transcendence, becomes for man the condition of 'blessedness'. Man is thus drawn further in the life of virtue, the goal of which is blessedness, 'being like to the divine'.[28]

If then this condition of human self-transcendence involves man in participation in the divine transcendence, we can refer to this encounter with God as a process of transcending and being transcended, or as Gregory of Nyssa puts it:

> The soul grows by its constant participation in that which transcends it; and yet the perfection in which the soul shares remains ever the same, and is always discovered by the soul to be transcendent to the same degree.[29]

It is a reaching beyond the self in the subjective projection of endless duration on to God - an experience which brings with it the enjoyment of infinite extension which is an objective possession of God. There is a connection therefore between the participating in the divine perfections and the participating in God himself. And this implies the presence of God in the participant, the presence of the Archetype in the image, a presence of which the participant becomes aware as an experience beyond the senses and beyond intellect; it is an awareness of the presence of God through love:

> For he who loved the Good will himself become good as well, as the goodness generated within him changes towards itself the one who received it.[30]

We have here a striking example, expressed in very similar terms, of the relationship of divine and human transcendence which we have referred to before as the 'relocating of transcendence', that experience of transcendence which is 'an experience of presence'. Now while it is true, as I.P.Sheldon-Williams observes, that the idea of the transcendent and the immanent coalescing in the soul is a Plotinian notion, involving the acceptance of the divinity of the soul and the conclusion that 'transcendence and immanence imply each other'; and furthermore, that 'for Gregory the soul is the image of the Divine and not the Divine itself',[31] I believe it is possible to see a 'mutual

implication' of transcendence and immanence in Gregory's thought - perhaps not 'realized in the soul', but certainly in relation to the individual soul's experience of participation in transcendent Being and in the divine perfections of that transcendent Being. For as we have described the 'relocating of transcendence' in terms of the awareness of the presence of divine love and the experience of being changed by that love, I believe we are very close to that experience of continual participation which preserves the soul in existence, that reaching beyond the self in endless duration on to God, in which the soul encounters an immanence which Gregory describes as deification - when the soul

> having divested itself of the multifarious emotions incident to its nature, gets its Divine form and, mounting above Desire, enters within that towards which it was once incited by that Desire, [and] offers no harbour within itself either for hope or memory.... thus the soul copies the life that is above, and is conformed to the peculiar features of the Divine nature.... having become simple and single in form and so perfectly Godlike (θεοείκελος)... fashioning itself according to that which it is continually finding and grasping.[32]

The third and final element of human transcendence which we shall consider is that the quest for transcendence involves liberation and expansion of the self to new levels of experience, affirming the creative freedom of man, and opening up a richer understanding of the way in which we relate to God and he relates to us.

This element of expansion of the self is perhaps the very essence of the concept of transcendence as we have been exploring it in this thesis. We have asserted that transcendence is inherent in the very nature of man, and we have claimed that transcendence involves the human existent in an awareness of, and a being open to, being itself, a being in relation to being itself. We have also claimed that both these elements in the notion of transcendence illuminate the concept of deification and enable us to appreciate it as the dynamic concept that the fathers understood it to be. In this third and fundamental element of transcendence, the notion of going out beyond the self into new ventures of faith and experience in that quest for the 'more' that exceeds our current possession, we find the greatest number of

parallels between the various philosophical, social and political expositions of transcendence which we have examined, and the concept of deification as it developed from its earliest appearances in Christian discourse up to the classic formulations of those fourth century Greek fathers with whom we concluded our survey.

It is the sense of dynamic movement in the concept of self-transcendence that makes it so generally applicable to many areas of human enterprise. All human beings are involved in physical movement, movement in time, advance in knowledge, growth through experiences. But there are also areas of involvement with and commitment to people, in personal relationships, political or religious afflilation, and social concern, which involve the crossing of less tangible but nonetheless real 'barriers' which limit or inhibit human life, or simply circumscribe our vision of the environment in which we live and the kind of persons we are, or might be. It was in his efforts to deal with the impoverishment of human life that Karl Marx focused upon this notion of self-transcendence as the means of overcoming the alienation to which people had been subjected by the capitalist economic ideology which regarded human labour as a purchasable and expendable commodity. He advocated the overthrow of the system which created this oppression. He sought to emancipate society from its servitude, and to allow people to be their own masters, creators of their own lives. His ultimate aim, as he stated it, was to develop a theory and programme of social reorganization that would result in 'the total redemption of humanity',[33] a goal very close, in expression at least, to the Christian enterprise, although the means of achieving it are vastly different, because Marx had no room at all in his scheme for religion or for God. However, his thought does alert us to the fact that any scheme of 'total redemption' cannot avoid taking full account of the actual conditions of human existence, even though there were inadequacies in his solution to the problem of human contingency.

For those who followed Marx, the 'neo-Marxists', self-transcendence is also a matter of 'overcoming', it is the tendency to 'overshoot' established systems of discourse and action, in favour of more

equitable and acceptable possibilities,[34] in a more humane society. The existentialist Martin Heidegger regarded man as unfinished, developing an idea which we noted in some of the earlier fathers who regarded man as incomplete, created as an 'infant' who by learning obedience to the will of God could obtain eternal life and come to participate in the divine attributes, and so 'become a god'.

For Bernard Lonergan self-transcendence involves a going beyond what and where one happens to be at any given time, towards a higher integration; it is a gradual unfolding of all human capacity in the unrestricted act of understanding that leads to God. The same process of cognitional activity is explored by Karl Rahner, who refers to man reaching beyond his finiteness towards God and experiencing himself as a transcendent being and as 'infinite possibility'[35] in absolute openness for being.

In this review of the element of liberation and expansion of self in the concept of transcendence, there are many parallels with the ways in which the early fathers advance the notion of deification, parallels which reveal a striking similarity of intention: to portray the present condition of human existence as unfulfilled in itself, and to point towards possibilities for human fulfilment. Those outside the Christian or theistic traditions have seen such possibilities in strictly 'secular' terms, and we have attempted in our analysis of these views in chapter five to highlight their limitations. But for all that, although many of these modern writers do not operate within a theistic or Christian framework, their notions of transcendence do incorporate the idea of mystery. They refer to the almost unlimited possibilities of 'unfolding' on the part of human being; the goal of humanity is always beyond, in the realm of 'transcendent mystery', a notion which at least has some kinship with the traditional idea of God. Such views therefore do help us to understand something of what the fathers were striving to express when they saw human fulfilment in terms of the 'experiment into God', that only experiment which leads to truly human living because it takes full account of human finitude and its need for redemption by one who fulfilled all the possibilities of being human,

by being himself in the perfect relationship of union with the transcendent divinity of God himself.

For the early patristic writers the idea of growth and advance, so fundamental in their teaching on creation and redemption, could be most effectively expressed in terms of deification, because that very word indicated that the whole of creation was dependent upon God as creator, redeemer, sustainer and perfecter. It was also the case that in the concept of transcendence expressed as 'advance' or 'progress' they found a truly illuminating way of exploring what the concept of deification was all about. God, the creator and redeemer of man, was also the object of man's desire, for in God lay man's true fulfilment, if he was to achieve the destiny of fellowship with God intended by God from the beginning. This affinity for and inclination to God did not denote status or privilege for an élite of 'true gnostics', rather it pointed to a potential, a capacity, in all creatures 'to become god', to increase in those qualities which they share with the creator and which will render them more and more Godlike, to reach beyond what they now are, to be made new, and like God. The whole point of human life, of our birth, of our learning, of our spiritual disciplines, of our works of service for others, is that we may grow to become more and more like him in whose image we were made.

Some fathers made much of the essential mutability of the human spirit, which they associated with the image of God in us, that endowment which gives the soul its kinship with and attraction for God. They saw our life as a continuing process towards the Absolute, because 'it is of the nature of the soul to be self-moving',[36] and in the process and by its imitation of Christ, the soul is gradually transformed into the likeness of God, and by thus entering upon the life which Jesus taught, becomes like him, divine.

For those fathers who employed the concept, deification was directly related to, and indeed could not be understood properly apart from, certain fundamental elements in their theology: the essential finiteness and mutability of human nature, and the consequent

unbridgeable and irreducible distance/discontinuity between God and man. They taught that since man is by nature mutable, it is his destiny, intended by God, to transcend his createdness and in so doing to be open to unlimited depths (or heights?) of participation in the attributes of God in whose image he was created and with whom he therefore has a created connaturality. This capacity for radical self-transcendence involves man in progressive growth towards the God in whose perfections he is participating - a process of ever increasing intensity. The absolute transcendence of God is the basis of the divine freedom which includes freedom from passion, and is the basis of the divine sovereignty. But in making man in his own image, God shared this transcendence and freedom with man, giving him 'dominion over the earth', that is, a special responsibility within the created order. Man thus enjoys the dual function of being set over the creation with the capacity for transcendence, and also of being immanent within the creation - present within it, and an integral part of it. This gives man the peculiar responsibility of intermediary between the material cosmos and God. Through man, therefore, creation participates in divinity, shares the divine attributes, and is directed Godwards.

This was man's original destiny, but by his disobedience he fell prey to the transient attractions of materiality, losing his freedom from passion and his participation in the divine virtues. By the incarnation of God the Word, however, human nature (and through it the created order) was reconciled to God, indeed it was indissolubly united to God and deified. Christ is the firstborn of the new humanity, sharing our flesh and blood, so that all who become united to Christ become partakers of that new humanity. To man is restored the special privilege bestowed on him in his creation in the divine image: the freedom to transcend his createdness, to co-create himself, not apart from God, as some of the thinkers we have considered in chapter five would have it, but by being in intimate union with God by whom all things are sustained in being. By participating in the transcendent being of his creator man overcomes the discontinuity of his created existence, and becomes fully human, that which he was intended to be, growing by constant participation in that which transcends him. Mutable

man's original creation involved a coming into being out of non-being, and now he is being brought into fuller being by the infinite and immutable God who always is. His potential for progress is a potential for growth in his capacity to apprehend virtue, a capacity which continually increases.

But although this process of growing is educative, purifying, and illuminating, and enables us to become 'a quickening power to others', the ultimate meaning of this present life is only realized, according to Gregory of Nazianzus, in reference to its final destination and consummation, for 'our final home is better than the pilgrimage itself'.[37] In that final dwelling place the process of illumination will be complete, and God will be known in nature and essence, for

> that within us which is Godlike and divine (τὸ θεοειδὲς τοῦτο καὶ θεῖον), I mean our mind and reason, shall have mingled with its like, and the image shall have ascended to the Archetype, of which it has now the desire.[38]

The direction of our transcending is Godward and the goal is 'to be made god'; and because we are always at a point of growth in our earthly existence, always at a point of transcendence, so we always have the capacity and potential for deification. What we achieve, or rather receive, here in this life is but a foretaste, the first fruits of ultimate deification; the full reward of becoming god (and that means of course being made god) belongs to the life beyond, that to which we ultimately transcend. At no stage during this earthly journey can the pilgrim claim to have reached the goal, it is rather the consummation which gives meaning and definition to the striving that has preceded it.

