

PASCAL'S TREATMENT OF THE QUESTION  
OF GRACE  
IN HIS WORKS

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## REFERENCES

References for all works by Pascal are to l'Intégrale edition of the Oeuvres complètes (O.C.), edited by Louis Lafuma in the Editions du Seuil, 1963. References for the Pensées are to fragment numbers in the Lafuma (L) and Brunschvicg (B) editions.

## DISCLAIMER

The term "man" is used extensively in this thesis in its generic sense (as defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary) to denote the "human individual" or, in the plural "mankind". Such usage is dictated by and corresponds to the frequent and identical usage of "l'homme" in Pascal's works.

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## ABSTRACT

Pascal's theology of grace, which he claimed to be the pure doctrine of St. Augustine and the orthodox teaching of the Catholic Church, has been variously labelled Augustinian, Thomist, humanist or a Jansenist heresy. In this thesis an attempt is made to determine the exact nature of that theology.

Key themes and assumptions which emerge from a study of Pascal's major writings directly concerned with his theology of grace, and from the shorter works which have influenced its formulation and expression, are appraised in the light of the basic presuppositions of the Augustinian doctrine and the religious experience which is their true warrant and psychological ground.

The conclusion which issues from this examination is that Pascal in fact subscribed to two conflicting sets of presuppositions, the one held at the conscious level of thought, and the other unconsciously assumed. At the conscious level he defends passionately the Augustinian doctrine of grace, reflecting a view of God and of grace based wholly upon non-rational grounds. Clearly, the fundamental Augustinian distinction between nature and grace underpins both method and matter in each of the works studied. This theology is also found to be identical, on all counts, with that of Port-Royal, Jansen, Thomas Aquinas and the orthodox teaching of the Catholic Church.

The inconsistencies and irrationalities in Pascal's works on grace witness, however, to unconsciously held assumptions which directly contradict those of Augustine, and correspond rather with the assumptions held by the Jesuits. If the doctrinal disagreements between Pascal and his Jesuit



opponents are transposed to the level of psychological insight, it is suggested that a view of grace can be worked out which encompasses both Augustinian and Scholastic traditions of Christian thought.

## INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

The aim of this thesis is an examination of Pascal's conception of divine grace in those of his works which deal with it specifically or inferentially. Discussion of three aspects of the question is attempted: the degree of equivalence of his doctrine with that of Augustine, Jansen and the Catholic Church; the modifying influence of his mathematical mode of thought upon its expression; and to what extent the psychological ground upon which it rests is responsible for inconsistencies not only within the doctrine itself, but also between doctrinal assumptions and those unconsciously held by Pascal.

A summary of the presuppositions of the Augustinian doctrine, especially the pivotal distinction between nature and grace upon which the whole edifice rests, is designed to provide a reference base for future discussion. Similarly, a short analysis of the Augustinian doctrine, especially with respect to Original Sin and the Fall, as the attempted rationalization of the non-rational intuitions of a particular type of religious experience, is intended to point up the psychological source of inconsistencies and irrationalities and to explain Pascal's uncritical acceptance of that doctrine. Selected shorter works are discussed which deal in greater depth with key themes and conclusions particularly relevant to the three main works, all developing and underscoring the basic premise of divine omnipotence and human powerlessness. Especially important is the expansion of the Augustinian distinction into an inflexible mathematical formula in the doctrine of the three orders, making absolute

the inaccessibility of God through the natural world or human reason without the aid of divine grace. The adoption by Pascal of the Platonism of Augustine, especially in the imagery used to depict the condition of unredeemed humanity, can be seen to effect a further hardening of the division between man and God by accentuating both human worthlessness and divine transcendence.

The Ecrits sur la Grâce constitute a full statement and defence of the orthodoxy of the Port-Royal theological stance and particularly of efficacious grace as the sole instrument of election. The work must be viewed in relation to its historical context, as part of the on-going struggle between Western and Eastern Traditions of Christendom, unequivocally reaffirming the primacy of divine revelation in the face of the increasing influence of a permissive and accommodating Jesuit rational theology, apparently sanctioned by the Council of Trent. The predominantly polemical tone of the Provinciales accords with the purpose of the work, namely, an appeal to French society to sanction the claims of divine grace over those of reason as sole authority in moral theology. This view of grace as constituting the only means of leading a truly moral Christian life necessarily highlights the Augustinian concept of the Church and the world as mutually exclusive societies, and the implications of this for a Church in which Jesuit rational moral theology threatened, in Pascal's view, its stability and integrity. Similarly, and perhaps paradoxically, the primacy of grace in divine revelation as the only source of conversion, mediated in the Tradition and Sacraments of the Church, is central to the whole of the Pensées, determining both the apologetic framework and the

need for the abdication of reason and uncritical acceptance of dogma as the first vital step in the search for the gift of faith.

Finally, in order to underline the deficiencies in Pascal's views, an attempt is made to propose a view of grace which acknowledges the insights of both rational and non-rational strains of the Christian Tradition, reconciling human responsibility and divine omnipotence.

#### The Term "Grace" in Christian Thought<sup>1</sup>

Whilst the early Christian Church affirmed both the necessity of divine grace and a true freedom of will in man upon which the acceptance of that grace depends, the mode of its operation and the degree of human freedom have been very differently conceived by the Eastern and Western Traditions of Christendom. The Eastern conception of grace, rooted in Greek philosophy, began from the premise of an essentially sound human nature, weakened but not crippled by the Fall, with a true freedom and ability to choose the good, and with moral evil attributable to ignorance rather than deliberate rebellion against God. The function of grace was limited to strengthening the will and illuminating the intellect by external means, particularly the example and teaching of Christ. Pelagius, who represented the extreme of this view, was perceived by the early Church as fundamentally irreligious in denying both the need for a supernatural grace or dependence upon God and the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice, and his teaching was duly condemned in favour of that of Augustine.

At the opposite pole, the Western notion of grace, influenced by the authoritarian structure and legal system of the Roman Empire, started out from a consciousness of the

overriding divine omnipotence, the universality of sin and the corruption and powerlessness of the human will. Upon such a view of man and God Augustine developed his doctrine of grace, as an irresistible divine power, merited only by the death of Christ and arbitrarily bestowed upon the elect to liberate and inwardly renew the will. Man remains entirely passive and freedom of will in the ordinary sense is effectively denied. As H.F. Stewart succinctly states, "The Grace which God gives to the elect predisposes the will to seek Him prior to any motion on man's part, influences the will which it has thus predisposed, and enables it to co-operate in the work of salvation. That is to say, in theological language of a later period, it is 'prevenient', 'operant' and 'co-operant'"<sup>2</sup>.

Augustine distinguishes two distinct types of grace, both wholly unmerited and gratuitous gifts of God. The first is the supernatural help (*adiutorium sine quo non*) granted to Adam at creation, subject to the choice of his will and sufficient to allow him to persevere in righteousness and maintain the harmony of his nature, and of which he was necessarily deprived by the Fall. The second is the special grace, wholly efficacious and infallible, required by Adam in the post-Fall state, to heal the corruption of the will and perform the good. Whilst, in Augustine, all virtuous acts whether of pagans or Christians are the result of a divine grace, only those performed under the power of this sanctifying grace merit salvation. The attainment of eternal life or final perseverance, however, depends upon a further gift which ensures that a state of grace coincides with death. Sanctifying grace, which operates by way of an attraction (*delectatio*)

to the will, is made efficacious by its congruity to the will of the recipient. The justified not predestined to glory simply lapse into the "massa damnata" by the bestowal of an incongruous grace. Although Augustine does not himself make such a distinction, he is the real author of the later distinction between "prevenient" and "co-operant", and "sufficient" and "efficacious" (i.e. incongruous and congruous) grace.

The Thomist theology of grace is simply a restatement of the Augustinian doctrine, modified, as a result of the influence of Aristotle and an increasing emphasis upon human merit and freedom, by the introduction of the concept of God as First Cause, the source from which all things spring, rather than the goal to which they are bent. Thomists affirmed the absolute necessity of both prevenient grace without prevision of merit and sanctifying grace, but add to the distinctions already implied by Augustine, those of "habitual" and "actual". The first is an indwelling gift predisposing the will to obtain the eternal good, and the second a motion of the soul by God which inspires and performs the good. God's antecedent and consequent will is the basis for the distinction in later Thomists between "sufficient" and "efficacious" grace which plays an important part in the Provinciales.

The doctrines of Luther and Calvin develop to its logical conclusion the determinism implicit in Augustinianism. Grace replaces the will of those predestined at creation to eternal life, and no attempt is made to save the divine justice or to find a place for human merit. Everything is predetermined by the divine will: election and reprobation, the Fall and the birth and death of Christ. Salvation is effected by the

imputation of Christ's merit to the works of the elect who remain in a state of corruption throughout their lives, but who, unlike their Augustinian counterparts are assured of final perseverance.

Semi-Pelagianism represented an attempt to mediate between the two traditions by affirming both the universal necessity of grace and a true freedom of choice in man. Revived in the teaching of Duns Scotus, it was given a further fillip by the ambivalent deliverances of the Council of Trent favouring both Scotists and Thomists, and reappeared in the teaching of the Jesuit theologian Molina. The interpretation of Lessius however, espoused by seventeenth century Jesuits, brought Molinism very close to the naturalism of Pelagius. Preventive grace was deemed necessary but subject to acceptance by the human will, thereby overthrowing the notions of irresistibility and predestination in Augustine and affirming a universal salvific will in God. It also necessarily abolished the Augustinian distinction between "sufficient" and "efficacious" grace, the "sufficient" grace promoted by Jesuit humanism offering man all the divine help needed to perform a meritorious action. "Sufficient" grace is rendered "efficacious" therefore simply by man's own effort, with God contributing only a simultaneous concord and salvation dependent not on the arbitrary choice of divine omnipotence but on that of a completely autonomous human will.

The battle engaged between the claims of nature and grace in seventeenth century France, in the rational theology of Jesuit humanism and the revived Augustinianism of the Jansenists, constituted a renewal, then, of the on-going controversy between Eastern and Western theologies of grace initiated by Pelagius and Augustine in the fifth century.

NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

1. Reference material for this section: H.F. Stewart's introduction to Pascal, Blaise, Les Lettres Provinciales (Manchester, University Press, 1920), pp.XV-XX; N.P. Williams, The Grace of God (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1966), pp.25-114; J. Miel, Pascal and Theology (Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), pp.1-63.
2. Stewart, Les Lettres Provinciales, p. XVII.



DOCTRINAL PRESUPPOSITIONS.<sup>1</sup>

The development of the Christian doctrine of grace, resting on the key doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin is, as N.P. Williams observes, associated with the name of Augustine, and those doctrines sanctioned in the Canons of the Council of Trent, the Thirty Nine Articles, the Institutio of Calvin, and the Augsburg Confession, are in his view "so many modified and competing versions of Augustinianism".<sup>2</sup> The ideas of Original Sin and Grace had developed quite independently in Jewish thought and it was by St. Paul rather than by Christ, that they were given authority in the New Testament and transmitted to modern Christianity. The study, under the tutelage of Ambrose, of St. Paul's writing on predestination and grace, and of certain of the Western Fathers, confirmed by the spiritual insights of his conversion experience, led Augustine to combine these concepts and elaborate them into "a vast intellectual scheme"<sup>3</sup> since known as the Christian doctrine of grace. A.V.G. Allen points out that, though anticipated in the work of Tertullian, Ambrosiaster and Augustine's mentor Ambrose, the doctrine of Original Sin as expounded by Augustine was not only unknown to Greek thought but an innovation in Western Christendom.<sup>4</sup> The doctrine was fully developed in De Diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum begun in 396, well before the Pelagian controversy, the latter sparked off, in fact, by Pelagian objections to its implicit expression in the Confessions of 400.<sup>5</sup> As Miel further indicates, the harshness of the Augustinian doctrine cannot

therefore be excused on the grounds that Augustine was forced to harden his views by the constraints of the controversy, a claim made by those in the Middle Ages who wished to temper his doctrine.