In contrast to this view of Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa maintains that it is the quest that is all important, in fact he goes so far as to suggest that there is no limit or ending to this quest for perfection in virtue. As the object of man's desire is infinite, so his desire is infinite. The desire itself becomes a further longing, and although the pursuit of the life of virtue brings about an increase in virtue, the quest for perfection continues, because, as Nyssa argues, the perfection of human nature actually consists in its very growth in

goodness, rather than in its attaining a particular state of goodness. The soul, ever attracted by and directed toward the good, finds its capacity for good growing through its exertion, and because the infinite and incomprehensible nature of the Godhead remains beyond all understanding,

> in our constant participation in the blessed nature of the Good, the graces that we receive at every point are indeed great, but the path that lies beyond our immediate grasp is infinite. This will constantly happen to those who thus share in the divine Goodness, and they will always enjoy a greater and greater participation in grace through all eternity.[39]

Does this then mean that the soul's quest is one of endless frustration, a tragic searching for that which can never be attained? As created beings we may only 'participate in', it is not for us to 'possess', therefore we may not, indeed cannot, possess God who is himself infinite, neither are we able to possess any of his attributes. Our loving of God is thus a dynamic ongoing participation, it continually draws the soul on, out of itself, in perpetual self-transcendence, but a transcendence generated by that love which is its very satisfaction. In the dialogue with his sister Macrina, On the soul and resurrection, Gregory of Nyssa suggests that the soul, having attached itself to and blended itself with the Beloved, fashions itself according to that which it is continually finding and grasping.[40]

When the soul reaches this goal it will have no need of anything else, for it will embrace the 'plenitude of all things... for the life of the Supreme Being is love'. But this is no static, lifeless experience, it is rather an activity, and because the life and love of the Supreme Being is without limit, no satiety can stifle or terminate this activity.[41] This is the plenitude to be enjoyed when the soul has become assimilated to the Good, and although it lacks nothing, and can therefore rise above desire, yet the activity of love generated by the coming together of the soul and God cannot be interrupted; it will 'go on unchecked into infinity'.[42]

This element of liberation and expansion of the self is, as we have noted, one of the central themes common to both concepts, transcendence and deification, because it draws upon the notion of human mutability,

expressed in rationality and freedom, which is itself a fundamental concern of both concepts. The concept of self-transcendence affirms the essential freedom of man to advance to full humanity by overcoming all that would impede his development, and this is the essence of what we believe the fathers were affirming by the concept of deification, the capacity to partake of the divine attributes which liberate human nature from the enslaving power of sin so that it might be drawn into a saving union with God who alone can confirm the principle of man's being. Deification is that process which is symmetrical with man's humanization, for deification as it is understood by the fathers is the means whereby human nature is transformed from its present condition of contingency into the condition of the Logos by the sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit.

We began this thesis with the assertion that there is a potential divineness in man. Such a claim is based on three primary convictions. First that there is a fundamental relationship of likeness and kinship between man and God, the ultimate reality from whom man derives his being. Second, that man is most appropriately defined in terms of that relationship, that he is most fully himself only when he is wholly open to and in communion with God. Third, that there has existed within human history a person open to and in communion with God to such a degree that the quality of humanness of this one person is deemed to be definitive for all humanity; and that person is the man Jesus of Nazareth, in whom, so the Christian tradition proclaims, 'all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross'.[43] This Jesus is the one in whom the fullness of deity dwelt bodily and in whom all may come to fullness of humanity. He is truly the God-man, the person in whom the nature and purposes of God have been made manifest, and in whom the nature and purpose of man are brought to fulfilment.

We have attempted to show that the way in which man's potential divineness (a divineness which is also derived) is brought to fulfilment, is, in the light of our three primary convictions, a

process of gradual emergence, a process which we have termed self-transcendence. In this process we believe man emerges into a deeper and richer experience of being human as he becomes more aware of and responsive to that transcending of God which we would describe as God's immanent activity in man. This thesis has endeavoured to indicate some parallels between this process of emergence, discovery and fulfilment, and that dynamic process of emerging to ultimate fulfilment in God which the early fathers of the church were describing when they wrote of the process of deification. We have also sought to establish thereby some links between patristic theology and contemporary thinking.

Having highlighted these various parallels and links, I should now like to suggest briefly, in conclusion, how this study might be fruitfully applied to further investigation in at least three areas of contemporary theology: the doctrine of man, the doctrine of God, and the doctrine of Christ.

In the doctrine of man, concentration on the concepts of self-transcendence and deification opens the way for a more 'hopeful' view of the human being. In the past theology has often stressed the finitude and sinfulness of man and of course it is true that human life as we know it is often compromised by limitations and failure. But where this is unduly stressed it does lead to a certain pessimism and an undervaluing of the human person. Without denying the reality of either finitude or sin, the concepts of deification and transcendence remind us that more original than original sin is man's creation in the image and likeness of God, giving him his derived and potential divineness and all the possibilities inherent in that. The concept of human transcendence as we have interpreted it provides a new and dynamic way of presenting to the contemporary secular mind the basic Christian anthropology, that man is originally a spiritual being whose destiny is in God.

Another area of theology in which these ideas could be useful is the doctrine of God. How do we speak of God and try to conceive of him? The

embarrassment of many contemporary theologians during the last generation shows us how acute this issue is. We have had theologians in recent decades who have spoken of Christianity without God, of taking leave of God, and even of the death of God, while others have suggested that we can really know nothing at all about God. It may be that the fact of human transcendence is our strongest pointer both to the existence of God and to his nature. Karl Rahner speaks of God as the 'whither' of our human transcendence, thereby placing God on the map of discourse by referring to our own human transcendence as moving in the direction of God.[44] Karl Jaspers says that we can only know something of God if there is something in the universe which points beyond the universe and he goes on to say that that is of course the human being.[45] The human being is, so to speak, that part of the cosmos which itself points beyond the cosmos to a reality more ultimate than the cosmos. And Roger Hazelton, as we have already noted, provides a new way of looking at the 'God-question' with his idea of relocating transcendence in the human existent.[46]

The third area of theology in which these ideas might be useful in offering new insights is in the reconstruction of christology. Many of our contemporary theologians begin their christologies from the human end, and one might say that the understanding of man as a being-in-transcendence is almost providential in the construction of a christology. In the Bampton Lectures of 1966 to which reference was made in the first chapter of this thesis, David Jenkins saw the questions raised by christology very much bound up with the issue of what is involved in being a man, particularly man as emerging or transcending. Karl Rahner also begins his study of the person of Jesus Christ from the study of humanity, pointing out that humanity has within it the fundamental capacity to reach towards God, to go out of itself into mystery. He suggests therefore that incarnation may be understood as that critical point at which manhood and Godhood come together in 'Godmanhood'. Here we have a way into christology which again is both loyal to the tradition and yet at the same time is speaking in contemporary terms of reference.

This way into christology is, as Rahner describes it,[47] the way of 'transcendental anthropology', an understanding of humanity as a reality absolutely open upwards, reaching its highest perfection when in it the Logos himself becomes existent in the world. Such a christology draws together these three areas of theological investigation, for it is at one and the same time the foundation and culmination of anthropology and takes us to the heart of theology. Because God himself has become man, we conceive ourselves in terms of that man, the one who is God's presence for us in the world, who became what we are in order that we might become what he is.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1 David E.Jenkins, The Glory of Man (Bampton Lectures 1966), London 1967, p.80.

2 Ibid., pp.82f.

3 Ibid., p.117.

4 St John 10:10.

5 St John 10:33.

6 Genesis 3:1-5 (RSV). The translation of the Hebrew of verse 5 could equally read 'like gods', and in fact the plural is made explicit later in the chapter in verse 22: 'Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil".' The point remains however that man sought to attain divine status.

7 W.R.Inge, 'The doctrine of Deification' (Appendix C), Christian Mysticism, London 1933, p.356.

8 David Cairns, The Image of God in Man, London 1973, p.109.

9 Benjamin Drewery, Origen and the Doctrine of Grace, London 1960, p.200.

10 Eric F. Osborn, The Beginning of Christian Philosophy, Cambridge 1981, p.113.

11 Donald F.Winslow, The Dynamics of Salvation, Cambridge, Mass. 1979, p.193.

12 Ibid.

13 Refer A Patristic Greek Lexicon, ed. G.W.H.Lampe, Oxford 1961 and A Greek-English Lexicon, ed. H.G.Liddell and R.Scott, new edit. by H.S.Jones and R.McKenzie, Oxford 1948.

14 See The Oxford English Dictionary, ed. J.A.H.Murray, H.Bradley and others, vol.3, Oxford 1933, pp.151 and 557.

15 P.B.T.Bilaniuk, 'The Mystery of Theosis or Divinization', Orientalia Christiana Analecta 195, 1973, p.349.

16 Ibid.

17 Athanasius, Orationes contra Arianos, I.39 (PG 26.93A), II.70 (PG 26.296B), III.53 (PG 26.433B).

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18 There has been considerable debate about the exact date of these orations but the consensus seems now to favour the later date of 356-362, see discussion in J.Quasten, Patrology vol.3, Westminster, Maryland 1983, pp.26f.

19 Gregory of Nazianzus, Orationes 17.9 (PG 35.976CD), 21.2 (PG 35.1084C), 25.2 (PG 35.1200B). This term θέωσις also occurs in one of Gregory's hymns (Carmina), Carmina moralia (I.ii) 34.161 (PG 37.957A).

20 Clement of Alexandria: θεοποιέω: Stromata VI.15 (GCS 15 p.495.9); Protrepticus 9.87 (GCS 12 p.65.5), 11.88 (GCS 12 p.81.1). θεόω: Stromata IV.23 (GCS 15 p.315.26).

21 E.g. Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus.

22 Eusebius of Caesarea, Demonstratio evangelica IV.14 (GCS 23 p.173).

23 Clement of Alexandria, Paedagogus I.12 (GCS 12 p.149.4).

24 See for example, Pseudo-Dionysius, De divinus nominibus 1.5 (PG 3.593C), 8.5 (PG 3.893A).

25 For the typical arguments of those who reject the idea see: B.J. Drewery, 'Deification' in Christian Spirituality, ed. Peter Brooks, London 1975; David Cairns, The Image of God in Man, London 1973, pp.50-51, 108-15; Dietrich Ritschl, 'Hippolytus' conception of deification', SJT 12, 1959, pp.388-99; J.L.M.Haire, 'On Behalf of Chalcedon', in Essays in Christology for Karl Barth, ed. T.H.L.Parker, London 1956, esp. pp.104ff; and R.S.Franks, 'The Idea of Salvation in the Theology of the Eastern Church', in Mansfield College Essays, London 1909, pp.251-64.

26 For further discussion of the idea of deification in Eastern Orthodox thought see T.Ware, The Orthodox Church, Harmondsworth 1963, pp.236ff, and Vladimir Lossky, In the Image and Likeness of God, Oxford 1975, esp. chapt. 5, 'Redemption and Deification', pp.97-110.

27 John Meyendorff, Byzantine Theology, Oxford 1975, p.3.

28 Ibid., p.139.

29 The Odyssey XV.249-251.

30 The Iliad V.265-266; XX.232-235.

31 The Odyssey V.135-136; 208-209.

32 On this topic see E.R.Bevan 'Deification', in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics vol.4, ed. James Hastings, Edinburgh 1911, pp.525ff.