The Fall and Original Sin: Pre-Fall Adam

The initial premise of Augustine's system consists in the doctrine of the Fall, a strictly literal interpretation of the Adam and Eve story. The first Christian theologian to devote serious attention to the state of Adam before the Fall, Augustine paints a glowing picture of human nature in the paradisaical state, carrying "to its highest pitch the growing tendency to attribute original righteousness and perfection to the first man".<sup>6</sup> Created mortal, Adam nevertheless enjoyed a conditional or possible immortality which carried with it immunity from the physical ills of life as it is now known, together with surpassing intellectual gifts. He possessed original innocence so that his nature was without vice or essential weakness, capable not only of perceiving the good, but also of performing it with ease. Reason and will were in equilibrium and exercised perfect control over his actions and bodily passions.

Since Adam was created for an end which was divine in its nature and origin, he was given a special divine assistance or "sufficient" grace without which his will was absolutely incapable of acting righteously or persevering in so doing and attaining the supernatural end, the enjoyment of God, for which he was destined at creation. Adam's freedom consisted, therefore, not in an inability to sin but in the ability not to sin if he so willed. The condition of achieving this goal was continued union with God through the subjection of his will in acknowledgement of a radical

dependence upon Him. As Abercrombie observes, "the right activity of man is all summed up in conversion to the God who made him, that he may become, from God, and by God, just, pious, wise, and happy".<sup>7</sup> The grace given to Adam which facilitated participation in the good, or God, was therefore as light to whole eyes, by the aid of which he may see. Had Adam fulfilled the condition of its reception, he would have attained immortality among the blessed in heaven, without enduring the suffering and death of a mortal existence.

In the opinion of N.P. Williams,<sup>8</sup> Augustine never made up his mind decisively whether this "donum superadditum" of Adam should be distinguished from the "pura naturalia" as found in the Schoolmen, or identified with them as in the Reformers and by implication, Jansen - a question of some importance in the eyes of certain critics of the Augustinus.<sup>9</sup> Clearly, as Gilson<sup>10</sup> emphasises, Augustine considered every grace including existence itself to be a wholly gratuitous gift of God, the crucial question for him being the recovery of that special divine assistance required by Adam, in view of his finitude, for the enjoyment of eternal life.

#### Post-Fall Adam

Though trifling in appearance, the first sin was particularly heinous in the view of Augustine, since it did not result from the difficulty of the precepts laid down by God or any inherent weakness or frailty in Adam's will which had no particular bias towards evil. It constituted a deliberate and unnecessary transgression of the divine command, of the greatest possible importance for the history of the human race, for as such it included in itself all possible forms of sin - pride, sacrilege, spiritual fornication, infidelity, theft, covetousness and suicide. The chief ground of Adam's

sin, however, was pride, the desire for self-determination and independence from God as his true principle, an act of perversity arising from his creatureliness which made such an aversion possible. In retribution for this act of rebellion Adam was abandoned by God in the love of creatures and the result of this self-imposed separation was the loss of all those privileges to which such a union had entitled him, - supernatural grace, immortality, impassibility, inward and outward harmony - becoming thereby the slave of concupiscence, ignorance and everlasting death of body and soul.

Augustine distinguishes two aspects of Original Sin: the "vitium" or hereditary moral disease from which man suffers; and the "reatus" or inherited legal liability to which he is subject as punishment. He defined the first as "the unbridled and inordinate tyranny of concupiscence ... the tendency that impels man to turn from the supreme and immutable good, which is God, in order to find his satisfaction and comfort in that which is mutable and less than God, that is, in creatures".<sup>11</sup> Augustine saw the reproductive instinct in man, in his view the most violent and least amenable to reason, as the greatest symptom of concupiscence which he tended, as a consequence, to equate with sexual passion. This identification provided a sufficient explanation for the transmission of concupiscence, in which punishment for the first sin principally consisted. Not simply in virtue of its physical descent from Adam, but because of its seminal identity with him (since the whole human race was in the loins of Adam when he sinned), this sin and the guilt attaching to it are imputed to all humanity.

A further consequence of the Fall and man's enslavement to concupiscence is the loss of the freedom enjoyed by Adam,

of being able to avoid sin and persevere in the good. In fact, fallen man is under a necessity of sinning since he begins life where Adam left off, free to sin but incapable of acting righteously without a radical conversion to God. His will, now controlled by the passions is no longer free to follow the judgement of reason but locked into love of creatures. As Abercrombie observes, "the creature may be free to empty itself, but it can never be filled except by the hand of the Creator".<sup>12</sup>

Though scarred and vitiated as a result of Adam's sin, human nature does, in Augustine, fall short of "total depravity," the inference drawn by Calvin and Luther from his doctrine. Restrained perhaps by his Platonic view of all being as a participation in the being of God, Augustine insisted that a trace of the divine image remained in Adam to bear witness to what was lost, evident in man's greatest attribute reason, by means of which concupiscence imitates God in the creation of earthly peace and order. Although darkened by the Fall, the mind is still capable of knowing truth and loving goodness, and even in fallen man there are natural virtues and good works. Though useless for salvation since they do not result from a special supernatural grace, all are nevertheless gifts of God and attributable to the general concursus sustaining the being of all creatures and the operations of nature.

#### Original Guilt and Predestination

The legal aspect of Original Sin consists in the imputation of the infinite guilt incurred by the wilful transgression of Adam to the whole of humanity who, by "seminal identity", participated in and were co-responsible for his perverse choice, and in virtue of which henceforth became

a "massa damnata", justly doomed to eternal damnation. By reason of original sin alone all the unbaptised, even guiltless infants, were destined to suffer the pains of hell, the latter, however, in a somewhat mitigated form. Since all were guilty, God was not obliged to redeem anyone but his kindness (gratia) impelled Him to elect from all eternity certain individuals from the massa damnata to bring to baptism and faith in Christ, leaving the remainder subject to a decree, not so much of reprobation as of preterition, a distinction, as N.P. Williams indicates, without a difference.<sup>13</sup>

Augustine insisted that there was nothing unfair about this apparently arbitrary and unjust arrangement, excusing it by reference to an "occult justice" in God, transcendent and incomprehensible to men. At the same time, however, he maintained that all men have the possibility of being among the elect if they so wish. It is God's will that they should be saved, though of necessity only the elect, whose number is hidden in the inscrutable mystery of the godhead, do actually will their salvation. Augustine was forced to defend this assertion of an arbitrary and infallible predestination in the face of the apparently unequivocal proof of a universal salvific will in God in the text, "whose will it is that all men should find salvation and come to know the truth" (1 Timothy 2, 4). His somewhat far-fetched attempts to explain away the meaning of "all", interpreting it to mean that God wills the salvation of all the elect, among whom men of all types and races are represented, were later taken up and used by Pascal.<sup>14</sup>

It is by the bestowal or withdrawal of this grace by the manipulation of its foreseen acceptability, in the divine

ordering of human lives, that the decree of predestination is effected and the elect, despite temporary lapses to induce humility, die in a state of grace and are brought to eternal life. Predestination is therefore of two kinds: to faith, baptism and membership of the Church in this life; or to salvation in the life to come through the gift of final perseverance. In the Ecrits sur la Grâce<sup>15</sup> Pascal describes the three groups into which mankind is thus divided: the bulk of humanity damned in virtue of Original Sin; those temporarily plucked from this group by the grace of justification; and "the Divine favourites"<sup>16</sup> permanently elected and predestined to glory.

#### The Grace of Redemption

In Augustine's view it was impossible for man to rise from the mire of concupiscence without the gift of a special "efficacious" grace to heal the corrupt will of fallen man and restore the divine image which was lost by the Fall. The source of this grace is the adoption of a creature by God in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ. Through baptism recipients of the grace of election receive remission of sins and the grace of justification. Augustine, as N.P. Williams explains,<sup>17</sup> understood "iustificare" as "to make just" rather than "to account or hold just", so that the former meaning in St. Paul came to be enlarged to include not only God's favour of preliminary absolution to the elect but also the "power", "gift" or "help" which he infuses into their souls to develop their moral and spiritual perfection.

In addition to the "prevenient" grace by which God excites in the soul the desire to will the good, "sanctifying" grace provides the divine power which is absolutely necessary for all Christians in order for them to perform any salutary

good work whatsoever. The whole of Augustine's view of grace, as Abercrombie observes, is summed up in the text, "Without me ye can do nothing".<sup>18</sup> For Augustine "grace, and grace alone, made the exercise of the Christian life possible; grace, in his view, does more than enable a man to do good works; it 'gets them done'".<sup>19</sup>

Occasionally Augustine follows the Pauline view of grace and equates it with the Holy Spirit which he frequently called "the finger of God". Elsewhere it is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and this differentiation later developed into the conception of grace as an impersonal force emitted by God. For Augustine, grace is always the grace of Christ, reflecting the centrality of Christ's death and suffering in his view of the Atonement. As Hastings Rashdall observes,<sup>20</sup> the whole theology of Augustine is concerned with redemption and all else is subordinated to it, resting, as in St. Paul, upon the twin pillars of Adam and Christ. By the fall of the first the whole of humanity was delivered into the Devil's power, and their redemption was effected solely by the death of the second, who, vicariously suffering the punishment due to man, gave his blood to the Devil as a ransom for the release of the elect.

Although the word "irresistible" does not occur in the writings of Augustine in relation to grace, other terms such as "insuperabiliter" furnish ample evidence that human wills are incapable of withstanding the will of God.<sup>21</sup> This control is exercised both by interior illumination of and action upon the soul, and the providential arrangement of the exterior circumstances which contribute to the shaping of our actions so that "All things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8, 28). To the elect, every circum-



stance of his earthly existence is an occasion of grace, a means of salvation, which he cannot resist or prevent. The essential fatalism inherent in such a system, seen in the submissive acceptance of all events and circumstances as from God and reflected in the writing of Pascal,<sup>22</sup> was not denied by Augustine himself.

There is no struggling against a force which represents all the might of omnipotence, directed by all the intellectual resources of omniscience. God is in the position of a chess-player, gifted with telepathic and hypnotic power of an infinitely high degree, who not merely foresees all the other player's moves, but actually himself makes them, acting through the other's mind and brain, and who consequently has won the game before it has even begun.<sup>23</sup>

#### Grace and Freedom

Determined either by an infallible grace or by concupiscence the will of man can scarcely be said to enjoy a true freedom in the ordinarily accepted sense. Yet Augustine independently affirmed the reality both of an irresistible grace and of free will. N.P. Williams cites the somewhat paradoxical exhortation of Augustine, delivered in a sermon on the text "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him", which reflects this ambivalence - "Art thou not yet drawn? pray that thou mayest be".<sup>24</sup>

The problem of reconciling grace with freedom of choice simply did not exist for Augustine.<sup>25</sup> He was concerned rather with the problem of liberty, i.e. whether it is in our power to will and therefore execute a good choice, since the act of willing is never, in his view, divorced from the action itself. The difference between the man who has grace and the man who does not lies, not in the possession or lack of free choice, but in its efficacy. Augustine believed that he had reconciled the two sides of the dichotomy of

free will and an absolute predestination in the theory of the "delectatio". The will, he claimed, always chooses freely in response to a motive, the attraction of some good perceived in its object. Indeed, the will consists essentially in love or delight, the inner weight which draws it to one end rather than another, the movement in which liberty finds expression. Knowing the response which each soul would freely make to every motive presented to it, grace operates in the elect by way of an infallible attraction, restoring the love of God or charity of which Adam's will was once capable, and emancipating it from sin and temptation into the liberty of the children of God. Those excluded from salvation may hear the call of grace but, having received only a "sufficient" grace, they find the delight of concupiscence more powerful and unfailingly choose sin.

The will under grace therefore retains its free choice and gains liberty, for grace enables free choice to act. As N.P. Williams succinctly states, "We are free to do what we like, but we are not free to like what we ought to like".<sup>26</sup> The Augustinian system, he concludes, "implies the negation of free will in any except a highly recondite and unnatural sense of the term"<sup>27</sup>, arguing that, "in order to preserve a nominal freedom in man he is driven to make use of shifts and expedients which, with all due respect to his mighty intellect, it is difficult to regard as more than mere verbal jugglery".<sup>28</sup> The inconsistencies and equivocation found in the writings of Pascal on grace can therefore be directly attributed to the attempt by Augustine to preserve man's responsibility for sin and God's sole causality in the performance of the good through the gift of divine grace.