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33 Charles Michel, Recueil d'inscriptions grecques, Brussels 1900, nos 1330 and 1331, p.881; Jane E. Harrison, Prologemena to Greek Religion, Cambridge 1908, pp.660ff.

34 Empedocles, Fragm. 115, 118, H.Diels, Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, rev. edit. by W.Kranz, Berlin 1953-4.

35 E.R.Bevan, art. cit., p.525.

36 Plutarch, Lysander 18.

37 Plutarch, Dion 29.

38 See: Κλέαρχος, in Suidae Lexicon, ed. A.Adler, part 3, Lipsia 1933, pp.126f.

39 See Hyperides Funeral oration (6).21; Aelian, Varia Historia 2.19; and for the resistance to these courtesies being offered within the lifetime of such a 'god' see Arrian, Anabasis 4.12. See also M.Charlesworth, Papers of the British School at Rome 15, 1939, pp.1-10.

40 See E.R.Bevan, art. cit., p.528.

41 For the development of the concept of divinization in the Roman Empire see Keith Hopkins, Conquerors and Slaves, Cambridge 1978, chapt. 5, pp.197-242; and on the later development and its relation to the teaching of the fathers, see Ernst H. Kantorowicz, 'Deus per naturam, deus per gratiam', Harvard Theological Review 45, 1952, pp.253-77.

42 Tacitus, Annals 14.31; Seneca Apokolokynthosis 8.

43 Seneca, Apokolokynthosis 1.

44 See E.R.Bevan, art.cit., pp.529-32; W.R.Halliday, The Pagan Background of Early Christianity, London 1925, pp.155ff; S.Angus, The Environment of Early Christianity, London 1914, p.899; and Keith Hopkins, Conquerors and Slaves, Cambridge 1978.

45 S.Angus, The Environment of Early Christianity, London 1914, p.899.

46 Plato, Theaetetus 176b; cf. Phaedo 82ab; Phaedrus 248a; Respublica X.613a.

47 Jules Gross, La divinisation du chrétien d'après les pères grecs, Paris 1938, p.47.

48 See S.Angus, The Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World, London 1929, pp.58ff, and The Environment of Early Christianity, London 1914, pp.100ff.

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49 A.H.Armstrong, 'Plotinus', in The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy, ed. A.H.Armstrong, Cambridge 1970, p.222.

50 Plotinus, Enneads VI.7.12 and 23.

51 Diogenes Allen, Philosophy for Understanding Theology, London 1985, p.75.

52 Plotinus, Enneads I.1.11; see also VI.4.14.

53 Ibid., II.9.2, and 4-10.

54 A.H.Armstrong, 'Plotinus', op.cit., p.223.

55 Plotinus, Enneads I.2.3 and 15-22.

56 Ibid., VI.7.34.

57 Ibid., VI.9.9.

58 Ibid., VI.9.11.

59 Corpus Hermeticum, so named because of their ascription to Hermes Trismegistus ('Hermes the Thrice-Greatest'), a later designation of the Egyptian God, Thoth, who was believed to be the father and protector of all knowledge.

60 Corpus Hermeticum 13.3, 5, 7a and 13.5, 7, 10b and 41a.

61 Ibid., 10.6.

62 Ibid., 11.2.20-21.

63 W.R.Inge, 'The doctrine of deification' (Appendix C), Christian Mysticism, London 1933, pp.356f.

64 A.H.Armstrong, 'Plotinus', op.cit., p.222. See also A.H.Armstrong, St Augustine and Christian Platonism, Villanova, Penn. 1967, pp.3-9; A.E.Harvey, Jesus and the Constraints of History, London 1982, p.156.

65 Acts 14:8-18.

66 Ibid., 28:1-6.

67 1 Corinthians 8:5.

68 Origen, Libri in Psalmos, Praefatio (PG 12.1053B).

69 See extensive footnote on this and other evidence of the 'elastic' nature of the concept of θεοί: A.Harnack, History of Dogma, vol.1, London 1894, pp.119-21.

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70 2 Peter 1:4.

71 A.H.Armstrong, St Augustine and Christian Platonism, Villanova, Penn. 1967, from which the basic lines of the following argument are drawn.

72 Ibid., p.14.

73 Irenaeus, Adversus haereses V.18.2.

74 Ibid., V.32.1.

75 Gregory of Nazianzus, Orationes 42.17 (PG 36.477C)

76 Eric F. Osborn, The Beginning of Christian Philosophy, Cambridge 1981, p.115, drawing on the discussions of this principle in: Jean Pépin, Idées grecques sur l'homme et sur Dieu, Paris 1971, p.27, and Alfred Bengsch, Heilsgeschichte und Heilswissen: eine Untersuchung zur Struktur und Entfaltung des theologischen Denkens im Werk 'Adversus Haereses' des hl. Irenäus von Lyon, Leipzig 1957, pp.157ff.

77 G.L.Prestige, God in Patristic Thought, London 1936, p.75. See also Maurice Wiles, The Making of Christian Doctrine, Cambridge 1967, pp.107ff.

78 David Cairns, The Image of God in Man, London 1973, p.50.

79 Ibid., p.109.

80 B.J.Drewery, 'Deification', op.cit., p.51.

81 Ibid., p.58.

82 Maurice Wiles, The Christian Fathers, London 1981, p.92.

83 E.L.Mascall, Via Media, London 1956, pp.153-54.

84 Among these works there appeared the following, listed in order of their original publication: G.F.Woods, 'The Idea of the Transcendent', in Soundings, ed. A.R.Vidler, Cambridge 1962; John Macquarrie, Studies in Christian Existentialism, Montreal 1965; Herbert W. Richardson and Donald R. Cutler, eds, Transcendence, Boston 1969; John Macquarrie, Three Issues in Ethics, London 1970; Alistair Kee, The Way of Transcendence, Harmondsworth 1971; John Macquarrie, Existentialism, New York 1972; Roger Hazelton, 'Homo capax dei: Thoughts on Man and Transcendence', Theological Studies 33, 1972; William A. Johnson, The Search for Transcendence, New York 1974; Roger Hazelton, 'Relocating Transcendence', in Union Seminary Quarterly Review 30, nos 2-4, 1975.

85 G.F.Woods, op.cit., pp.45-65.

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86 See the article by John McIntyre on 'Transcendence' in A New Dictionary of Christian Theology, ed. Alan Richardson and John Bowden, London 1983, pp.576-7.

87 G.F.Woods, op.cit., p.56.

88 Ibid., p.60.

89 Ibid., p.63.

90 John Macquarrie, Studies in Christian Existentialism, Montreal 1965, p.11.

91 Ibid., p.259.

92 Herbert W. Richardson and Donald R. Cutler, eds, Transcendence, Boston 1969.

93 Ibid., p.viii.

94 John Macquarrie, Three Issues in Ethics, London 1970.

95 Alistair Kee, The Way of Transcendence, Harmondsworth 1971.

96 Ibid., p.xxvii.

97 Ibid.

98 Ibid., p.224.

99 Ibid., p.229.

100 Ibid., p.225.

101 Roger Hazelton, 'Relocating Transcendence', op. cit., p.101.

102 John Macquarrie, In Search of Humanity, London 1982, p.vii.

103 Roger Hazelton, op.cit., p.102.

104 Roger Hazelton, 'Homo capax dei: Thoughts on Man and Transcendence', op. cit., p.738.

105 Ibid., p.744.

106 Roger Hazelton, 'Relocating Transcendence', op.cit., p.109.

107 William A. Johnson, The Search for Transcendence, New York 1974, pp.4-5.

108 William A. Johnson, op.cit., p.1. See also John Macquarrie, Principles of Christian Theology, rev. edit., London 1977, p.62.

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109 Huston Smith, 'The Reach and the Grasp: Transcendence Today', in Transcendence, ed. H.W.Richardson and D.R.Cutler, Boston 1969, p.2.

110 G.F.Woods, op.cit., p.60.

111 Gabriel Marcel, The Mystery of Being vol.1, London 1950, p.43.

112 Ephesians 4:13.

113 Irenaeus, Adversus haereses V. Praefatio.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1 See above, chapter 1, p.38.

2 See above, chapter 1, p.7.

3 See above, chapter 1, p.27.

4 Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1-3; 9:5-6.

5 Wisdom of Solomon 2:23.

6 Enoch (Genesis 5:24), Abraham (Isaiah 41:8, see also James 2:23), Elijah (2 Kings 2:1-12), and Moses (Exodus 33:11).

7 For a development of this concept of 'theomorphic anthropology' see the study of Abraham Heschel, The Prophets, New York 1962, espec. pp.260ff.

8 Romans 6.

9 2 Corinthians 3:18.

10 1 John 3:2.

11 It is here that some studies appear to make a much stronger case for finding the origins of a doctrine of deification within the biblical tradition itself than the evidence would seem to allow: see Jules Gross, La divinisation du chrétien d'après les Pères grecs, Paris 1938, pp.70-111, and the shorter study of P.B.T.Bilaniuk, 'The Mystery of Theosis or Divinization', Orientalia Christiana Analecta 195, 1973, pp.342-347.

12 2 Peter 1:4.

13 For an analysis of these linguistic parallels and the ideas they express, see J.N.D.Kelly, A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and of Jude, London 1969, pp.302ff; C.Bigg, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St Peter and St Jude, Edinburgh 1902, pp.255-6; and J.B.Mayor, The Epistle of St Jude and the Second Epistle of St Peter, London 1907, pp.84, 190, and cxxviiff.

14 Clement of Rome, 1 Clement 33.4.

15 Ibid., 59.2.

16 Ibid., 35.2.

17 Ibid., 36.2.

18 Ibid., 16.17.

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19 Epistle of Barnabas 5.3.

20 Ibid., 14.5.

21 Ibid., 18-20.

22 Didache 1.2.

23 Ibid., 5.1-2.

24 Ibid., 9.3.

25 Ibid.

26 The title 'Apostolic Fathers' is accorded to the authors or compilers of documents from the first and early second centuries, outside the New Testament canon, which reflect the preaching of the Apostles. Those usually included in this designation are: Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna, Papias of Smyrna, Hermas, and the authors of the Epistle of Barnabas, the Epistle to Diognetus, the anonymous sermon commonly referred to as Clement's 'Second Letter', and the Didache.

27 2 Peter 1:4.

28 Ignatius of Antioch, Epist. ad Romanos 4.2.

29 Epist. ad Ephesios 3.2.

30 Epist. ad Smyrnaeos 4.1.

31 Epist. ad Ephesios 4.2.

32 Epist. ad Magnesios 14.1.

33 Ibid., 13.

34 Epist. ad Ephesios 9.2.

35 Ibid., 12.2.

36 Ibid., see also: Epist. ad Polycarpum 2.3; 7.1; Epist. ad Magnesios 14; Epist. ad Romanos 1.2.

37 Epist. ad Romanos 5.3.

38 Epist. ad Polycarpum 6.1.

39 Epist. ad Philadelphios 5.1.

40 Epist. ad Romanos 7.2.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

41 Ibid., 7.3.

42 Epist. ad Ephesios 7.2.

43 Ibid., 20.2.

44 Epist. ad Polycarpum 2.3.

45 See Karl Rahner, 'Current Problems in Christology', in Theological Investigations vol.1, London 1963, pp.199f.

46 Maurice Wiles, 'Christianity without Incarnation?' in The Myth of God Incarnate, ed. John Hick, London 1977, p.8.

47 The first recognition of such a category of early Christian literature reflecting a distinctive orientation and purpose as 'apologist' was an important step in the classifying of early Christian writings. But as William Schoedel warns in the introduction to his edition of the works of Athenagoras, there is also some artificiality in the designation, because there is a wide diversity of views and temperaments in these second century 'apologists'. See William R. Schoedel, Athenagoras: Legatio and De Resurrectione (OECT), Oxford 1972, p.xi.

48 Justin Martyr, Apologia 1.46.

49 Dialogus cum Tryphone Judaeo 18.

50 Ibid., 88.

51 Apologia 1.14.

52 Ibid., 1.10.

53 Dialogus cum Tryphone Judaeo 124.

54 Apologia 1.52.

55 Tatian, Oratio ad Graecos 7.

56 Ibid., 12.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid., 13.

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid., 15.

62 Ibid.

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63 Ibid., 13.

64 Ibid., 7.

65 Athenagoras, Supplicatio pro Christianis 4.1.

66 De resurrectione mortuorum 12.6.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid., 12.7.

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid., 13.1.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid., 13.2.

73 Ibid., 13.3.

74 Ibid., 15.2.

75 Ibid., 15.3.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid., 15.6-7.

78 Ibid., 16.1.

79 Ibid., 16.1-6.

80 Ibid., 17.1.

81 Supplicatio pro Christianis 31.4.

82 De resurrectione mortuorum 24.1-5.

83 Ibid., 25.1.

84 Ibid., 25.4.

85 Eusebius of Caesarea, Historia ecclesiastica IV.24.

86 Theophilus of Antioch, Ad Autolycum II.11, 18, 24, 27.

87 Ibid., II.24; see also II.27.

88 Ibid., II.25.

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89 Ibid.

90 Ibid., II.26.

91 Ibid., II.27.

92 Ibid., I.7.

93 Ibid., II.27.

94 Ibid.

95 Ibid., II.24.

96 Irenaeus, Adversus haereses IV.38.1. [References to this work will be given according to the book, chapter, and verse numbering of the Massuet edition of 1702 reprinted in Migne PG 7 and adopted by the ANF and LF translations. References to the critical edition of W.W.Harvey, Cambridge 1857, will follow in brackets with the prefix H:] (H.IV.62); see also Irenaeus's other extant work, Demonstratio apostolicae praedicationis 12.

97 Adversus haereses V.1.3 (H.V.1.3).

98 Demonstratio apostolicae praedicationis 12, and Adversus haereses IV.38.3 (H.IV.63.2).

99 Adversus haereses V.21.3 (H.V.21.3).

100 Ibid., V.1.3 (H.V.1.3).

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid., V.12.2 (H.V.12.2).

103 Ibid., V.16.2 (H.IV.27.1)

104 Ibid., V.6.1 (H.V.6.1); see also ibid., IV.20.1 (H.IV.34.1), V.1.3 (H.V.1.3).

105 Ibid., V.5.1 (H.V.5.1).

106 Ibid., III.18.7 (H.III.19.6).

107 See ibid., I.10.1 (H.I.2), II.22.4 (H.II.33.2), III.16.6 (H.III.17.6), III.21.10 (H.III.30), III.22.2-3 (H.III.31.2-32.1), IV.40.3 (H.IV.66.2).

108 Ibid., V.1.3 (H.V.1.3).

109 Ibid., III.22.4 (H.III.32.1).

110 Ibid., III.21.10 (H.III.30).

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111 Ibid., II.22.4 (H.II.33.2).

112 Ibid., V.21.2 (H.V.21.2).

113 Ibid., III.18.7 (H.III.19.6).

114 Ibid., III.19.1 (H.III.20.1).

115 Ibid., II.20.3 (H.II.32.2), III.16.9 (H.III.17.9), IV.5.4 (H.IV.10.1), V.1.1 (H.V.1.1), and V.16.3 (H.V.16.3).

116 Ibid., III.19.1 (H.III.20.1)

117 Ibid., IV.14.1 (H.IV.25.1).

118 Ibid., IV.18.5 (H.IV.31.4).

119 Ibid., V.9.3 (H.V.9.3) and Demonstratio apostolicae praedicationis 5.

120 Adversus haereses V.6.1 (H.V.6.1).

121 Ibid., V.8.1 (H.V.8.1).

122 Ibid.

123 Gustaf Wingren, Man and the Incarnation, ET London 1959, pp.208ff.

124 Adversus haereses III.18.7 (H.III.19.6).

125 Ibid.

126 Ibid., III.19.1 (H.III.20.1).

127 Ibid., IV.33.4 (H.IV.52.1).

128 Ibid., IV.20.6 (H.IV.34.6)

129 Gustaf Wingren, op.cit., p.209.

130 Maurice Wiles, The Christian Fathers, London 1981, p.92.

131 Adversus haereses IV.38.3 (H.IV.63.2). [The John Keble translation (LF) is to be preferred here to that of Roberts and Donaldson in ANF.]

132 Ibid., IV.38.4 (H.IV.63.3).

133 Ibid., IV.11.2 (H.IV.21.3).

134 Ibid., IV.33.4 (H.IV.52.1)

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135 Ibid., IV.20.7 (H.IV.34.7).

136 Ibid., IV.20.5 (H.IV.34.6).

137 Clement of Alexandria, Stromata II.22.

138 Ibid., I.28.

139 Ibid., I.5.

140 Protrepticus 1.7; see also Stromata VII.2. and Paedagogus I.1. and passim.

141 Stromata VII.10.

142 Ibid.

143 Paedagogus I.12; see also I.2.

144 Protrepticus 12.120.

145 Stromata VI.6.

146 E.g. Paedagogus I.5; I.11; III.12; Protrepticus 11.111 and 12.120.

147 Stromata VI.12.

148 Ibid.

149 Plato, Theaetetus 176b; see also Phaedo 82ab; Phaedrus 248a; Respublica X.613a, and Plotinus Ennead I.2.6f.

150 See Stromata II.22, III.5, IV.22.

151 Ibid., VII.3.

152 Ibid., VI.13.

153 Ibid., VI.12.

154 Protrepticus 11.111; see also Stromata II.22.

155 Stromata II.12.

156 Ibid., II.22.

157 Ibid., IV.23.

158 Ibid., II.22 and IV.23.

159 Ibid., VI.24 and II.19.

160 Stromata VI.9. See also Paedagogus III.1, where the common element

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between man and God is said to be reason or the Word, present with God in the character of the Son and with man in the character of the saviour.

161 Ibid., V.14; Paedagogus I.12.

162 Stromata VI.9.

163 Paedagogus I.12.

164 Ibid., I.6.

165 Stromata V.1 and VII.2.

166 Ibid., VII.1.

167 Ibid., II.9; VI.8.

168 Ibid., VI.12; II.20; IV.7.

169 Ibid., VII.10.

170 Ibid., VI.12.

171 Ibid., VI.9.

172 Ibid.

173 Ibid., VI.15.

174 Ibid., VI.10.

175 Ibid.

176 Ibid.

177 Protrepticus 12.117; Stromata V.11; VII.10.

178 Protrepticus 1.10; Stromata II.10; Paedagogus I.6.

179 Protrepticus 12.117; Paedagogus I.6.

180 Paedagogus I.6; Stromata VII.13.

181 Paedagogus I.6.

182 Stromata VII.10.

183 Ibid., VII.3.

184 Ibid., VI.12.

185 Ibid., IV.23.

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186 Ibid., VII.16; see also Protrepticus 1.8.

187 Stromata II.19.

188 Ibid., VII.3.

189 Ibid.

190 Ibid. V.14; see also Protrepticus 10.98.

191 Stromata V.14.

192 Ibid., V.13.

193 Ibid., II.9.

194 Ibid., V.6; see also Protrepticus 11.112.

195 Paedagogus I.6.

196 Ibid.

197 Stromata VI.9.

198 Ibid., VII.3; see also IV.23.

199 Ibid., VII.3.

200 Ibid., VII.10.

201 Ibid., VI.12

202 Ibid., VI.9.

203 Ibid., VII.11.

204 Ibid., VI.9.

205 Ibid.

206 Ibid., VI.12; IV.18.

207 Romans 12.2.

208 Stromata VI.12.

209 P.T.B.Bilaniuk, 'The Mystery of Theosis or Divinization', Orientalia Christiana Analecta 195, 1973, pp.341-2.

210 Stromata IV.21.

211 Paedagogus I.6.

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212 Stromata IV.7.

213 Ibid., VII.10.

214 Ibid., VI.14.

215 Ibid., VII.11.

216 Ibid., VII.16.

217 Ibid., VII.3.

218 Hippolytus, Refutatio omnium haeresium (also known as Philosophoumena) X.33.9. [The references to the works of Hippolytus will be given according to the numbering in definitive editions in the GCS corpus.]

219 Comm. in Daniel 2.28.

220 Refutatio omnium haeresium X.33.10ff.

221 Ibid., X.34.3-5.

222 Origen, De principiis I.4.3-5 and Plotinus Ennead IV.4.15ff. See the interesting study comparing and contrasting the views of Origen and Plotinus on salvation by Antonia Tripolitis, 'Return to the Divine: Salvation in the thought of Plotinus and Origen' in Disciplina Nostra, ed. D.F.Winslow, Cambridge, Mass. 1979, pp.171-8.

223 Comm. in Johannem XIII.25.

224 De principiis IV.4.9-10; Comm. in Johannem I.34; II.3; VI.38.

225 Exhortatio ad martyrium 47; De principiis III.6.1; IV.4.9-10; Contra Celsum IV.30; VI.63; Comm. in Johannem XX.20.

226 De principiis II.9.6.

227 Ibid., II.6.3.

228 Ibid., I.8.1.

229 Comm. in Johannem. II.7.

230 De principiis II.9.2.

231 Ibid.

232 See ibid., II.8.2; II.9.2; and II.9.6.

233 Contra Celsum IV.3.

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234 De principiis I.2.7.

235 Ibid., IV.1.2.

236 Ibid., IV.3.12.

237 Contra Celsum I.52.

238 Ibid., VI.68.

239 Ibid., III.28.

240 Comm. in Johannem VI.17.

241 De principiis III.2.1.

242 Comm. in Johannem I.9.

243 Ibid., XIII.14.

244 Contra Celsum VII.46; see also Comm. in Johannem XIX.1.

245 Comm. in Johannem XXXII.27.

246 Ibid., XIX.4.

247 De principiis II.8.3.

248 Ibid., II.11.3.

249 Ibid., II.11.4.

250 Ibid., II.11.5.

251 Ibid., II.11.5; see also De oratione 25.2. For the distinction between this form of final union with God and that proposed by Plotinus in the Neoplatonic scheme, see Antonia Tripolitis, art. cit., pp.176-8.

252 De principiis II.11.7; De oratione 27.13.

253 Comm. in Johannem I.16.

254 Ibid., XX.7.

255 See De principiis I. Praefatio 5; III.6.6; and Contra Celsum V.17f.

256 De principiis I.6.2.

257 Contra Celsum VII.38.

258 De principiis III.1.21; see also ibid., II.9.2.

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259 Jules Gross, La divinisation du chrétien d'après les Pères grecs, Paris 1938, p.185.