Merit

The conception of merit as a source of election or spiritual credit is, as the Reformers acknowledged, contradictory to the very idea of a wholly gratuitous grace and is particularly irreconcilable with one defined as irresistible, but by the fourth century such a notion was already built into Scripture and the tradition of the Church.<sup>29</sup> The essential determinism of Augustine's doctrine and insistence upon predestination "ante praevisa merita", made merit a possibility only as the result of good works produced by the elect under grace. Since the merit in virtue of which they receive eternal life is thus the gift of God, it can be considered only nominal in Augustine.

Knowledge of God<sup>30</sup>

The influence upon Augustine of the Platonic Theory of Ideas which led him to see goodness as a participation in God, and therefore restored in fallen man only by His gift of Himself, also led him to view God as the universal of all particular truths. He saw the intellect as occupying a midway position between sensory knowledge upon which it passes judgement, and the given truths or principles in accordance with which these judgements are made, and to which the intellect necessarily assents. In his view, the knowledge of such truths which are necessary, immutable and eternal, cannot themselves be the product either of the senses or human reason, since these are contingent and changeable, but are perceived under the influence of a special illuminative action of God which he compares to the sun's light in regard to vision. While, by the use of reason working on sense data, man can come to understand the nature of material things, the divine illumination enables him to see their

relation to the eternal realities.

Augustine's own experience convinced him that reason is unable to bring us knowledge of God and beatitude by its resources alone. This deficiency in reason he believed explicable only in terms of Original Sin and capable of restoration only by its Creator. The first step in the ascent of the mind to God is therefore not a matter of rational demonstration but of faith, defined by Gilson as "both an adherence of the mind to supernatural truth and a humble surrender of the whole man to the grace of Christ".<sup>31</sup> The reward of faith is an intuitive knowledge of God found in Revelation or in the natural world, or placed directly in the soul and only fully completed in the next life. This does not imply the total rejection of natural theology found in Pascal, for Augustine believed that the universe afforded ample evidence of God as its author.<sup>32</sup>

### The Christian Life<sup>33</sup>

For Augustine knowledge and happiness were synonymous, so that knowledge of God must necessarily lead to the enjoyment of Him who is eternal. Characteristic of the Christian life is the particular attitude to the things of the material world adopted by those living under the rule of charity. Augustine held that we "enjoy" whatever we think of as an end in itself and "use" what we regard only as the means to an end. Since this is possible solely through the saving blood of Christ it is only within his Body, the Church, which mediates, in its sacraments and teaching, the grace of conversion and absolution, that the Christian life can be realized. This consists in an imitation of the suffering of Christ both as a penance for sin and as a source of redemption and union with him. Whilst grace recreates in

the elect the image of God, life nevertheless remains a constant struggle between the flesh and the spirit, for as long as man is in a tainted body his soul can obey God's law, but the flesh remains under the power of concupiscence from which it is released only at death.

Emile Mersch describes Augustine's psychological conception of the Mystical Body, formulated against the Donatists and the Pelagians and establishing the Western view of the Atonement as consisting only in the death and suffering of Christ, who in his continued passion incorporates men into himself and unites them with God in his Body, the Church.

En cet homme unique le Sauveur continue sa passion, comme il y prolongue sa prière, et le sang de l'agonie ne cesse de couler par les plaies des martyrs.

- ... Mais ces tourments demeurent ceux du Christ. Seulement, en passant dans la chrétienté, ils prennent une sorte d'extension catholique.
- ... A ce trésor commun, nous versons chacun ce que nous devons, et, d'après nos forces, nous apportons tous notre part. La mesure de la passion ne sera pleine que quand le monde sera fini.

La douleur, pour les chrétiens, n'est pas un accident: elle est devoir de profession. Vivre, pour eux, c'est mourir à une vie antérieure; vivre, c'est s'insérer dans un Sauveur qui veut continuer en eux ses douleurs expiatrices et sa lutte contre le péché. Lui-même a été en horreur au monde, parce qu'il lui était contraire; il faut donc que son corps aussi subisse persécution et mépris.<sup>34</sup>

On this view the Church, as A.V.G. Allen claims,<sup>35</sup> takes the place of Christ as the way of Redemption, since it is the deposit of divinely given supernatural truth in Revelation. The Eucharist is a continuation of the sacrifice of the Cross and as such is the source of the life and unity of the Church since it is the very substance of the Saviour.

The whole of humanity is consequently divided into two mutually exclusive societies: the city of God consisting

of the justified under the rule of grace or charity; and the earthly city under the domination of concupiscence or the Devil. For both the world is the instrument of God's predestinatory will: the former through grace rejecting its pleasures and viewing every aspect of the earthly life as a means of sanctification and the attainment of beatitude; the latter, deprived of the divine illumination, enjoying material things as ends in themselves, and thereby forfeiting eternal life and meriting damnation.

The slender Biblical foundation upon which the enormous edifice of Augustine's doctrine was based comprises, as N.P. Williams<sup>36</sup> indicates, five proof-texts of which three were mistranslations, together with an alleged consensus of Tradition consisting of citations from a selection of Western Fathers, the practice of baptism, and the physical and mental misery of the actual state of man - all pointing in Augustine's view to the presence in man of a profound hereditary guilt.<sup>37</sup>

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL GROUND

All Christian theories of grace, in the opinion of N.P. Williams,<sup>38</sup> are so many "rationalizations" of differing experiences of grace, and the writer elsewhere indicates that such an experience is the true warrant for the premises from which each is nominally deduced.<sup>39</sup> The psychological ground for the Augustinian theology of grace, and especially the doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin, undoubtedly lies in the experience and temperament of the specifically "twice-born"<sup>40</sup> religious personality, of which William James<sup>41</sup> considered Augustine a classic example. James outlines the essential elements of the twice-born temperament: a natural pessimism and intensity of feeling; an extreme sensitivity

to suffering and evil both within the self and in the world and mankind generally; and an ever-present consciousness of mortality and consequent evaluation of natural pleasures and even natural virtue as worthless, vain and transitory since they are inevitably cancelled out by death.<sup>42</sup> Since evil is perceived to be so radical and ingrained that it cannot possibly be overcome by the power of the natural will, a profound sense of failure, sinfulness and despair of ever attaining lasting happiness is the characteristic attitude of such a type. The psychological basis of the twice-born character resides therefore, according to James, in "a certain discordancy or heterogeneity in the native temperament of the subject, an incompletely unified moral and intellectual constitution".<sup>43</sup> The discord consists in the conflict between an innate longing for enduring happiness and the felt sinfulness and weakness of will which appear to preclude the possibility of such an ideal ever being realized.<sup>44</sup>

In his Confessions Augustine records the yearning for God and the consciousness of sin and moral weakness which divide him, and which are explicable to him only in terms of a nature vitiated by original sin.

Myself when I was deliberating upon serving the Lord my God now, as I had long purposed, it was I who willed, I who nilled, I, I myself. I neither willed entirely, nor nilled entirely. Therefore was I at strife with myself, and rent asunder by myself. And this rent befel me against my will, and yet indicated, not the presence of another mind, but the punishment of my own. Therefore it was no more I that wrought it, but sin that dwelt in me; the punishment of a sin more freely committed, in that I was a son of Adam.<sup>45</sup>

N.P. Williams points out that a theology based upon such an experience of moral impotence and human misery will always

appeal to "Augustine's psychological kinsfolk",<sup>46</sup> such as St. Paul, Luther, Newman and by implication, Pascal. In the Apologia Pro Vita Sua, where a profound pessimism is evident in his description of the hiatus between the promise and actual condition of man's being, Newman gives substance to this claim.

And so I argue about the world; - if there be a God, since there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal calamity. It is out of joint with the purposes of its Creator. This is a fact, a fact as true as the fact of its existence; and thus the doctrine of what is theologically called original sin becomes to me almost as certain as that the world exists, and as the existence of God.<sup>47</sup>

In the face of a universe totally devoid of meaning or any comforting trace of God, such a "sick soul"<sup>48</sup> can feel only panic and terror. He requires above all an authoritarian religion of redemption and deliverance, for a human nature thus vitiated and powerless clearly requires a supernatural remedy to effect the renunciation of all that is temporal and a conversion to the higher good. For such a religious type, "There are two lives, the natural and the spiritual, and we must lose the one before we can participate in the other".<sup>49</sup> In his dramatic conversion, Augustine (and Pascal) clearly discovered the psychological truth that it is only as the will is surrendered and the struggle abandoned that unification of will and ideal is possible, for, as James writes, "We cannot create a belief ... when our perception actively assures us of its opposite".<sup>50</sup> Augustine interpreted the experience as demonstrating conclusively that the true good is possible only as the will is empowered by the gift of a supernatural "efficacious" grace, given in response to complete submission to God in humility and repentance, the latter



itself a grace and perceived as the fruit of his mother's prayers.<sup>51</sup> Sincere repentance, humility and renunciation, on this view, are both the condition of the assurance and joy of election and the result of the gift of grace.

The temperament of the twice-born character can, therefore, be seen as crucial in the interpretation of his religious experience. As Rudolph Otto so convincingly demonstrates in The Idea of the Holy<sup>52</sup>, an analysis of such experience, especially in the more mystical types<sup>53</sup>, reveals the a priori non-rational insights of which the basic pre-suppositions of doctrine are the inadequate rational expression, inevitably stressing the rational attributes of God at the expense of the "numinous"<sup>54</sup> content. His interpretation of the intuitive apprehension of the numen as "mysterium tremendum et fascinans", the felt awe or reverence in the face of the mystery and transcendent majesty of an absent God, combined with the felt bliss in the assurance of His love and mercy, would appear to explain the essentially paradoxical character of Augustine's belief.

In his short work Sur la Conversion du pécheur<sup>55</sup>, Pascal records these intuitive apprehensions concerning the nature of God, the world and man, together with the responses they evoke, as they arise in the conversion experience. The Augustinian doctrine must clearly always appeal to all such twice-born types who have the same a priori knowledge which is its ground and guarantee.

The more daunting quality of the numinous consciousness includes the felt mysteriousness or "wholly other" character of God, inducing the belief "that God transcends all reason, in the sense that He is beyond the powers of our conceiving, not merely beyond our powers of comprehension"<sup>56</sup>, calling

for the rejection of reason as a possible means of access to knowledge of God. A qualitative difference is perceived to exist between natural and supernatural categories of evaluation<sup>57</sup>, a discontinuity hardened and codified by Pascal in his doctrine of the three orders. God is necessarily a "Deus absconditus" whose nature cannot be understood conceptually, but who can be "known" only intuitively. Otto believes that the mysteriousness and inaccessibility of the numen is expressed in the absoluteness of all rational attributes applied to God (love, knowledge, goodness, mercy and justice), which, though derived from social ideals, altogether exceed our power of understanding<sup>58</sup>.

The "aweful aspect" (tremendum) of the deity, as author and sustainer of all existence, evoking the response of religious humility, is rationalized in ideas of omnipotence, justice and moral will<sup>59</sup>. All human willing, all human experience and all events (good or evil), must be attributed to the divine will and all apparent injustices explained by reference to an "occult" justice in God. When the omnipotence of God is thus extended to place God outside the moral law, it necessarily destroys the moral goodness of God<sup>60</sup>.

Otto describes "creature-feeling"<sup>61</sup> or religious humility as the response elicited by the felt unapproachability and overpoweringness of God. This feeling of dependence, impotence and nothingness which demands the annihilation of self is not a moral depreciation however, but rather a disvaluation of the self in respect to existence, together with a corresponding judgement of appreciation of the numen. The conviction of radical sinfulness and unworthiness, of despair of ever transcending them and the felt need for

redemption accompany this self-disvaluation. The depreciation of the "flesh" in St. Paul, the identification of original sin with concupiscence in Augustine and Pascal's evaluation of the natural world as worthless and perishing and rejection of all human affections witness to the reality of "creature-feeling".

Directly opposed to the intimidating aspect of the numinous consciousness is the element of attractiveness (fascinans) found in the "joy" of salvation or the experience of beatitude which can be known only in a living experience of God<sup>62</sup>. Such an experience of union is perceived by the sinner as an undeserved mercy and from it arises the conviction of God's love and mercy - all, in fact, that is meant by the term "grace". The person of Christ, the divinely appointed means of atonement, is perceived as the sole source of this union for the Christian<sup>63</sup>, for only by his blood is the sinner cleansed and made fit for the presence of God. His Body is therefore the refuge to which man must cling to ensure a continuation of grace and joy<sup>64</sup>.