260 Gregory Thaumaturgus, In Origenem oratio panegyrica 11.

261 Ibid.

262 De principiis IV.4.10.

263 Ibid.

264 Gregory Thaumaturgus, In Origenem oratio panegyrica 11.

265 Methodius, De resurrectione, I.54.

266 Ibid., III.18.

267 Ibid.

268 Ibid., I.35.

269 Convivium decem virginum 6.1.

270 Ibid., 3.5.

271 De resurrectione II.1.

272 Convivium decem virginum 10.1.

273 Ibid., 3.6.

274 Ibid., 1.4.

275 De resurrectione III.23.

276 Convivium decem virginum 1.4.

277 Ibid., 3.14; 5.1-6.

278 Ibid., 10.1.

279 Ibid., 6.2.

280 Ibid., 8.1.

281 See also Convivium decem virginum 6.5.

282 Ibid., 8.2.

283 Ibid.

284 Ibid., 1.1.

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285 De resurrectione I.47.

286 Convivium decem virginum 9.5.

287 Ibid., 8.3.

288 De resurrectione III.11.

289 Convivium decem virginum 9.5.

290 J.N.D.Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, London 1960, pp.174ff.

291 Tertullian, De anima 40.

292 Adversus Marcionem I.22; De resurrectione carnis 16.

293 De anima 9.

294 Ibid., 19.

295 Adversus Marcionem II.9.

296 Adversus Judaeos 13.

297 Scorpiace 7.

298 See De praescriptiones haereticae 13; Apologeticum 21.

299 Adversus Marcionem II.27.

300 In 1 Corinthians 15.

301 De resurrectione carnis 49.

302 Ibid.

303 Adversus Praxean 13.

304 Psalm 82:6 according to the numbering in the Hebrew Bible, but 81:6 in the LXX (Greek) and Vulgate (Latin) versions.

305 William A. Johnson, The Search for Transcendence, New York 1974, p.1.

306 Apologeticum 17.6.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1 Athanasius, Orat. contra gentes 2; see also Orat. de incarnatione Verbi 3.

2 Orat. contra Arianos II.68.

3 Orat. de incarnatione 4.

4 Ibid.; and Orat. c. gentes 35.

5 Orat. de incarnatione 11.

6 Ibid., 3.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid., 5.

9 Ibid., 4.

10 Orat. c. gentes 4; 31-3.

11 Orat. de incarnatione 20.

12 Ibid., 11, 15.

13 Orat. de incarnatione 8.

14 Orat. c. Arianos I.16.

15 Ibid., 54. See also Epist. ad Adelphium 4, and Epist. de synodis Arimini in Italia et Seleuciae in Isauria 51.

16 Orat. de incarnatione 8-9, 26-7, 29-30, 44.

17 Orat. c. Arianos II.70.

18 J.N.D.Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, London 1960, p.208.

19 Orat c. Arianos I.47.

20 E.g. Epist. ad Serapionem 2.3,6.

21 Jules Gross, La divinisation du chrétien d'après les Pères grecs, Paris 1938, p.208.

22 Orat. de incarnatione 11-16.

23 Orat. c. Arianos I.16.

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24 Orat. de incarnatione 8, 13; Orat. c. Arianos III.33.

25 Here Athanasius follows Irenaeus' idea that redemption as ἀνακεφαλαίωσις takes us to a higher level than the one we were at before the Fall, rather than Origen's view that redemption is merely ἀποκατάστασις, the recovery of the unfallen state - see chapter 2.

26 Orat. c. Arianos II.67.

27 Ibid., II.70.

28 Jules Gross, op. cit., p.201.

29 Orat. c. Arianos I.38.

30 Ibid., III.25.

31 Ibid., III.19-20.

32 Orat. de incarnatione 54; see also Epist. ad Adelphium 4.

33 Orat. c. Arianos II.59. See also III.19 for the Holy Spirit's role in making men sons.

34 De decretis Nicaenae synodi 14.

35 Epist. ad Serapionem 1.24.

36 Ibid., 1.20.

37 Ibid., 1.9, 24, 31.

38 Ibid., 1.9.

39 Ibid., 1.25.

40 Orat. de incarnatione 27-32.

41 Ibid., 30, 50-51.

42 Orat. c. Arianos III.19.

43 De decretis Nicaenae synodi 31, and Orat. c. Arianos I.34.

44 Orat. c. Arianos II.41.

45 Epist. ad Serapionem 1.30.

46 Orat. c. Arianos II.42.

47 Orat. de incarnatione 14.

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48 Orat. c. Arianos II.67.

49 Orat. de incarnatione 27.

50 Orat. c. Arianos II.69. See also III.33.

51 Orat. de incarnatione 27.

52 Orat. c. Arianos III.33.

53 Orat. de incarnatione 54.

54 Basil, Regulae fusius tractate 2.3; Hom. super psalmos 48.8; Hom. diversae 3 (Attende tibi ipse).6.

55 Epist. 105. See also Adversus Eunomium I.18, 20, 23, 27; II.16, 17, 31; and also Liber de Spiritu sancto 8.21; Hom. div. 15 (De fide).2; and Epist. 226.3, 234.1 (for the distinction of the divine attributes and energies from the divine essence), and 236.1.

56 Hom. super psalmos 48.8.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid.

59 Hom. div. 9 (Quod deus non est auctor malorum).6.

60 Regulae fusius 2.2.

61 Regulae fusius 2.3; Hom. div. 3 (Attende tibi ipse).6.

62 Ad adolescentes de legendis libris gentilium (Hom.div. 22).8.

63 Here we find man described as a 'microcosm' of the created universe, a summary in miniature, constituted of both material and spiritual principles. This metaphor is also used by Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa, and also by Nemesius of Emesa.

64 Hom. div. 3 (Attende tibi ipse).7.

65 Regulae fusius 2.1. See also Hom. super psalmos 48.8; and Hom. div. 15 (De fide).1: 'The desire to glorify God is sown in the nature of beings endowed with reason.'

66 Hom. div. 3 (Attende tibi ipse).6.

67 Hom. div. 9 (Deus non est auctor malorum).6.

68 Adversus Eunomium II.19.

69 Hom. div. 9 (Deus non est auctor malorum).6; Regulae fusius 2.1.

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70 Hom. div. 20 (De humilitate).1.

71 Sermones ascetici 1.1.

72 Hom. div. 20 (De humilitate).1.

73 Regulae brevius tractate 248.

74 Hom. super psalmos 45.7-8.

75 Epist. 235.1-3, and Hom. div. 23 (In Mamantem martyrem).4.

76 Hom. div. 20 (De humilitate).4.

77 Hom. div. 13 (In sanctum baptisma).1.

78 Hom. div. 15 (De fide).1.

79 Liber de Spiritu sancto 8.18.

80 Ad adolescentes (Hom.div. 22).7; Hom. super psalmos 29.6.

81 Liber de Spiritu sancto 22.53.

82 Ad adolescentes (Hom. div.22).7-8. See also Regulae fusius 269; Hom. super psalmos 28.5; Hom. div. 14 (In ebriosos).6; Hom. div. 3 (Attende tibi ipse).8; Epist. 2.2

83 Hom. super psalmos 33.3; Regulae brevius 21; Regulae fusius Prooemium; Liber de Spiritu sancto 8.17; Hom. div. 15 (De fide).3.

84 Liber de Spiritu sancto 29.75; Adversus Eunomium I.7; Hom. super psalmos 33.1.

85 Ibid. 24.56.

86 Adversus Eunomium III.6.

87 Ibid., III.5.

88 Hom. super psalmos 44.2; see also Hom. div. 12 (In principium Proverbiorum).14.

89 De fide 2.

90 Ibid., 3.

91 Hom. super psalmos 45.8.

92 Hom. div. 12 (In principium Proverbiorum).14.

93 Hom. div. 15 (De fide).1. See also Hom. super psalmos 59.2.

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94 Epist. 234.1.

95 Adversus Eunomium III.2.

96 Liber de Spiritu sancto 1.2; see also Hom. super psalmos 48.8. and Hom. div. 20 (De humilitate) 1.

97 Liber de Spiritu sancto 14.32.

98 Hom. super psalmos 45.7.

99 Regulae brevius 258. See also Hom. div. 4 (De gratiarum actione).2.

100 Regulae fusius 2.2.

101 Epist. 262.2.

102 Liber de Spiritu sancto 10.24 and 25.59 and passim.

103 Ibid., 26.64 and 28.69.

104 Ibid., 29.74 and Epist. 233.1-2.

105 Liber de Spiritu sancto 15.36; 16.38; 26.61.

106 Ibid., 8.18.

107 Ibid., 9.23.

108 Adversus Eunomium III.2.

109 Epist. 188.1.

110 Adversus Eunomium II.4.

111 Epist. 8.3.

112 Sermones ascetici 1.1.

113 Regulae fusius 2.1; Hom. div. 15 (De fide).1, and Hom. div. 20 (De humilitate).3.

114 Hom. div. 15 (De fide).1.

115 Epist. 2.2; Regulae fusius 5.1; Hom. div. 14 (In ebriosos).6; Hom. div. 12 (In principium Proverbiorum).14.

116 Regulae fusius Prooemium 3; Hom. super psalmos 7.4; Liber de Spiritu sancto 15.36.

117 Adversus Eunomium II.4; III.5; and Epist. 8.3.

118 Sermones ascetici 1.1.

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119 Hom. super psalmos 114.5. Here Basil's thought is to be contrasted with that of his brother, Gregory of Nyssa, who says the soul is always in a state of 'becoming', constantly being created.

120 De fide 2; Epist. 235.3.

121 Hom. div. 3 (Attende tibi ipse).6.

122 Epist. 233.1; Liber de Spiritu sancto 2.1.

123 Liber de Spiritu sancto 9.22.

124 Gregory of Nazianzus, Orat. 2.73.

125 Orat. 28.17.

126 D.F.Winslow, The Dynamics of Salvation, Cambridge, Mass. 1979, p.193 et seq.

127 Orat. 38.9.

128 Orat. 7.21, 24; see also Orat. 21.25; Orat. 30.4-6, 15.

129 Orat. 38.11.

130 Ibid.; see also Orat. 6.12; 28.12; and 40.5.

131 Carmina dogmatica (I.i.) 8.1f.

132 Orat.2.17.

133 Carmina dogm. (I.i.) 8.72f.

134 Orat. 14.7.

135 Orat. 7.19. Cp. Genesis 1:27.

136 Orat. 38.11; see also Carmina dogm. (I.i.) 4.91; 8.1f, and 8.70f. Cp. Genesis 2:7.

137 Orat. 38.8-10 (repeated in Orat. 45.4-6).

138 Orat. 39.8; see also 21.1-2.

139 Orat. 38.11.

140 Orat. 17.9; Orat. 32.27; Orat. 34.12.

141 Carmina moralia (I.ii.) 2.560-1. See also Orat. 2.22; Orat. 28.17; Orat. 38.11-12.

142 Orat. 7.23.

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143 Adam, according to Theophilus of Antioch, was created as an 'uncompleted sketch'; according to Irenaeus he was as an 'infant'; and according to Clement of Alexandria, although created 'perfect in formation', he was yet 'imperfect in constitution' - see chapter two.

144 So Gregory interprets Adam's premature partaking of the tree of knowledge in the garden - Orat. 38.12. See also Orat. 2.25, and Orat. 39.7, and Carmina dogm. (I.i) 8.111 and 9.82f.

145 Orat. 28.12; Orat. 38.11.

146 Orat. 28.15; Orat. 38.12. See also Orat. 39.13.

147 Orat. 38.12.

148 Orat. 14.25.

149 As Gregory says in Orat. 28.7: 'For composition is the origin of strife and strife of separation and separation of dissolution.' See also Orat. 31.15.

150 Orat. 39.13.

151 Ibid.

152 Orat. 45.12.

153 Orat. 39.13.

154 Ibid.

155 Orat. 40.5.

156 Orat. 1.4.

157 Orat. 29.19.

158 So Aloys Grillmeier writes: 'The christology of Gregory of Nazianzus..., springs not so much from speculative theological reflection as from his spiritual disposition. For his attention is taken up with the idea of the divinization (sic) of man, an idea for which the divinization of Christ's human nature is to supply the theological foundation.' Christ in Christian Tradition, London 1965, p.282.

159 Epist. 101.

160 Ibid.

161 See Orat. 2.23; Orat. 34.10; Orat. 38.13.

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162 Orat. 38.13.

163 Epist. 101.

164 Orat. 39.16.

165 Orat. 30.21. It appears that here Gregory envisages not just Christ's humanity being sanctified, but all humanity being sanctified by Christ, for he goes on to speak of Christ being 'a leaven to the whole lump... becoming for all men all things that we are except sin'. But Gregory, like Athanasius, is not suggesting (in terms of Platonic 'generic realism') that salvation/deification is an automatic process - on the contrary he recognizes in every individual complete moral autonomy.

166 Ibid.

167 Orat. 38.13. See also Orat. 30.20 for a similar idea of Christ as the image or 'reproduction' of God the archetype.

168 Orat. 38.13.

169 Orat. 29.20.

170 Orat. 30.1.

171 Orat. 30.14.

172 This is obviously to be translated 'let us become gods', not 'God's' as in the LNPF translation.

173 Orat. 1.4-5.

174 Orat. 38.13.

175 Orat. 45.12.

176 Orat. 38.13.

177 Orat. 45.13.

178 Orat. 38.4.

179 Orat. 40.3.

180 Orat. 39.2, and Orat. 18.13.

181 Orat. 40.8.

182 Orat. 39.17. He makes the same point again in Orat. 31.28, and Orat. 40.42, and uses a similar form of argument in Orat. 31.4, 6, and Orat. 34.12.

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183 Philippians 3.14.

184 Orat. 4.124.

185 Orat. 2.17; see also Orat. 37.13, Orat. 40.12-14, Carmina moral. (I.ii.) 2.20-30. and Epist. 178.

186 Orat. 14.7 and Orat. 2.17.

187 Orat. 38.11.

188 Orat. 18.3.

189 Orat. 41.12.

190 Orat. 8.18. See also Orat. 18.38.

191 Orat. 45.16; see also Epist. 171.

192 Orat. 25.2.

193 Orat. 2.22.

194 Orat. 34.12; see also Orat. 17.9; Orat. 32.27, and Orat. 38.11.

195 Orat. 38.11.

196 Ibid.

197 Orat. 39.13.

198 Orat. 30.20: 'the most unerring impress... the image... the reproduction of its Archetype...'

199 See D.F.Winslow, op. cit., p.189.

200 Orat. 30.21.

201 Orat. 38.18.

202 Orat. 1.4-5.

203 D.F.Winslow, op. cit., p.59.

204 Orat. 45.12.

205 Orat. 21.2.

206 Orat. 39.8.

207 Orat. 28.17.

208 Orat. 4.71. See also Carmina moral. (I.ii) 1.210-4, and 10.630-1.

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209 As in Orat. 2.91 and Orat. 8.14, 19.

210 Orat. 7.21 and Orat. 14.8.

211 Orat. 38.11 and 13.

212 Orat. 21.25.

213 Orat. 18.3.

214 Orat. 14.26-7; Epist. 178.

215 Orat.2.7.

216 Orat. 28.11-13.

217 Ibid. 13.

218 Orat. 40.5; see also Orat. 28.12.

219 Orat.40.7.

220 Orat. 38.13.

221 Orat. 7.23. It would appear that this passage contradicts what Gregory has said elsewhere about deification not meaning becoming God 'in the strict sense of the term' (Orat. 42.17). But recognizing that this quotation comes from his panegyric on his brother Caesarius, we can perhaps assume this to be oratorial hyperbole, and perhaps it should be more properly translated 'yes, god indeed'?

222 Orat. 28.17.

223 Orat. 30.6.

224 Gregory of Nyssa, De virginitate 12.

225 De opificio hominis 16.8-9.

226 Dialogus de anima et resurrectione (PG 46.148AB).

227 See A.H.Armstrong, 'Platonic elements in St Gregory of Nyssa's doctrine of Man', Dominican Studies 1, 1948, p.120; and for a more general survey of Gregory's anthropology, Gerhart B. Ladner, 'The Philosophical Anthropology of St Gregory of Nyssa', Dumbarton Oaks Papers 12, Cambridge, Mass. 1958, pp.61-94.

228 Orat. catechetica magna 5.

229 Ibid.

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230 I.P.Sheldon-Williams, 'The Cappadocians', in The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy, ed. A.H.Armstrong, Cambridge 1970, pp.448-454. Gregory also uses the motif of man as a 'microcosm', encompassing in himself these elements by which the universe is constituted and perfected', Dial. de anima et resurrectione (PG 46.28B), and In inscriptiones psalmorum 1.3, but he also expresses some reservations about its application, see De opificio hominis 16. This motif also occurs in the writings of Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Nemesius of Emesa.

231 Orat. catech. 7-8.

232 De orat. dominica 5.

233 Orat. catech. 8.

234 Ibid., 25.

235 Refutatio confessionis Eunomii ¶143, (GNO II, p.374; PG 45.553A). See also Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarem 15.

236 See David L. Balas, 'Plenitudo Humanitatis: the unity of human nature in the theology of Gregory of Nyssa', in Disciplina Nostra, ed. D.F.Winslow Cambridge, Mass. 1979, pp.115-131; and also A.H.Armstrong, 'Platonic elements in St Gregory of Nyssa's doctrine of man', op. cit., pp.114-19.

237 Orat. catech. 32.

238 De professione christiana ad Harmonium, (GNO VIII.1, p.132; PG 46.244C).

239 Orat. catech. 33 and 36.

240 Ibid., 37.

241 In inscriptiones psalmorum 2.16.

242 See particularly: David L. Balas, ΜΕΤΟΥΣΙΑ ΘΕΟΥ: Man's Participation in God's Perfections according to St Gregory of Nyssa (Studia Anselmiana 55), Rome 1966; E.Ferguson, 'God's Infinity and Man's Mutability: Perpetual Progress according to Gregory of Nyssa', GOTR 18, 1973, pp.59-78; E.Ferguson, 'Progress in Perfection: Gregory of Nyssa's Vita Moysis', Studia Patristica XIV (TU 117), 1976, pp.307-314; Charles Kannengiesser, 'L'infinité divine chez Grégoire de Nysse', Recherches de Science Religieuse 55, 1967, pp.55-65; and R.Gillet, 'L'homme divinisateur cosmique dans la pensée de saint Grégoire de Nysse', Studia Patristica VI (TU 81), 1962, pp.62-83.

243 De vita Moysis I.7. (The section numbers within each book are those of the Sources Chrétiennes edition, Grégoire de Nysse: La Vie de Moïse, trs. J.Daniélou, Paris 1955.)

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244 Orat. de beatitudinibus 6.

245 Gerhart B. Ladner, 'The Philosophical Anthropology of St Gregory of Nyssa', op.cit., p.95.

246 Dial. de anima et resurrectione (PG 46.105AB); In Canticum canticorum 8, 12 and 14.

247 In Canticum canticorum 5; De vita Moysis I.10.

248 De perfectione christiana ad Olympium monachum (PG 46.285). See also In Ecclesiasten 7; and In Canticum canticorum 12.

249 De vita Moysis II.136.

250 Dial. de anima et resurrectione (PG 46.89CD).

251 De orat. Dominica 2; Orat. de beatitudinibus 1.

252 Orat. de beatitudinibus 7.

253 De professione christiana ad Harmonium (GNO VIII.1, p.132; PG 46.244C).

254 John Macquarrie, In Search of Humanity, London 1982, p.239.

255 Dial. de anima et resurrectione (PG 46.89Cf).

256 Orat. catech. 35.

257 De opificio hominis 22.5.

258 Dial. de anima et resurrectione (PG 46.152A).

259 Ibid. (PG 46.160BC).

260 Ibid. (PG 46.41D).

261 De orat. Dominica 5.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1 The name occurs in various alternative spellings: Ephraem, Ephraim, and Ephrem being the most common.

2 Genesis 1:28.

3 Ephraem, Comm. in Genesim 2.26. And again in Sermo de fide 3.27-34, where he refers to Adam as a 'created god'.

4 Carmina Nisibena 41:14.

5 Comm. in Genesim 2.23. See also 2.20-22, 26 and 36.

6 Ibid., 2.23.

7 Genesis 3:5.

8 Carmina Nisibena 69.12.

9 Comm. in Diatessaron Tatiani 1.1.

10 Hymni de virginitate 48.17-18.

11 Hymni de paradiso 11.6-7.

12 Hymni de fide 5.15-17. See also Sermo de Domino nostro 2.

13 Hymni de fide 29.1 and 46.6.

14 Comm. in Genesim 2.23.

15 For a summary of the arguments on the authorship and date of these lectures see Frances M. Young, From Nicaea to Chalcedon, London 1983, pp.128-31.

16 Cyril of Jerusalem, Procatechesis 6; see also Catechesis 5.1.

17 Catech. 11.14; see also Catech. 11.19.

18 Ibid., 12.3.

19 Ibid., 12.15.

20 Ibid., 22.3.

21 Ibid., 4.16.

22 Apollinarius, Fragment 107.

23 Ibid.

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24 Fragm. 126.

25 Fragm. 138.

26 Fragm. 107.

27 E.g. in Fragments 22 and 76, and in the treatise Recapitulatio 10, 11, 25 and 29.

28 Fragm. 74.

29 Ibid.

30 Fides secundum partem (Kata meros pistis) 11.

31 Ibid., 31.

32 Fragm. 116.

33 Fragm. 128.

34 Fragm. 155.

35 It seems probable that the school of which Didymus was the head was not, as is often suggested, the great Catechetical School of Alexandria that had had Clement and Origen as its masters. See Frances M. Young, op.cit., p.303, f.n. 108 for the evidence in support of this view.

36 Didymus of Alexandria, De Trinitate II.12.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid., III.16.

40 Ibid., II.25. Cf. Athanasius, Epist. ad Serapionem 1.24 and 30-31, and Basil; Adversus Eunomium III (PG 29.665).

41 De Trinitate III.2. Cp. Athanasius, Orat. contra Arianos I.38.

42 In epist. ii ad Corinthios 2.15 (PG 39.1691B). For an examination of this view see Edward L. Heston, The Spiritual Life and the Role of the Holy Ghost in the sanctification of the Soul as Described in the Works of Didymus of Alexandria, St Meinrad, Indiana 1938.