The response of the creature granted participation in the true reality of God is the total surrender of heart and mind, even a fatalistic abandonment of self-responsibility. An analysis of the characteristic practical consequences of conversion in the lives of twice-born Christians by William James<sup>65</sup> reveals a marked correspondence with the requirements listed by Pascal in his correspondence. Submission and humility are manifested in the voluntary withdrawal from and renunciation of the world in asceticism, poverty, charity, purity, the rejection of family ties and other distractions, and the acceptance of suffering and penance to purge sin and escape punishment in the next life. The mixture of fear and

joy experienced by the elect reflects the dual response to the presence of the numen<sup>66</sup>.

The doctrine of Predestination arises, in the view of Otto, from the experience of individual election, a religious intuition of having been chosen and preordained unto salvation, and especially of God as its sole and absolute cause. The recipient feels that "grace was imparted to him, grasped him, impelled, and led him"<sup>67</sup>. Any suggestion that man by his own reason and moral effort can merit grace is therefore inconceivable in view of this all-embracing efficacy of God<sup>68</sup>.

Otto underlines the danger inherent in the formulation of theological concepts from non-rational insights which ought to serve only as ideograms of the divine nature. C.A. Campbell<sup>69</sup> endorses the implication of Otto's thesis, namely that the function of theology is to suggest, not portray the corresponding moment in the numinous. The affirmation of the dual character of the numen, for example, in His omnipotence and justice on the one hand, and love and mercy on the other, gives rise to inconsistencies and absurdities which are quite inexplicable to the rational, non-mystical individual concerned only with the moral aspects of the religious life. The obvious absurdity of simultaneously asserting the reality of free will and the omnipotence of God, or the blatant injustice in the abandonment of those left in the "massa damnata" by a God who is Justice itself, illustrate this fact.

Otto concluded that such intuitive knowledge of God cannot be adequately communicated or taught by rational means but is a matter of feeling<sup>70</sup> and must be aroused from the spirit of man, a point recognized and underlined by Pascal

in De l'Art de Pesuader, and of prime importance for the understanding of the apologetic method of the Pensees. The source of religious growth in man is described as an a priori capacity in man for the supernatural which, when aroused, becomes an impulsion to seek God<sup>71</sup>. Almond<sup>72</sup> describes this universal predisposition as "a faculty of receptivity and a principle of judgement and acknowledgement" which recognizes and acknowledges the sacred, an action attributed by Augustine to "prevenient" grace.

Clearly, the twice-born type represents but one aspect of a religious consciousness which covers a broad spectrum from the rational humanism of Pelagius, optimistically affirming a God-given reason and freedom in man as sufficient for the good, to the irrational determinism of Luther and Calvin, for whom both will and reason were impotent. A.V.G. Allen suggests that Augustine lived out in his own experience the dominant moods of his time and that his mission was "to personate the crisis through which the church and the world of his time were passing"<sup>73</sup>. Under the influence of such Fathers as Tertullian and Ambrose, Western Christianity was clearly moving towards a theology tailored to the perceptions of the twice-born soul and when given definitive form by Augustine, that theology established the sharp divisions between man and God, the secular and the religious, and the Church and the world, which were to persist until the Reformation.

Augustine found in the Platonism<sup>74</sup> of Apuleus a vehicle perfectly suited to the expression in dogmatic form of the non-rational insights of his particular religious experience. As the universal of all goodness, power, knowledge and reality, God transcends reason, while the natural counterparts or

"shadows" of these attributes have the illusory, transitory and worthless character attributed to them by the "creature-feeling" in the face of the holy. Aristotle was to perform a similar function for the more rational and moral, if less religious temper of Renaissance humanism in the rational theology of the Scholastics. The revival of Augustinianism in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, culminating in the Jansenist movement, merely reflected the resistance of twice-born Christians to the modification by the Catholic Church of Augustinian theology and the adoption of religious practices suited to the more rational temperament. Otto observes,

The battle here joined between so-called "Platonism" and "Aristotelianism", and in general the long persistent protest against the scholastics, is itself in large part nothing but the struggle between the rational and the non-rational elements in the Christian religion; And the same antithesis is clearly operative as a factor in Luther's protest against Aristotle and the "theologi moderni".<sup>75</sup>

NOTES

## CHAPTER I

1. Reference material for Augustine's theology of Grace: N.J. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1936), pp.1-47; J.N.D. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, (London, Adam and Charles Black, 1960), pp.344-395; Miel, Pascal and Theology, pp.20-37; N.P. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, (London, Longmans, Green, 1927), pp.317-389; Williams, The Grace of God, pp.25-51.
2. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.322.
3. Williams, The Grace of God, p.25.
4. A.V.G. Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, (London, Ward, Lock and Co., 1884), p.157.
5. Miel, Pascal and Theology, p.20.
6. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, p.362.
7. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, p.5.
8. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.363.
9. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, pp.154-155.
10. E. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, (London, Gollancz, 1961), p.152.
11. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.365.
12. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, p.19.
13. Williams, The Grace of God, p.46.
14. see page 114.
15. see pages 108-109.
16. Williams, The Grace of God, p.31.
17. *ibid.*, p.28.
18. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, p.7.
19. *ibid.*, p.32.
20. H. Rashdall, The Idea of the Atonement in Christian Theology, (London, Macmillan, 1920), p.330.
21. Williams, The Grace of God, p.33.
22. see page 82.

23. Williams, The Grace of God, p.34.
24. *ibid.*, p.36.
25. For an account of Augustine's reconciliation of freedom and grace, see Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, pp.157-164.
26. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.369.
27. *ibid.*, p.370.
28. *ibid.*, p.368.
29. Williams, The Grace of God, pp.46-48.
30. F. Copleston, A History of Philosophy, Vol.11, Medieval Philosophy: Augustine to Scotus, (London, Burns, Oates, 1950), pp.51-67, provides the background to this section. See also Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, pp.27-43.
31. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, p.31.
32. *ibid.*, p.12.
33. *ibid.*, pp.165-184 and E. Mersch, Le Corps Mystique du Christ, (Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1951), Vol.II, pp.35-138 provide an account of the Augustinian concept of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ.
34. Mersch, Le Corps Mystique du Christ, Vol.II, pp.110-112.
35. Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.143.
36. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, pp.378-380.
37. cf. Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.157.
38. Williams, The Grace of God, p.116.
39. Williams, The Grace of God, p.91. See also The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, pp.329-331, and p.378 and H. de Lubac, Augustinianism and Modern Theology (London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1969), p.46.
40. The terms "once-born" and "twice-born", coined by Francis W. Newman, are explained in an extract from his work cited by W. James in The Varieties of Religious Experience (Glasgow, Collins, 1981), pp.94-95.
41. *ibid.*, p.176.
42. *ibid.*, p.143.
43. *ibid.*, p.173.
44. cf. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.324, where the author describes the moral struggle of Augustine.



45. St. Augustine, Confessions, trans. E.B. Pusey, (London, J.M. Dent and Sons, 1970), p.166.
46. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.331.
47. J.H. Newman, Apologia Pro Vita Sua, (London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1886), pp.242-243.
48. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, pp.137-171.
49. *ibid.*, p.172.
50. *ibid.*, p.214.
51. St. Augustine, Confessions, pp.170-172.
52. R. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, (London, Oxford University Press, 1950); see P. Almond, Rudolf Otto, (Chapel Hill and London, University of North Carolina Press, 1984), for a recent interpretation of Otto's work; cf. also C.A. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, (London, George Allen and Unwin, 1957), p.373. In Lecture XVI Campbell discusses the significance of Otto's work.
53. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.323, calls Augustine a "predestinarian mystic". H. Gouhier, Blaise Pascal Commentaires, (Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1966) interprets Pascal's conversion as ascetic rather than mystical. See page 53. "L'union mystique, certes, exige la renonciation au monde, mais cette renonciation n'implique pas l'union mystique".
54. see Otto, The Idea of the Holy, Chapter II.
55. O.C., p.290.
56. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, p.95.
57. *ibid.*, p.15. cf. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, pp.329-339 and E. Underhill, Mysticism, (New York, Dutton, 1961), p.199.
58. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, pp.140-142.
59. *ibid.*, pp.20 and 140.
60. *ibid.*, p.101.
61. *ibid.*, p.10.
62. *ibid.*, pp.30-38; cf. in Mémorial", Joie, joie, joie, pleurs de joie", O.C., p.618.
63. cf. O.C., p.618, "Jésus-Christ, Jésus-Christ". Pascal feels united with God through the person of Christ.
64. *ibid.*, p.618, "Soumission totale à Jésus-Christ et à mon directeur".
65. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, pp.269-320.

66. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, p.31.
67. *ibid.*, p.87.
68. cf. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.322; and The Grace of God, p.35. Augustine's apprehension of the universal divine causality is the major premise upon which his doctrine was developed.
69. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, pp.360-361.
70. cf. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, pp.414-415,"I do believe that feeling is the deeper source of religion, and that philosophic and theological formulas are secondary products, like translations of a text into another tongue".
71. cf. "gouffre infini" of fragment L.148, B.425.
72. Almond, Rudolf Otto, p.109.
73. Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, pp.143-144.
74. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, pp.94-95.
75. *ibid.*, p.94.

## CHAPTER II

## SHORTER WORKS

Reason and Revelation

The genesis or development of certain themes and concepts directly related to Pascal's theology of grace are to be found in his correspondence and shorter writings. Especially important among these are the basic notions which led to the formulation in the Pensées<sup>1</sup> of the doctrine of the three orders. In the Préface. Sur le Traité du Vide<sup>2</sup>, Pascal explains the very explicit distinction between the roles of reason and authority in the fields of natural and supernatural truth which underpin the whole of his scientific and religious writing. In direct opposition to the current trend in the physical sciences he deplores the exaggerated veneration for antiquity, whose findings are revered as infallible principles.

Le respect que l'on porte à l'antiquité étant aujourd'hui à tel point, dans les matières où il doit avoir moins de force, que l'on se fait des oracles de toutes ses pensées, et des mystères même de ses obscurités; que l'on ne peut plus avancer de nouveautés sans péril, et que le texte d'un auteur suffit pour détruire les plus fortes raisons...<sup>3</sup>.

Whilst, with Descartes<sup>4</sup>, Pascal readily accepted this innovative approach to authority in science, he was unwilling to extend it to the field of religion, upholding rather the Jansenist view that theology is a matter of memory. In the Augustinus Jansen devotes the Proemial Book of the second volume to this fundamental Augustinian distinction which constituted a reversal of Scholastic rational theology<sup>5</sup>. Clearly the dramatic conversion which

resulted from Augustine's surrender to the injunction of St. Paul<sup>6</sup> confirmed for him the primacy of faith over reason as a path to God<sup>7</sup>. Allen suggests that submission to the authority of the Church in Revelation resolved for Augustine the long-standing intellectual conflicts of his search for the truth by falling back upon "external authority as the only mode of silencing the reason and satisfying the conscience"<sup>8</sup>. Whatever the cause, the distinction, especially in its final and rigid formulation, is of crucial importance both for Pascal's theology of grace and for his moral theology, since it implies the rejection of all natural theology and precludes the scrutiny of the context of belief by reason and the function of conscience as criterion of true morality. Above all, it establishes the unbridgeable gulf between man and God which renders all human effort vain and grace absolutely necessary for the performance of the good.

In the view of Pascal and of Port-Royal the extent of respect for authority must be assessed in accordance with the source of knowledge, and Pascal therefore divides the sciences into two distinct categories: those which depend on memory alone, and those which depend upon reason.

In the case of the former, subjects such as history, geography, jurisprudence, languages and theology, based upon recorded fact, books are the only source of knowledge. Here, Pascal believes, it is vital that reason submit to authority, the only source of enlightenment; and this is particularly true in theology, where divinely inspired books furnish reason with the facts in matters which surpass its powers of comprehension, where the inspiration of grace

elevates reason to participate in supernatural truth inaccessible simply by its own powers.

C'est l'autorité seule qui nous en peut éclaircir. Mais où cette autorité a la principale force, c'est dans la théologie, parce qu'elle y est inséparable de la vérité, et que nous ne la connaissons que par elle: de sorte que pour donner la certitude entière des matières les plus incompréhensibles à la raison, il suffit de les faire voir dans les livres sacrés (comme pour montrer l'incertitude des choses les plus vraisemblables, il faut seulement faire voir qu'elles n'y sont pas comprises); parce que ses principes sont au-dessus de la nature et de la raison, et que, l'esprit de l'homme étant trop faible pour y arriver par ses propres efforts, il ne peut parvenir à ces hautes intelligences s'il n'y est porté par une force toute-puissante et surnaturelle<sup>9</sup>.

As Laporte<sup>10</sup> indicates, reason is "trop faible" in this domain only inasmuch as it is related to the will, which since the Fall, is turned by concupiscence to the love of self and of created goods, and cannot, therefore, attain to knowledge of God.

No such blindness affects reason in the field of the natural sciences such as geometry, arithmetic, music, physics and medicine. Reason is sufficient here and authority unnecessary, for truth is self-evident to the senses and proportionate to the reach of the mind, which has complete freedom to extend continually and endlessly the scope of its productivity and experimentation.

Mais comme les sujets de cette sorte sont proportionnés à la portée de l'esprit, il trouve une liberté toute entière de s'y étendre: sa fécondité inépuisable produit continuellement, et ses inventions peuvent être tout ensemble sans fin et sans interruption...<sup>11</sup>

Subject as they are to reasoning and experiment, these sciences must be continually augmented to become perfect, and just as the ancients added to the knowledge of those

before them, so each generation must build upon the work of the last, gradually expanding the sum of natural knowledge.

It was the controversy over the vacuum, in which the Jesuit, Père Noël, and other traditionalists challenged Pascal's rejection of the authority of the ancients, which elicited such an explicit statement of Pascal's view. He believed that in the spheres of science and theology, reverence for authority was being perverted by such men, and he especially deplored those who relied upon reason instead of the authority of the Scriptures and the Fathers in theology. In his attack upon the casuistry of the Jesuits in the Provinciales, it is their innovative approach to moral principles and disregard of the law of the Gospels, which, for him, constitute a heresy<sup>12</sup>. Conversely, in the physical sciences, where Pascal believes reasoning and experimentation are the only principles, and the role of reason is to recognize facts and submit to reality, authority is revered and innovation frowned upon. It is by the sense data from such experimentation that the secrets of nature are being revealed, the ancients forming a stepping-stone to a greater knowledge of the universe. Such excessive respect for authority is, in fact, an affront to human reason, putting it on a level with animal instinct whose responses are programmed by nature to remain within carefully prescribed limits<sup>13</sup>.

Man, however, is made for infinity and his whole life, and that of mankind generally, constitutes a continual striving towards the attainment of natural truth. Laporte describes the mark of this capacity in man as "l'insatiable élan qui le fait tendre perpétuellement à se dépasser lui-

même, et 'l'élève' sans relâche au delà de tout ce qui est fini?"<sup>14</sup> just as each man learns not only from his own experience, but also from that of his predecessors, and advances from day to day, so mankind can be regarded as a single individual, advancing from age to age as the universe grows older<sup>15</sup>. The philosophers of antiquity, such as Aristotle, therefore lived in the childhood of mankind, and antiquity resides rather with men of the present age. Whilst the former can be admired for the conclusions they drew from their limited experience, these must nevertheless be regarded only as opinions and not as final truth. Certitudes in science must, for Pascal, always be regarded as partial, relative and provisional, and, although with Descartes he saw the science of nature as mechanistic physics, he could not agree with the latter on the status of conclusions. As Laporte points out, "Descartes prétend pour la science à une certitude globale qui serait aussi une certitude absolue"<sup>16</sup>, seeking, in the view of Chevalier<sup>17</sup>, to reconstruct reality instead of submitting to it.

In the Lettre à Père Noël (1647), defending this new physics and the possibility of the existence of a vacuum, Pascal cites a universal rule for the recognition of truth in science, namely, that only those things either so self-evident to the senses and reason that they can be affirmed as principles, or those deduced from them, can be considered as true. We can pass decisive judgements only on things based on one of these two conditions and everything else must be left in a state of indecision, provisionally labelled "vision", "idée", or "belle pensée" until compel-

ling evidence renders them capable of affirmation<sup>18</sup>.

Both in science and religion, then, reason must submit to the facts: in the realm of natural phenomena to those provided by sense experience and self-evident principles; but in theology only to those given directly by God in Revelation.

Et nous réservons pour les mystères de la foi, que le Saint-Esprit a lui-même révélés, cette soumission d'esprit qui porte notre croyance à des mystères cachés aux sens et à la raison<sup>19</sup>.

Krailsheimer<sup>20</sup> rightly suggests that this ultimate criterion of all Pascal's scientific work, namely, submission to the facts however inconvenient, rather than abstract principles, persisted as a characteristic element of all his later work on religion. This is very evident in the Ecrits sur la Grâce and the Pensées, where Pascal first places before the reader the facts of the human condition as incontrovertible proof of the authenticity of the Scriptures, and of the Fathers as divinely inspired.

The division of all knowledge into three categories: sense data, logical or mathematical principles derived from the intellect, revealed truth which resulted from the submission of reason; is given full expression in the eighteenth Provinciale, where Pascal challenges the Jesuit Annat to produce evidence of the presence of the Five Propositions in the Augustinus.

D'où apprendrons-nous donc la vérité des faits?  
Ce sera des yeux, mon Père, qui en sont les légitimes juges, comme la raison l'est des choses naturelles et intelligibles, et la foi des choses surnaturelles et révélées<sup>21</sup>.

Pascal's insistence upon the absolute discontinuity existing between the three orders of body, mind and charity



is expressed in several of his shorter works. In his letter to the Queen of Sweden (1652)<sup>22</sup>, dedicating to her his calculating machine, he makes a very precise distinction in kind and degree between the orders of "corps" and "esprit". Suggesting that the Queen has, in fact, attained the highest rank in both orders, he nevertheless defines them as heterogenous and ascending, the highest degree in the one amounting to no more than an image of that in the other.

Les mêmes degrés se rencontrent entre les génies qu'entre les conditions; et le pouvoir des rois sur les sujets n'est, ce me semble, qu'une image du pouvoir des esprits sur les esprits qui leur sont inférieurs, sur lesquels ils exercent le droit de persuader, qui est parmi eux ce que le droit de commander est dans le gouvernement politique. Ce second empire me paraît même d'un ordre d'autant plus élevé, que les esprits sont d'un ordre plus élevé que les corps, et d'autant plus équitable, qu'il ne peut être départi et conservé que par le mérite, au lieu que l'autre<sup>23</sup> peut l'être par la naissance ou par la fortune.

As Chevalier<sup>24</sup> points out, Pascal had not yet attained to the order of charity, the certitude and supremacy of whose reality was accorded him at the time of his second conversion.

In De l'Esprit Géométrique and De l'Art de Persuader Pascal explores the functions of mind and heart by which man acquires natural and supernatural truth. Here reason is humbled, the method of mathematical and logical demonstration of "l'esprit de géométrie" falling far short of the intuitive method of "l'esprit de finesse", which penetrates to the heart of a matter "d'une vue", with an immediacy which belongs to judgement or sentiment. The disproportion which Pascal reveals between the finite mind of man and natural truth, whose principles are given by nature and

cannot be defined, underlines the even greater disproportion between man and God, remedied only by a greater gift, that of divine grace which inclines the heart to knowledge and love of God. Fragment L298, B283 sets down the essential difference between the orders of mind and heart.

Le coeur a son ordre; l'esprit a le sien, qui est par principe et démonstration, le coeur en a un autre. On ne prouve pas qu'on doit être aimé, en exposant d'ordre les causes de l'amour; cela serait ridicule.

In De l'Esprit Géométrique<sup>25</sup> Pascal sets out to explain the geometric method, in his view the perfect vehicle for demonstrating truths already discovered and discerning them from falsehood, for it gives full scope to man's rational powers while setting strict limitations on their range, "car ce qui passe la géométrie nous surpasse"<sup>26</sup>. An even higher method, Pascal explains, would consist in defining all terms and proving all propositions, but this would lead the mind in a retrogression ending in "mots primitifs", terms or axioms which are given by nature and before which the mind must stop. Geometry seeks, therefore, to define all terms wherever possible, to avoid ambiguity, and to prove propositions which are not self-evident; but the things with which it is principally concerned, such as space, time, number and motion, simply cannot be defined or proved. Their extreme clarity, however, makes this lack of proof a sign of excellence for the intellect apprehends with certainty and immediacy their meaning, nature and properties. Pascal differentiates here between the two quite distinct operations in the intellectual order<sup>27</sup>: the intuitive apprehension of natural principles by the "coeur" or "instinct", and the essentially discursive function of

reason which uses such principles to prove propositions<sup>28</sup>.

From a discussion of the nature and interrelatedness of such concepts, Pascal proceeds to reflect upon the properties common to all things, and, in particular, the two infinities which open the mind to the greatest wonders of nature. He explains at great length in this work that reason, though finite, can demonstrate the existence of infinity in the domain of motion, number, space and time without understanding either its nature or properties, for, like these concepts, it is "given" truth which the mind cannot conceive but only admire. As J. Russier<sup>29</sup> indicates, Pascal is concerned to expose as erroneous a presupposition, common especially among sceptics, that concepts such as infinity must be rejected as impossible because they are incomprehensible and cannot be apprehended directly by the mind. He affirms that their existence can, in fact, be concluded by way of double negation, and proposes a method of determining the truth of such propositions, namely, to suspend judgement and examine the opposite. If this is manifestly false, one can affirm the first, however incomprehensible it may be and thus arrive indirectly at truth.

C'est une maladie naturelle à l'homme de croire qu'il possède la vérité directement; et de là vient qu'il est toujours disposé à nier tout ce qui lui est incompréhensible; au lieu qu'en effet il ne connaît naturellement que le mensonge, et qu'il ne doit prendre pour véritables que les choses dont le contraire lui paraît faux.

Et c'est pourquoi, toutes les fois qu'une proposition est inconcevable, il faut en suspendre le jugement et ne pas la nier à cette marque, mais en examiner le contraire; et si on le trouve manifestement faux, on peut hardiment affirmer la première, tout incompréhensible qu'elle est<sup>30</sup>.

In a passage which Brunschvicg<sup>36</sup> suggests may have been added after his retreat at Port-Royal, Pascal applies his

conclusions on the infinities to the field of theological truth, suggesting that the disproportion of man in nature, set between two infinities of space, time, number and movement which are beyond his powers of comprehension, should lead to an even more profound reflection on his "juste prix".

Mais ceux qui verront clairement ces vérités pourront admirer la grandeur et la puissance de la nature dans cette double infinité qui nous environne de toutes parts, et apprendre par cette considération merveilleuse à se connaître eux-mêmes, en se regardant placés entre une infinité et un néant d'étendue, entre une infinité et un néant de nombre, entre une infinité et un néant de mouvement, entre une infinité et un néant de temps. Sur quoi on peut apprendre à s'estimer à son juste prix, et former des réflexions qui valent mieux que tout le reste de la géométrie<sup>32</sup>.

Pascal's ambivalence about the competence of reason, which is a characteristic feature of the whole of his writing on grace, is here very apparent. He clearly believes that without the illumination of grace natural reason is able to transcend its finitude and, by an act of judgement, evaluate man's "juste prix". But this passage also points up the non-rational grounds of Pascal's belief, namely, his extremely pessimistic view of human nature and his idea of God as transcendent and "wholly other". Both of these are assumed by him to be the inevitable outcome of any reflection about human nature and destiny.

This theme is fully explored in the Pensées (fragment L199, B72), where Pascal relates it to the apologetic purpose by shocking the reader into a recognition of his true state, "Borné[s] en tout genre". He describes man as "un milieu entre rien et tout", infinitely far from understanding these extremes which "se touchent et se réunissent à force de s'être éloignées, et se retrouvent en Dieu, et

en Dieu seulement". Failure to contemplate these infinities has led man to believe that there is a proportion between him and nature, and accordingly he treats as ultimate those things which seem so to his senses, like an indivisible point, which is, in fact, infinitely divisible. In the perspective of these infinities, all finites are equal, moreover, so that, as Davidson aptly states "our approach to God, like our approach to nature, ends in a disproportion"<sup>33</sup>.