43 The substance of the current opinion on the origin of the Homilies is conveniently summarised by A.Louth, in The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition, Oxford 1981, pp.114-15.

44 Homiliae Spirituales 1.7.

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45 Ibid., 49.4.

46 Ibid., 45.5-6.

47 Ibid., 4.9. See also Ibid., 4.10, and 46.1.

48 Ibid., 46.6.

49 Ibid., 12.1.

50 Ibid., 15.35.

51 Ibid., 26.1.

52 Ibid., 12.2.

53 Ibid., 46.3.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid., 26.18.

56 Ibid., 26.1.

57 Ibid., 44.8.

58 Ibid., 44.9.

59 Ibid., 26.2.

60 Ibid., 30.2.

61 Ibid., 1.2.

62 Ibid., 15.35. This same relationship of deification and ἀπάθεια is made in Hom. 26.2, and again in 49.3.

63 Ibid., 4.9.

64 Ibid., 25.5

65 Ibid., 26.14.

66 Ibid., 26.15.

67 Ibid., 25.5, 39.1, 44.9, 49.3.

68 As in Hom. 44.9, 49.1,2, and 26.14.

69 Ibid., 8.1,2; 25.7.

70 See espec., Hom. 8.

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71 Ibid., 45.7.

72 Ibid., 26.16.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid., 26.18.

75 Ibid.

76 Ibid., 26.16.

77 Ibid., 26.17.

78 Ibid., 8.5 and 25.5.

79 Ibid., 8.4.

80 John Chrysostom, In epist. ad Galatas comm. 4.1-7.

81 In Johannem hom. 11.1.

82 In epist. ad Galatas comm. 4.1; see also In Johannem hom. 14.1-2 and 25.1.

83 In Johannem hom. 3.2.

84 Ibid., 11.1.

85 In Matthaeum hom. 12.4; see also ibid., 1.1-2.

86 Athanasius, Orat. contra Arianos I.38, and again in Epist. ad Serapionem 1.25.

87 E.g. In epist. ad Romanos hom. 6.6, referring to the Gentiles making gods of the passions (τὰ πάθη ἐθεοποίουν); see also Ad populum Antiochenum (De statuis) hom.1.

88 As in the Homilies on Genesis which deal with the creation of man: Hom. in Genesim 1-16, and in In epist. ad Hebraeos hom. 2.2 et passim.

89 Hom. in Genesim 8.3; 9.2; 10.3.

90 Ibid., 9.2.

91 Ibid., 12.5; 14.5; 15.3-4; 16.1,4,5 6; 17.5.

92 Homiliae diversae 3.1 (PG 63.474) and Expositiones in Psalmos 135.1.

93 In Johannem hom. 11.2.

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94 In Matthaeum hom. 52.4.

95 In epist. ii ad Timotheum hom. 6.3.

96 In epist. ad Romanos hom. 3.4.

97 Ibid.

98 De laudibus sancti Pauli apostoli hom. 3.

99 Exp. in Psalmos 134.7.

100 Catecheses ad illuminandos (Baptismal instructions) 9.21-22.

101 In epist. ad Galatas comm. 3.5.

102 Gregory of Nyssa, Orat. catechetica magna 37.

103 In Matthaeum hom. 82.5; see also In Johannem hom. 46.3-4; In epist. i ad Corinthios hom. 24.2-3; In epist. ad Ephesios hom. 3.3-4.

104 In epist. i ad Timotheum hom. 15.4. See also In epist. i ad Corinthios hom. 8.4 for similar thought, but in the context of images of a vine and branches and stones cemented into a building.

105 Exp. in Psalmos 134.7.

106 J.Gross, La divinisation du chrétien d'après les Pères grecs, Paris 1938, p.272.

107 Ibid., p.262.

108 See for example: Rowan A. Greer, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Exegete and Theologian, London 1961, pp.15-19; R.A.Norris, Manhood and Christ, Oxford 1963, pp.168-70; J.M.Dewart, The Theology of Grace of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Washington 1971, pp.146-50; and Frances M. Young, From Nicaea to Chalcedon, London 1983, p.212.

109 Frances M. Young, op.cit., p.212.

110 M.F.Wiles, 'Theodore of Mopsuestia as Representative of the Antiochene School', The Cambridge History of the Bible vol.1, Cambridge 1970, p.490.

111 R.A.Norris, op.cit., p.190.

112 Rowan A. Greer, op.cit., 'Appended Note', pp.153-64.

113 Theodore of Mopsuestia, Comm. in Johannem on 10:34f., from the Latin version edited by J.M.Vosté, p.154 (cited hereafter as Vosté). See also Homiliae catecheticae 3.11; 4.10; 11.8; and 14.24 where a similar point is made. References to these instructional

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homilies are according to both the English translation by A.Mingana, in Woodbrooke Studies (cited hereafter as WS) vols 5 and 6, and the French translation by R.Tonneau (cited hereafter as Tonneau). The section numbers of the individual homilies are from the Tonneau edition; the respective citations in the two editions to the references above are as follows: 3.11 (WS5 p.40; Tonneau p.69); 4.10 (WS5 p.46; Tonneau p.87); 11.8 (WS6 p.7; Tonneau pp.297-8); 14.24 (WS6 p.66; Tonneau p.453).

114 Hom. catech. 4.6 (WS5 p.45; Tonneau p.83); see also ibid., 1.14-16 (WS5 p.25; Tonneau pp.23-5); 2.11 (WS5 p.30; Tonneau pp.43-5); 9.3 (WS5 p.95; Tonneau p.219).

115 A technical term which Theodore uses when referring to the humanity which the Logos assumed at the incarnation effecting a union which was εὐδοκία (by good pleasure), a unique πρόσωπον, in which there was a totality of sharing all that the Father has. For a full discussion of this idea which lay behind Theodore's Christology and so affected his understanding of salvation see J.M.Dewart, 'The Notion of "Person" underlying the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia', Studia Patristica XII (TU 115), 1975, pp.199-207.

116 Comm. in Johannem on 5:20 (Vosté p.80); see also ibid., on 1:16 (Vosté p.26); In epist. ad Romanos on 8:15 (PG 66.821-823); In epist. ad Galatas on 3:26 (from the Latin version by H.B.Swete [cited hereafter as Swete 1, 2] vol.2, pp.55f; PG 66.905B); and De incarnatione VII (PG 66.976BC; also in Appendix A of Swete 2 p.295).

117 De incarnatione VII (PG 66.980C; Swete 2 p.298); Hom. catech. 8.17-18 (WS5 pp.91-2; Tonneau pp.211-13).

118 De incarnatione VII (PG 66.969B; Swete 2 pp.291-2).

119 Comm. in Johannem on 10:36 (Vosté p.154).

120 Hom. catech. 5.15-16 (WS5 pp.58-9; Tonneau pp.121-3).

121 See Rowan A. Greer, op.cit., pp.15f.

122 See J.M.Dewart, 'The Notion of "Person" underlying the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia', op. cit., p.202 for further discussion of this idea.

123 Hom. catech. 1.4 (WS5 pp.19-20; Tonneau pp.7-8); see also ibid., 12.2 (WS6 p.17; Tonneau p.325).

124 Ibid., 16.30 (WS6 p.115; Tonneau p.583).

125 Ibid., 12.25 (WS6 p.30; Tonneau pp.361-3).

126 Ibid., 14.17 (WS6 p.62; Tonneau p.439).

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127 Ibid., 15.12 (WS6 p.77; Tonneau p.479).

128 Ibid., 15.2 (WS6 pp.71-2; Tonneau p.465).

129 In epist. ad Galatas on 2:15-16 (Swete 1 p.27; PG 66.904A).

130 Hom. catech. 14.10 (WS6 p.56; Tonneau p.425), my italics.

131 Ibid., 10.18 (WS5 p.113; Tonneau p.273).

132 Ibid., 9.17 (WS5 pp.102-3; Tonneau pp.241-3).

133 De sacerdotio (fragment) 2 (WS7 p.96, quoted in a treatise On Solitude by the 7th century Syriac author Dadisho Katraya).

134 Hom. catech. 7.8 (WS5 p.77; Tonneau p.173).

135 In epist. ad Ephesios 1.18 (Swete 1 p.136; PG 66.916AB).

136 See J.Quasten, Patrology vol.3, Westminster, Maryland 1983, p.486, and T.W.Crafer, The Apocriticus of Macarius Magnes, London 1919, pp.xvi-xxiii.

137 For a full account of this theory, see Robert Waelkens, L'économie, thème apologétique et principe herméneutique dans l'Apocriticus de Macarios Magnès, Louvain 1974, pp.13-29.

138 Macarius Magnes, Apocriticus III.14 (according to the editio princeps by C.Blondel [cited hereafter as B, with page and line numbers], 90.6-13).

139 Apocriticus IV.11 (B172.20-26 et seq.).

140 Ibid., IV.30 (B221.1-4).

141 Ibid., (B222.25-29).

142 Ibid., (B226.17-22).

143 Ibid., II.8 (B10.23-11.6).

144 Ibid., IV.17 (B192.7-8). See also ibid., II.27(B214-215) where the blessed condition of those who have been granted to dwell in the heavenly place is contrasted with the misfortune of those whose condition is that of the corruption of the earth.

145 Ibid., III.23 (B105.21-22) and IV.16 (B189.29-30).

146 Ibid., IV.16 (B189.32).

147 Ibid., IV.18 (B194.22).

148 Ibid., IV.18 (B197.26-28).

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149 Ibid., II.20 (B37.12).

150 Ibid., IV.18 (B197.4-9).

151 Ibid., III.23 (B106.23-24).

152 Ibid., III.23 (B104.33-105.1).

153 Ibid., III.23 (B107.3-6).

154 Ibid., IV.16 (B186.7-11).

155 Gregory of Nyssa, In inscriptiones psalmorum 1.3 (PG 44.440C), where Gregory speaks of man as a microcosm. Macarius also in another section of his apology uses a similar description for man: as a world within the world (κόσμος τοῦ κόσμου)', Apocriticus II.20 (B37.14).

156 Robert Waelkens, op.cit., p.271.

157 Apocriticus IV.26 (B211-213 passim).

158 Ibid., (B212.23).

159 Ibid., (B213.7).

160 Ibid., IV.18 (B194.24).

161 See E.F.Osborn, The Beginning of Christian Philosophy, Cambridge 1981, pp.111-20, espec. p.115.

162 Apocriticus II.8 (B11.1-5).

163 It is a matter of some debate just how widely read he was in the Antiochene and other traditions: some would suggest his theological background is exclusively Alexandrian, and that he had little concern about post-Arian developments such as Apollinarianism. See Frances M. Young, From Nicaea to Chalcedon, London 1983, p.251, and her references here: J.Liébaert, La doctrine christologique de S. Cyrille d'Alexandrie avant la querelle nestorienne, Lille 1951, and A. Grillmeier, Christ in Christian Tradition, London 1965.

164 Cyril of Alexandria, Glaphyrorum in Genesim I (PG 69.20BC).

165 Comm. in Johannem IX.1 on 14:20 (PG 73.280).

166 Ibid., I.9 on 1:9 (PG 73.128AC, 145A); see also ibid., IX.1 on 14:20 (PG 73.277); and De sancta Trinitate dialogi 4 (PG 75.908).