In the "Pari" fragment Pascal draws out the full theological implications of the conclusions reached in De l'Esprit Géométrique by distinguishing three orders of knowing, which are attributed to the discursive reason, intellectual intuition and grace.

Nous connaissons qu'il y a un infini, et ignorons sa nature...

...Nous connaissons donc l'existence et la nature du fini parce que nous sommes finis et étendus comme lui. Nous connaissons l'existence de l'infini et ignorons sa nature, parce qu'il a étendue comme nous, mais non pas des bornes comme nous. Mais nous ne connaissons ni l'existence ni la nature de Dieu, parce qu'il n'a ni étendue ni bornes...

...S'il y a un Dieu, il est infiniment incompréhensible, puisque n'ayant ni parties ni bornes, il n'a nul rapport à nous. Nous sommes donc incapables de connaître ni ce qu'il est, ni s'il est<sup>34</sup>.

Only grace can overcome this disproportion and unite man to God, "Si on vous unit à Dieu, c'est par grâce, non par nature"<sup>35</sup>.

Similarly, Pascal applies to theology his method for determining indirectly the truth of a proposition by proving the opposite false, claiming that only the facts of Christian Revelation, however incomprehensible, can explain the

enigma of the human condition. In fragment L809, B230 Pascal cites four antinomies concerning the existence of God, the soul, the world and original sin, all equally incomprehensible, but nevertheless capable of resolution. As he explains in fragment L149, B430, "Tout ce qui est incompréhensible ne laisse pas d'être. Le nombre infini, un espace infini égal au fini". Just as human reason accepts infinity in the mathematical sphere, without knowing its nature, so, given the facts of Revelation, it is reasonable to affirm God and the doctrine of Original Sin. Nothing could be more shocking to reason, or more contrary to human justice, but on the grounds that it makes man less incomprehensible to himself than he would otherwise be, it ought to be accepted by reason.

Certainement rien ne nous heurte plus rudement que cette doctrine. Et cependant sans ce mystère, le plus incompréhensible de tous, nous sommes incompréhensibles à nous-mêmes. Le noeud de notre condition prend ses replis et ses tours dans cet abîme. De sorte que l'homme est plus inconcevable sans ce mystère que ce mystère n'est inconcevable à l'homme<sup>36</sup>.

As Chevalier aptly remarks, "Ici, Pascal pousse trop loin les choses"<sup>37</sup>, for many may with justification, refuse to accept the mystery of original sin as the only possible explanation of the human condition. For Pascal, however, no explanation, save that of Revelation, existed as an option<sup>38</sup>.

#### De l'Art de Persuader

In this short work Pascal discusses the mechanics of belief. The evidence of his own conversion clearly confirmed the insight of Augustine that belief can result only from the action of prevenient grace, arousing the capacity

in man for the intuitive apprehension of God. The subject is therefore of particular relevance to the effectiveness of an apology which seeks to serve as the agent of just such a divine activity. Pascal analyses the way in which assent to a proposition is produced, pointing out that geometrical demonstration is addressed only to the mind, and persuasion must engage the other principal faculty by which the soul receives opinions, namely, the will. Although men claim that reason is the judge of the will's choice, Pascal affirms that "tout ce qu'il y a d'hommes sont presque toujours importés à croire non par la preuve, mais par l'agrément"<sup>39</sup>. In the domain of natural knowledge, truth is received into the soul by way of the reason, acting independently of the will, in logical demonstrations and experiment, and by the heart, acting as an intellectual instinct which apprehends natural principles "d'une vue". However, in the order of supernatural and, therefore, moral truths, where love and knowledge are linked, the will is the faculty of belief<sup>40</sup>. Ruled by concupiscence since the Fall, and no longer under the control of reason, the corrupt will ties men to the "sales attachements" of the world which blind them to the truth. Only God can instil divine truths directly into the souls of men, by presenting the will with a more powerful, "douceur toute céleste", which draws it away from love of creatures, to love and knowledge of God.

...Dieu ne verse ses lumières dans les esprits  
 qu'après avoir dompté la rébellion de la volonté  
 par une douceur toute céleste qui la charme et  
 qui l'entraîne<sup>41</sup>.

The heart here, as in the doctrine of the three orders<sup>42</sup>, clearly belongs both to the intellectual and supernatural

orders as a faculty of knowing<sup>43</sup>, and is raised to the latter only through this action of grace upon the will.

In the domain of natural truths within the reach of man, the mind and heart are the doors by which entry to the soul is effected. The preeminently intellectual forces which influence assent are the self-evident principles known to everyone, and maxims adopted by certain people, which with time acquire the power of natural principles. Those which motivate the will to belief, however, are the natural aspirations, common to all men, like the desire for happiness, and the particular pleasures in which this happiness is perceived to reside. Effective persuasion depends, therefore, upon simultaneously satisfying both organs of belief, for, however enlightened the mind, the heart ("cette âme impérieuse") follows the shameful choice of the corrupt will. The appeal is, therefore, to self-interest, for, in Pascal's view, it is necessary to have an intimate knowledge both of the principles and pleasures of the subject, a method rendered "plus difficile, plus subtile, plus utile et plus admirable"<sup>44</sup>, by their great diversity.

Mais celles qui ont cette liaison tout ensemble, et avec les vérités avouées, et avec les désirs du coeur, sont si sûres de leur effet, qu'il n'y a rien qui le soit davantage dans la nature<sup>45</sup>.

The rules which Pascal proposes for acquiring assent are essentially those of geometry and, indeed, of traditional rhetoric<sup>46</sup>: to define all terms which are introduced, and prove everything by mentally substituting definitions for the things defined. Pascal makes effective use of the second rule in the Provinciales to expose, in the second



letter, the deceitfulness of the Thomists and Jesuits in supposedly sharing a "sufficient grace", and in the fourth letter the impotence of "grâce actuelle".

Mon Père, ce mot de grâce actuelle me brouille; je n'y suis pas accoutumé: si vous aviez la bonté de me dire la même chose sans vous servir de ce terme, vous m'obligeriez infiniment<sup>47</sup>.

In De l'Art de Persuader, as elsewhere in his work, Pascal denies the possibility of attaining to supernatural truth unless grace first heals the will and reason humbly submits.

Je ne parle pas ici des vérités divines, que je n'aurais garde de faire tomber sous l'art de persuader, car elles sont infiniment au-dessus de la nature: Dieu seul peut les mettre dans l'âme, et par la manière qu'il lui plaît<sup>48</sup>.

Yet the method outlined in this treatise clearly made a contribution to the overall modus operandi of the Pensées, albeit, in Pascal's view, as the mere instrument of grace. As Laporte<sup>49</sup> points out, the Apology had a double preoccupation: to use the most convincing arguments, selecting only those most likely to be found acceptable by the reader; and to touch the heart, so that the reader would want religion to be true, by adopting a style whose aim is to avoid the boredom of a linear argument. Such a style sets out to "échauffer"<sup>50</sup> by frequent digression and converging proofs. Laporte concludes "Ainsi ... se combinèrent l'ordre géométrique et l'ordre du coeur en une méthode inspirée de l'Évangile, de saint Paul, et de saint Augustin"<sup>51</sup>.

Laporte rejects the view of Chevalier and Strowski, however, that this method of convergent probabilities leads the heart to combine them and obtain certitude, affirming unequivocally that it is in flagrant opposition to the

fundamental beliefs which inspired the Pensées. "C'est bien le coeur qui nous y fait accéder, c'est le coeur qui opère 'le passage d'un ordre à un autre'; mais le coeur, en tant qu'éclairé d'une lumière divine, en tant que touché du sentiment surnaturel de la foi"<sup>52</sup>. Jeanne Russier concurs with this view that Pascal himself believed the purpose of the Apology was not to create faith in his readers but to dispose them to ask it of God and offer themselves by humiliations for its reception. She writes "Nous avons vu en quoi même son effort pour rendre la vérité aimable est beaucoup moins une application de l'art d'agréer qu'une occasion offerte à la grâce de Dieu seule capable d'échauffer"<sup>53</sup>.

Yet, the Apology is clearly aimed at a specific group, the cultivated and worldly, with whom Pascal was intimately associated and whose pleasures and philosophical beliefs he knew well. This is most evident in the "Pari" fragment<sup>54</sup>, where his appeal is tailored specifically to minds familiar with the mathematics of chance, and to wills bent upon experiencing the highest pleasures, urging them to wager on the existence of God and to adopt a lifestyle of austerity and charity, both of which should furnish an eternity of happiness. As Jeanne Russier states,

Le pari nous offre en quelque sorte l'expression mathématique d'une intuition dont Pascal a transcrit ailleurs l'expression mystique et personnelle: "Eternellement en joie, pour un jour d'exercice sur la terre". Et de cette recherche de Dieu, à laquelle l'apologiste invite le libertin, on peut redire ce qu'affirme le Mystère de Jésus: "Tu ne me chercherais pas, si tu ne m'avais trouvé"<sup>55</sup>.

Pascal's insistence on the absolute gratuitousness of the gift of grace also derived from his own experience of certitude, which necessarily precluded a transposition to the

supernatural order by means of natural reason or a will under the domination of concupiscence. Yet, in simultaneously urging a reorientation of the will, which would clearly be the result of natural choice based upon an appeal to self-interest, while affirming that such an act can result solely from the action of divine grace, Pascal is affirming, if unconsciously not only the efficacy of "l'Art de Persuader", but that the human will is both free and determined; and determined, moreover, in this instance, by a stratagem which scarcely accords with the divine nature.

Entretien avec M. de Saci

In the Entretien avec M. de Saci, Pascal adopts the dialectical style characteristic of the Pensées and Ecrits sur la Grâce to demonstrate the inadequacy of reason in explaining and furnishing a remedy for the enigma of the human condition. The reader is invited to acknowledge, presumably in the light of natural reason, the supremacy of divine grace in furnishing both answer and cure in the revealed doctrines of Original Sin and the Fall, which are claimed to encompass all partial truths of rational systems. Like Augustine in the fifth century Pascal rejects the current philosophical systems of Stoicism and Scepticism, reascent in seventeenth century France, whose rationalizing influence, he believes, inevitably led to deism or atheism. Founded upon pride in the ability of reason, these systems deny the corruption of human nature and the need for divine grace, and thereby eliminate the redemptive role of Christ himself<sup>56</sup>. The work takes the form of a recorded conversation between Pascal and M. de Saci, the spiritual director

appointed to him when he retired to Port-Royal after his second conversation in 1654. In his analysis of the work, Gouhier suggests that Pascal prepared texts on Epictetus and Montaigne with a view to writing an apology<sup>57</sup>, envisaging such an undertaking as his particular contribution to the Christian faith, and that Fontaine, in fact, almost certainly merely copied a text entirely written by the hand of Pascal for submission to his spiritual director. As Gouhier remarks, "L'intention de Pascal se reflète dans les objections de M. de Sacy comme en un miroir"<sup>58</sup>.

M. de Sacy, then, serves as a testing ground for the approval of such a work by Port-Royal, to whom such philosophers were anathema, and in their view responsible for the nominal faith and lax morality of the worldly seventeenth century French society, and for the heresy of the Jesuits whom they believed to have rejected the Gospel law in favour of rational moral principles based only upon self-interest<sup>59</sup>. Gouhier shows, however, that Pascal is not, in fact, proposing an apology on the level of philosophy, where reason operates the passage from agnosticism to theological truth. He concludes, as do Laporte and Russier, that Pascal's true purpose was to prepare the reader for conversion by creating favourable conditions for the reception of divine grace: "l'apologétique se sert de la philosophie pour une fin étrangère à la philosophie: abattre l'orgueil et secouer la paresse, c'est-à-dire entretenir un état d'humilité et un désir de recherche qui sont les premières conditions de la conversion"<sup>60</sup>.

The subject of the discussion is the value or danger for the Christian of reading the works of Epictetus and

Montaigne, principal proponents of the Stoic and Sceptic schools of philosophy, "les deux plus grands défenseurs des deux plus célèbres sectes du monde, et les seules conformes à la raison"<sup>61</sup>, and, as Gouhier points out, "marquant ainsi les deux pôles entre lesquels oscille la philosophie"<sup>62</sup>.

Each promotes a half-truth about the nature of man, and that in turn suggests that the union of these could result in a third philosophy, encompassing the whole truth. Pascal demonstrates, however, that this would lead rather to their mutual destruction, and that the antithesis must be resolved at the higher level of Revelation.

He opens the exchange by praising, in line with current humanist thinking, the virtues of Epictetus, who, he claims, saw very clearly how men ought to behave.

Epictète, lui dit-il, est un des philosophes du monde qui aient mieux connu les devoirs de l'homme. Il veut, avant toutes choses, qu'il regarde Dieu comme son principal objet; qu'il soit persuadé qu'il gouverne tout avec justice; qu'il se soumette à lui de bon coeur, et qu'il le suive volontairement en tout, comme ne faisant rien qu'avec une très grande sagesse: qu'ainsi cette disposition arrêtera toutes les plaintes et tous les murmures, et préparera son esprit à souffrir paisiblement tous les événements les plus fâcheux<sup>63</sup>.

Despite this high degree of enlightenment, however, Pascal points out that Epictetus failed to take account of man's very obvious frailty and impotence, in asserting that God had given him the means to fulfil his obligations and that happiness and perfection are to be sought through the will and the mind<sup>64</sup>. Epictetus claimed that these functions, unlike our circumstances, are not predetermined but free, and by means of them man can "parfaitement connaître Dieu, l'aimer, lui obéir, lui plaire, se guérir de tous ses vices,

acquérir toutes les vertus, se rendre saint ainsi et compagnon de Dieu"<sup>65</sup>. Pascal condemns these "principes d'une superbe diabolique", which lead men into even more serious errors: that the soul is part of the divine substance; and that pain and death are not evils so that suicide can be considered a permissible alternative to persecution.

Montaigne, by contrast, a professing Catholic, living in a Christian society, bases his principles on the one supposition that man is devoid of all divine revelation and that God is entirely absent from his creation. He places all things in universal doubt, making this the principle of his works and deriding all certainties, not in order to establish the contrary, but intent only upon proving the vanity of most widely accepted principles and opinions.

Il met toutes choses dans un doute universel et si général, que ce doute s'emporte soi-même, c'est-à-dire s'il doute, et doutant même de cette dernière supposition, son incertitude roule sur elle-même dans un cercle perpétuel et sans repos; s'opposant également à ceux qui assurent que tout est incertain et à ceux qui assurent que tout ne l'est pas, parce qu'il ne veut rien assurer<sup>66</sup>.

With unbiased eclecticism Montaigne questions the value and necessity of laws; the validity of the heretics' claim to a true interpretation of Scripture; and man's denial of the existence of an infinite God, when he cannot even understand or explain the infinities, or the principles and concepts of the natural order. He even goes so far as to state that, as faith is the guarantor of such truths, the existence of God must necessarily be in doubt. In Pascal's view, Montaigne attacks the ability of reason by itself so vigorously that he reduces it to the level of the beasts,

where it can only humbly contemplate its own weakness. Far from rejoicing in such an abasement of reason, Pascal deplores the unlimited degree to which it is humbled, since, in his view, the recognition of its limitations should have led to acceptance of the Christian ethic<sup>67</sup>. He accuses Montaigne of abdicating in the face of such uncertainty, because, having observed man's failure to find the true good through reason, Montaigne chooses the easy path, making the "moi" the axis of existence instead of God and his laws, with conformity to custom dictating his outward rule of conduct, but self-interest, convenience and comfort the true mainspring of his ethic<sup>68</sup>.

M. de Saci voices the objections of Port-Royal when he questions the need to resort to such philosophers, when one has only to cite St. Augustine himself, who has already travelled the path of both Stoics and Sceptics, a path from which he was delivered by divine grace. While there is no danger for Pascal in reading such works since, "Dieu a répandu dans votre coeur d'autres douceurs et d'autres attraites que ceux que vous trouviez dans Montaigne", they are "viandes dangereuses" for those not similarly delivered who might be seduced into stopping short at the natural systems of men whose intellect has been placed at the service of the Devil by encouraging, through the one, pride, and, through the other, sloth.

However, as Gouhier points out, Pascal did not propose in his projected apology a demonstration at the philosophical level, or an accord between the insights of reason and faith: "parce qu'il a conscience de présenter une apologétique nouvelle où la persuasion est vraiment autre chose

que démonstration, où l'apologétique est essentiellement autre chose que l'art de rendre la philosophie attrayante"<sup>69</sup>.

The purpose of Pascal's apology would rather be to expose the inadequacies of rational doctrines in the light of the full Christian Revelation.

Such inadequacies are of value, therefore, since they can be brought into harmony with theological truths, each explaining one of the two states of man, before and after the Fall. The Stoics see some traces of original greatness and, ignoring corruption view nature as healthy and in no need of a Redeemer, which leads to pride. The Sceptics, on the other hand, conscious of man's present misery and unaware of his original dignity, regard nature as infirm and beyond repair, which in turn drives them to despair of achieving true goodness, and into moral laxity. A perfect morality should result from combining the two but would, Pascal affirms, end in their mutual destruction. Since the one establishes certainty and man's greatness and the other doubt and man's weakness, they undermine each other's truth as well as each other's falsity, making way for the higher truth of the Gospel.

De sorte qu'ils ne peuvent subsister seuls à cause de leurs défauts, ni s'unir à cause de leurs oppositions, et qu'ainsi ils se brisent et s'anéantissent pour faire place à la vérité de l'Évangile<sup>70</sup>.

The Christian Gospel unites these oppositions "par un art tout divin", combining only what is true in each, and thus fashioning elements that are incompatible in human doctrines into "une sagesse véritablement celèste". Philosophers err in attributing both infirmity and greatness to human nature, while the faith teaches that only man's



weakness belongs to his nature, while his strength is the gift of grace. Pascal interprets this union of two natures by grace as a figure and effect of the union by God of two natures, human and divine, in Christ.

Voilà l'union étonnante et nouvelle que Dieu seul pouvait enseigner, et que lui seul pouvait faire, et qui n'est qu'une image et qu'un effet de l'union ineffable de deux natures dans la seule personne d'un Homme-Dieu<sup>71</sup>.

Theology, Pascal concludes, is at the heart of all truth since it embraces all truths found in rational opinions, reconciling them at the level of the supernatural. His projected apologetic stratagem is, therefore, to use the insights of both philosophers to induce the state of humility, and the desire for the truth which are the prerequisites of conversion. Epictetus will disturb the calm of those who seek the truth in external things, forcing them to recognize that they will find only error and grief unless they yield themselves completely to God. Montaigne, on the other hand, confounds the pride of those who believe that true justice and unshakeable scientific truths can result from rational reflection. M. de Saci likens Pascal to those doctors who, "par la manière adroite de préparer les plus grands poisons, en savent tirer les plus grands remèdes"<sup>72</sup>, for, if read together, each offsets the evil of the other. As Chevalier<sup>73</sup> states, in the Entretien avec M. de Saci Pascal has effectively sketched out the introductory passage (Grandeur/Misère de l'Homme) of the Pensées, and established the style of dialectical reasoning, in which two opposed theses are reconciled by the introduction of a third factor, and which is the main thrust of the work<sup>74</sup>. In all such antinomies it is the grace of Christ,

who bridged the gap between natural and supernatural, which is the unifying agent. Thus, in the Apology, the weakness and grandeur of man are reconciled by the gift of grace; in the Ecrits sur la Grâce, the opposed heresies, each partially true, of Molinism and Calvinism are fused in the authentic, revealed truth as interpreted by Augustine; while, in the Provinciales the apparently unbridgeable gap between "Juifs charnels" and the Blessed is closed by the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

These four short treatises, then, reveal the genesis of Pascal's theory of knowledge, expressed in the doctrine of the three orders<sup>75</sup>, where heart, intellect and senses constitute a hierarchy of orders differing both in kind and degree. The Préface. Sur le Traité du Vide makes the important differentiation between the roles of reason and authority in the fields of natural and supernatural truth. In mathematics and the physical sciences reason must not submit to authority but is free to extend the sum of natural truth proportionate to its reach and to build upon or reverse earlier opinions, in accordance with the evidence of sense data. In theology, however, reason has no competence and must submit to the authority of Revelation, the corpus of divine truth where memory prevails. Pascal also alludes here to the "given" instinctive knowledge of animals, who lack the ability of the human intelligence to expand its range, placing such instinctive knowledge at an ever lower level, presumably that of "corps".

De l'Esprit Géométrique determines the limits of reason in the sphere of natural knowledge and describes the two ways in which this is acquired: by the intuitive apprehen-

sion of basic concepts which, because of their inherent clarity, are grasped "d'une vue" by a function of reason remaining from man's pre-Fall state<sup>76</sup>; and by the logical demonstration of truths starting from such principles. In what Davidson describes as "his own half-mathematical, half-religious" mode of expression<sup>77</sup>, Pascal uses the incomprehensibility of the two infinities, the existence of which can be grasped by reason only indirectly, to point up the enormous disproportion existing not only between man and the finite world, but between man and an infinite God. Geometry is, in fact, regarded as so inferior in kind and degree to theology that, in a letter to Fermat, Pascal dismisses it as only a "métier"<sup>78</sup>.

In De l'Art de Persuader, Pascal deals with the mechanism of assent which has such important implications for his apology. Logical demonstration, the mode of discursive reason, is inadequate to secure conversion since both the heart and the mind are involved in belief. The heart, already defined as the organ of felt, immediate knowledge in Geometry - an intellectual instinct belonging to the order of mind - becomes, when raised by grace to the order of charity, the function in man for the reception of direct, intuitive knowledge of God<sup>79</sup>. In this capacity the heart is identical to the will, for both love and knowledge are inevitably linked<sup>80</sup>. As Pascal underlines in the Entretien avec M. de Saci, the will ruled by concupiscence and centred upon self follows moral principles devised by reason to promote self-interest and creaturely comfort, rationalizing the will's choice to preserve "amour-propre", unless grace

draws it by a stronger attraction to love and knowledge of God. Pascal follows Augustine in believing that the will is only free when it is released from the bondage of concupiscence by God and enabled to choose the good. Elsewhere he reveals an acute consciousness of the continuous need for grace in order that reason should not thus consent to the will's sinful desires. In a letter to the Périier (1651) he writes:

Saint Augustin nous apprend qu'il y a dans chaque homme un serpent, une Eve et un Adam. Le serpent sont les sens et notre nature; l'Eve est l'appétit concupiscible, et l'Adam est la raison. La nature nous tente continuellement, l'appétit concupiscible désire souvent; mais le péché n'est pas achevé, si la raison ne consent. Laissons donc agir ce serpent et cette Eve, si nous ne pouvons l'empêcher; mais prions Dieu que sa grâce fortifie tellement notre Adam qu'il demeure victorieux; et que Jésus-Christ en soit vainqueur, et qu'il règne éternellement en nous<sup>81</sup>.

Similarly in the ninth of the Prière pour demander à Dieu le bon usage des maladies, he prays:

Faites-moi la grâce, Seigneur, de réformer ma raison corrompue, et de conformer mes sentiments aux vôtres<sup>82</sup>.

De l'Art de Persuader therefore stresses the importance, in acquiring the assent of a corrupt will, of "agrément" as the necessary complement of logical demonstration. Both reasoned arguments and an understanding of the psychology of the reader play an important role in preparing him for a conversion experience which must, itself be wholly the work of God. Davidson writes,

The projected sequence of the Apology, insofar as the large blocks of apologetic substance are concerned, derives in fact from the reader, from the person to be persuaded rather than from the argument purely and simply. The mechanism of assent and the stages implied by it set the moral plot. There is a beginning, middle, and end, each

corresponding to a mental and moral state: indifference, search, and active waiting for divine inspiration<sup>83</sup>.