167 In epist. ad Romanos on 5:18 (PG 74.788C-789B).

168 Comm. in Johannem I.9 on 1:12 (PG 73.153AB).

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169 Comm. in Lucam, hom. 142 on 22:19 (PG 72.908-909).

170 Comm. in Johannem X.2 on 16.7 (PG 74.432B) and De sancta Trinitate dial. 1 (PG 75.692).

171 Comm. in Johannem V.2 on 7:39 (PG 73.750-760) and I.9 on 1:14 (PG 73.160-161).

172 Homiliae paschales 17.14 (PG 77.785-788); Comm. in Johannem X.2 on 16:7 (PG 74.432B) and V.2 on 7:39 (PG 73.750-760).

173 De incarnatione unigeniti (PG 75.1213) and its parallel passage in Orat. ad Theodosium imperatorem de recta fide 20 (PG 76.1161CD) which appears to be an almost word for word redrafted version. There is uncertainty about priority.

174 Contra Nestorium II.10 (PG 76.96-100).

175 Comm. in Johannem X.2 on 15:1 (PG 74.333-336).

176 De sancta Trinitate dial. 7 (PG 75.1093).

177 Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate 34 (PG 75.579AC).

178 Comm. in Johannem I.9 on 1:13 (PG 73.157B).

179 De sancta Trinitate dial. 7 (PG 75.1088-1089).

180 Comm. in Johannem IX on 14:20 (PG 74.280); see also Glaph. in Genesim I (PG 69.20BC); De sancta Trinitate dial. 4 (PG 75.908).

181 De sancta Trinitate dial. 6 (PG 75.1013).

182 Comm. in Johannem X.2 on 15:4 (PG 74.360-361).

183 Responsiones ad Tiberium 8 [as edited by P.E.Pusey (cited hereafter as Pusey 3), Pusey 3, p.590]. See also Hom. paschales 27.3 (PG 77.936) and Comm. in Lucam, hom. 79 on 11:11-13, and De dogmatum solutione 3 (Pusey 3, p.557).

184 Hom. paschales 10.2-4 (PG 77.617-625). [There appears to be no homily numbered 9 in the series. This homily, listed as 9 in the table at PG 77.395-396, is traditionally known as Homilia 10.]

185 Glaphyrorum in Exodum II (PG 69.437B); In epist. ad Romanos on 5:3 (PG 74.781); In epist. ad Hebraeos on 2:14 (PG 74.965); and Comm. in Johannem VIII (fragm.) on 12:27 (PG 74.89-92).

186 So Thesaurus de Trinitate 15 (PG 75.284) and 20 (PG 75.333).

187 See Comm. in Johannem II.1 on 3:5 (PG 73.244-245); Thesaurus de Trinitate 33, 34 (PG 75.571, 585-597); De sancta Trinitate dial. 7

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(PG 75.1116).

188 Comm. in Johannem I.6 in 1:4 (PG 73.85-88).

189 Glaph. in Exodum II (PG 69.432A).

190 In epist. ad Romanos on 1:3 (PG 74.776A).

191 Comm. in Johannem II.1 on 3:5 (PG 73.244D-245A); see also Comm. in Lucam, hom. 141 on 22:8 (PG 72.904); Glaph. in Genesim I (PG 69.29).

192 Comm. in Matthaeum on 8:15 (PG 72.389C).

193 Comm. in Johannem IV.2 on 6:53 (PG 73.572-576); see also ibid., IV.3 on 6:58 (PG 73.585f.); Epist. 17 [ad Nestorium] (PG 77.113C).

194 Comm. in Johannem IV.3 on 6:63f. (PG 73.601f.).

195 Thesaurus de Trinitate 20 (PG 75.333C).

196 Comm. in Johannem III.6 on 6:37 (PG 524-528); and ibid., IV.2 on 6:53 (PG 73.572-576).

197 Comm. in Johannem XI.11 on 17:26 (PG 74.577A); see also ibid., II.1 on 1:32-33, (PG 73.205), V.2 on 7:39 (PG 73.757), X.2 on 16:6-7 (PG 74.433B), XI.10 on 17:18-19 (PG 74.541CD).

198 Comm. in Johannem IX on 12.49-50 (PG 74.108), IX on 14:12-13 (PG 74.248), XI.2 on 16:15 (PG 74.452), and XI.2 on 16:16ff. (PG 74.456); and De sancta Trinitate dial. 7 (PG 75.1089CD).

199 Comm. in Johannem III.4 on 6:15 (PG 73.464) and IX.1 on 14:8 (PG 74.200-201).

200 De sancta Trinitate dial. 4 (PG 75.905); see also ibid., 7 (PG 75.1088-1089).

201 Thesaurus de Trinitate 12 (PG 75.200, 205).

202 Hom. paschales 17.14 (PG 77.785-788) and Comm. in Johannem X.2 on 16:7 (PG 74.432B) and V.2 on 7:39 (PG 73.750f.).

203 De dogmatum solutione 3 (Pusey 3, p.555-7); see also In epist. ii ad Corinthios on 3:18 (Pusey 3, p.339); ibid., on 3:2 (Pusey 3, p.351); In epist. ad Romanos on 8:24 (PG 74.823); Hom. paschales 25.3 (PG 77.912); ibid., 24.4 (PG 77.900).

204 In epist. i ad Corinthios on 15:42-43 (Pusey 3, p.309).

205 Ibid., (Pusey 3, p.316-17).

206 Walter J. Burghardt, The Image of God in Man according to Cyril of

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Alexandria, Washington 1957, pp.94ff.

207 Comm. in Johannem IX.1 on 14:20 (PG 74.280).

208 De dogmatum solutione 8 (Pusey 3, pp.564-5).

209 Comm. in Johannem XI.2 on 16:25 (PG 74.464) and Glaph. in Exodum II (PG 69.432D).

210 Comm. in Johannem X.1 on 14:21 (PG 74.284C).

211 Glaph. in Exodum II (PG 69.429A).

212 Comm. in Lucam, hom.136 on 20:27 (PG 72.892C).

213 In epist. i ad Corinthios on 6:15 (Pusey 3, p.263-4).

214 Frances M. Young, From Nicaea to Chalcedon, London 1983, p.251.

215 Comm. in Johannem I.6 on 1:4 (PG 73.85); Thesaurus de Trinitate 13 (PG 75.225).

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1 Leszek Kolakowski, Main Currents of Marxism vol.1, Oxford 1978, p.80.

2 Roger Hazelton, 'Homo capax dei: Thoughts on Man and Transcendence', Theological Studies 33, 1972, p.744.

3 Huston Smith, 'The Reach and the Grasp: Transcendence Today', in Transcendence, ed. H.W.Richardson and D.R.Cutler, Boston 1969, p.2.

4 Leszek Kolakowski, op. cit., vol.1, p.80.

5 Karl Marx and Frederick Engles, The German Ideology, ed. R.Pascal. New York 1939, p.7.

6 Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, trs. T.B.Bottomore, (publ. in Erich Fromm, Marx's Concept of Man, New York 1978), pp.139-40.

7 Ibid., p.183.

8 Istvān Mēszāros, Marx's Theory of Alienation, London 1975, p.20.

9 Karl Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Introduction, trs. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton (publ. in Karl Marx, Early Writings, Harmondsworth 1981), p.256.

10 Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, trs. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton (publ. in Karl Marx, Early Writings Harmondsworth 1981) p.333.

11 Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, trs. T.B.Bottomore, op.cit., p.138.

12 Ibid., p.129.

13 Ibid., p.128.

14 Leszek Kolakowski, op. cit., vol.1, p.174.

15 Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, trs. T.B.Bottomore, op.cit., p.149-50.

16 Ibid., p.183.

17 Ibid., p.127.

18 1 John 3:2.

19 Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, trs.

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T.B.Bottomore, op. cit., p.127.

20 Ibid., p.107.

21 Ibid., p.140.

22 Karl Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Introduction, tr. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton (publ. in Karl Marx, Early Writings, Harmondsworth 1981), p.256.

23 Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, trs. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton, (publ. in Karl Marx, Early Writings, Harmondsworth 1981), p.356.

24 Ibid., p.324, and Capital vol.1, p.772.

25 Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, trs. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton (publ. in Karl Marx, Early Writings, Harmondsworth 1981), p.356.

26 Ibid., trs. Bottomore, op. cit., p.137.

27 David Jenkins, 'The Liberation of "God"', an extended introduction to: Jürgen Moltmann, Theology and Joy, London 1973, p.6.

28 Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, trs. T.B.Bottomore, op. cit., p.96.

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Text: E.Beck, CSCO 174, Scriptores Syri 78.
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Trans: J.Gwynn, LNPF series 2, vol.13.
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(ii) Carmina moralia 1-40
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(i) Carmina de se ipso 1-99
Text: PG 37.969-1452.

(ii) Carmina quae spectant ad alios 1-8
Text: PG 37.1451-1600.

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Text: P.Gallay, GCS 53.
PG 37.21-388.
Trans: C.G.Browne and J.E.Swallow, LNPF series 2, vol.7 (Select Letters).
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PG 45.1301-1333.
Trans: W.Moore and H.A.Wilson, LNPF series 2, vol.5.

Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarem

Text: F.Müller, GNO III.1.
PG 45.1124-1269.

Contra Eunomium libri

Text: W.Jaeger, GNO I-II.
PG 45.248-464, 909-1121, 572-908.
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De infantibus praematurе abreptis

Text: PG 46.161-192.
Trans: W.Moore and H.A.Wilson, LNPF series 2, vol.5.

De instituto christiano

Text: W.Jaeger, GNO VIII.1.
PG 46.288-305.
Trans: V.W.Callahan, FC 58.

De opificio hominis

Text: J.Laplace, SC 6.
PG 44.124-256.
Trans: W.Moore and H.A.Wilson, LNPF series 2, vol.5.
J.Laplace, op.cit. (French).

De oratione Dominica orationes V

Text: PG 44.1120-1193.
Trans: H.C.Graef, ACW 18.

De perfectione christiana ad Olympium monachum

Text: W.Jaeger, GNO vol.VIII.1.
PG 46.252-285.
Trans: V.W.Callahan, FC 58.

De professione christiana ad Harmonium

Text: W.Jaeger, GNO vol.VIII.1.
PG 46.237-249.
Trans: V.W.Callahan, FC 58.

De Spiritu sancto [In Pentecosten]

Text: PG 46.696-701.

De virginitate

Text: J.P.Cavarnos, GNO VIII.1.
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Trans: W.Moore and H.A.Wilson, LNPF series 2, vol.5.
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Text: H.Musurillo, GNO VII.1.
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Trans: B.Jackson, LNPF series 2, vol.8 (appears as Letter XXXVIII among the letters of St Basil the Great).

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Trans: H.Musurillo, From Glory to Glory (selections from Gregory of Nyssa's mystical writings), London 1962.

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Text: J.Macdonough and P.Alexander, GNO V.
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Text: PG 44.1193-1301.
Trans: H.C.Graef, ACW 18.

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PG 10.1052-1104.
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Text: PG 61.9-382.
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In epistulam ad Ephesios argumentum et homiliae 1-24

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Text: PG 63.9-236.
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