Reason is persuaded to accept Revelation, or more particularly the Augustinian doctrine of Original Sin, however incomprehensible, in the same way as it does the two infinities in the natural order, by rational demonstration of its superiority over alternative systems. In the "Pari" fragment of the Pensées Pascal depicts the will as persuaded by an appeal to self-interest to turn to the good and thereby find certainty. In his assertion in De l'Art de Persuader that a true morality is possible only by the agency of divine grace, Pascal anticipates the theme of the Provinciales and points up, by implication, the obvious absurdity of the appeal he makes in the Provinciales to the "sens commun" to reject a rational moral theology which, without the aid of divine grace, it must inevitably adopt. Since the doctrine of the three orders formulated in the Pensées precludes the possibility of reason functioning as a moral guide in the supernatural sphere, Pascal must always affirm that if men are to be converted rational argument and persuasion can only be the instruments of grace<sup>84</sup>. Only those wills first delivered from concupiscence by grace, can in fact respond to Pascal's argument and persuasion. In spite of these assertions, however, Pascal quite clearly, if unconsciously, accords reason the role of arbiter of religious truth, for as C.A. Campbell points out:

And what can this appeal to reason mean save the acceptance of reason as the ultimate court of appeal, even in matters of religion, which is just what the philosopher claims it to be?  
 ...I cannot persuade myself, therefore, that there is any real alternative to acknowledging reason

as the ultimate arbiter in the field of truth - religious truth or any other sort of truth - except silence, a dogged refusal even to begin to argue in defence of one's beliefs. It need hardly be pointed out that this alternative is not one that has much commended itself to the leading apostles of anti-reason in the religious world of today<sup>85</sup>.

### "Dieu Caché"

In Gouhier's commentary upon Pascal's theme of the "Dieu caché", which occupies such an important place in the Pensées, and is the subject of the fourth letter to the Roannez (October 1656), the writer throws some light upon this apparently equivocal attitude of Pascal to the role of reason. The purpose of the letter was to report the Church's verification of the Miracle of the Holy Thorn, which prompted Pascal to reflect upon the secrecy of God and the reasons for this secrecy. He propounds the view that such a miracle is one of the rare moments when God reveals himself to Christians, so that, knowing him with greater certainty, their faith is stimulated to more ardent service. That Pascal's god-daughter should be the recipient of a miraculous healing which occurred during the course of his writing of the Provinciales, was interpreted as a clear sign of divine favour and encouragement by the community of Port-Royal and especially by Pascal himself<sup>86</sup>. Faith would have no merit, he writes, if God continually revealed himself; but if he were totally absent there would be few believers, a somewhat paradoxical statement in view of his theology of grace.

Mais il se cache ordinairement, et se découvre rarement à ceux qu'il veut engager dans son service. Cet étrange secret, dans lequel Dieu s'est retiré, impénétrable à la vue des hommes, est une grande leçon pour nous porter à la solitude loin de la vue des hommes<sup>87</sup>.

Not only is the role of the community of Port-Royal, as defenders of the faith thus confirmed, but also their life-style, for retreat from the world can itself be seen as an imitation of the "Dieu caché".

Pascal describes the way in which God both concealed and revealed Himself during the course of history: until the Incarnation under the veil of nature where a few pagans "ont reconnu un Dieu invisible par la nature visible"<sup>88</sup>; then under the veil of human flesh where heretical Christians have known and adored God in his humanity; and, finally, under the veil of the Eucharist where only Catholics recognize God in the bread. God is still hidden in the Scriptures which have both a literal and a mystical meaning. The Jews stopped at the literal meaning without thinking that another may exist. Similarly they recognize only the humanity of Christ; and now the heretics fail to recognize in the bread of the Eucharist the real presence of Christ.

Gouhier suggests that this theme of a God who hides and reveals himself in a dialogue with men, springs from Pascal's own profoundly religious experience of the night of 23rd of November 1654, when he received the grace of election. "Le Dieu qui se veut cacher est le Dieu de sa joie et de sa crainte, le Dieu de sa prière"<sup>89</sup>. J. Russier echoes Gouhier's view that it is faith which responds to "'l'étrange secret' en Dieu", when she writes, "c'est l'esprit de Dieu présent en l'homme qui reconnaît ce même esprit dans ses manifestations historiques ... c'est la grâce qui discerne la grâce"<sup>90</sup>. The Apology will be designed as a vehicle of self-revelation for the "Dieu caché", as Gouhier explains:

Quand Pascal ajoute: "Les Chrétiens doivent le reconnaître en tout", il indique ce que doit faire l'apologétique. Certes, le "sens mystique" ne cesse d'être caché que par la volonté de celui qui l'a caché: mais, dans les limites de la raison et de l'expérience humaines, n'est-il pas possible de rendre ce sens manifeste sous une lumière qui, s'il plaît à Dieu deviendra brûlante?

The Apology "ayant pour mission de découvrir le Dieu partout caché"<sup>91</sup>, like the miracle will serve as an instrument of election.

The theme of the "Dieu caché" is linked, therefore, in Pascal's work with that of predestination, for God's hiddenness or self-revelation is the means by which he discerns the elect from the "réprouvés", through the bestowal or deprivation of the grace needed to recognize and seek Him. Prayer, itself a gift of God, is the means by which Christians continue to recognize God in all things. Pascal clearly fails to recognize the inherent injustice of a plan of redemption, to which he intends his Apology to contribute, in which the "endurcis" are inexplicably abandoned and the seeker already saved<sup>92</sup>, drawn from the world to an imitation of Christ's suffering which holds the promise of eternal beatitude, for, "Les afflictions temporelles couvrent les biens éternels où elles conduisent"<sup>93</sup>. The appropriate response of the elect to such an arbitrary deliverance is understandably infinite thankfulness, and the recognition of continuous dependence upon God.

Prions Dieu de nous le faire reconnaître et servir en tout. Rendons-lui des grâces infinies de ce que s'étant caché en toutes choses pour les autres, il s'est découvert en toutes choses et en tant de manières pour nous...<sup>94</sup>.

### Conversion

In Prière pour demander à Dieu le bon usage des



maladies, Pascal describes the non-rational insights which underpin the Augustinian theology of grace, revealing the conviction of radical sinfulness and powerlessness which ensures that all rational systems must, in his view, fail to bring men to an authentic faith in God. He states unequivocally the prerequisite for conversion.

Mais je reconnais, mon Dieu, que mon coeur est tellement endurci et plein des idées, des soins, des inquiétudes et des attachements du monde, que la maladie non plus que la santé, ni les discours, ni les livres, ni vos Ecritures sacrées, ni votre Evangile, ni vos mystères les plus saints, ni les aumônes, ni les jeûnes, ni les mortifications, ni les miracles, ni l'usage des Sacraments, ni le sacrifice de votre corps, ni tous mes efforts, ni ceux de tout le monde ensemble, ne peuvent rien du tout pour commencer ma conversion, si vous n'accompagnez toutes ces choses d'une assistance tout extraordinaire de votre grâce<sup>95</sup>.

Only God can wrench the sinner from the world which has put its image on him and remake him in the image of Christ. The short text Sur la conversion du pécheur, dating from the period late in 1653, when, according to Jacqueline, Pascal experienced a profound dissatisfaction with the world<sup>96</sup>, is clearly a detailed account of his own spiritual metamorphosis, which culminated in the conversion experience of November 1654. As Davidson<sup>97</sup> also indicates, it plainly provided a blueprint for the plan of spiritual evolution in the Pensées, whereby the reader is progressively drawn, by grace, from a state of indifference and pride, to experience "ennui" and separation from God, then enlightenment, humility and seeking, adoration, annihilation of self, total submission, supplication and active renunciation.

God first inspires the soul with understanding and extraordinary insight so that it begins to view temporal goods, the "délices" of concupiscence "qui le charment", in

which it finds repose, in a new light, thus precipitating a state of fear and agitation. "Cette nouvelle lumière", which, in Chevalier's<sup>98</sup> view, is the essential characteristic of conversion, is produced by the action of grace healing the will, and with it the reason, so that reason can recognize the things of this world as incapable of bringing lasting satisfaction. In the second letter to Mlle de Roannez, who had recently embarked upon the Christian life, Pascal remarks with some sympathy, "Il est bien assuré qu'on ne se détache jamais sans douleur"<sup>99</sup>, for, torn between the ephemeral nature of worldly pleasures which still tempt it, and the reality of the invisible good which demands the exercise of piety and detachment from the world, the soul experiences bitterness and torment.

The realization that all those things in which the heart has placed its hopes of happiness - pleasures, health, authority, honours and personal attachments - are indeed perishable, perishing and already perished fills the soul with fear since, at death, it must inevitably be alone and abandoned. This acute consciousness of man's mortality induces in the soul "une sainte confusion" and "un étonnement qui lui porte un trouble bien salutaire"<sup>100</sup>, which in turn excite "une sainte humilité", the penitence which is the prerequisite for knowledge of God, leading the soul out of pride and "ennui" in an upward journey in search of the true good. This must be as lasting as the soul itself, unless deliberately lost by its own consent, and such that nothing is more lovable. Knowing by the light of grace that it is not to be found "en elle, ni hors d'elle, ni devant elle", the soul turns its back upon the

mass of men and ascends above the created world to the very throne of God where it finds repose.

The soul has clearly reached that point which is the goal of the "Pari" fragment, where, "sa raison aidée des lumières de la grâce", it recognizes God as the transcendent and immutable good from which it cannot be unwillingly separated. Pascal stresses the fact that the soul does not experience from the practice of piety pleasures corresponding to those of concupiscence, but rather this certainty of election. To seek God is therefore already to possess Him "puisque c'est le posséder que de le désirer, et que le refuser c'est le perdre"<sup>101</sup>, so that the bestowal or deprivation of grace clearly constitutes the condition of such possession.

Recognition of the boundless transcendence of God prompts the soul to an even more profound humility and adoration, which clearly corresponds to the intense experience of the numinous, recorded in the Mémorial, of absolute nothingness before the inconceivable majesty of God ("elle se considère comme sa vile et inutile créature"), of self-abasement ("jusqu'aux derniers abîmes du néant") and adoration. Silent adoration, complete submission, gratitude and the desire to appease the anger of God for past sins, are the response of the soul to the wholly gratuitous gift of God's self-revelation, together with ardent prayers for continued help and guidance, since only God can raise it to Himself.

Since the Christian cannot in his own right choose between good and evil, "conscience" is merely the capacity for the reception of divine guidance.

Seigneur, je sais que je ne sais qu'une chose: c'est qu'il est bon de vous suivre, et qu'il est mauvais de vous offenser. Après cela je ne sais lequel est le meilleur ou le pire en toutes choses. Je ne sais lequel m'est profitable de la santé ou de la maladie, des biens ou de la pauvreté, ni de toutes les choses du monde. C'est un discernement qui passe la force des hommes et des anges, et qui est caché dans les secrets de votre providence que j'adore et que je ne veux pas approfondir<sup>102</sup>.

Only by the light of divine grace can "conscience" discern the salvific will of God in events and particular goods.

J'apprends que tout ce qui est arrivé a quelque chose d'admirable, puisque la volonté de Dieu y est marquée<sup>103</sup>.

God is, therefore, both the final end of man and the means of perseverance to that end, through the gift of prayer.

Car comme c'est à Dieu qu'elle aspire, elle n'aspire encore y arriver que par des moyens qui viennent de Dieu même, parce qu'elle veut qu'il soit lui-même son chemin, son objet et sa dernière fin<sup>104</sup>.

Prayers, in turn, lead to action, to the search for necessary guidance from others more experienced in the Christian life, and to the resolution to conform his will to that of God for the rest of his life, imploring him, nevertheless, for the grace to reach this goal.

Ainsi elle reconnaît qu'elle doit adorer Dieu comme créature, lui rendre grâce comme redevable, lui satisfaire comme coupable, le prier comme indigente<sup>105</sup>.

Two characteristic elements exemplify this conversion as typically that of the "twice-born" soul, aptly described by N.P. Williams as "an interior 'bouleversement' which appears in consciousness as the hand of God reaching down from the clouds to pluck the brand from the burning, the favoured sinner from the 'lump of perdition'"<sup>106</sup>. The first is the sudden and dramatic illumination producing a re-

evaluation of and dissatisfaction with life, both past and present, with the "étonnement" aroused by this insight underlining the "aveuglement" and "assoupissement"<sup>107</sup> in which reason has hitherto been locked by concupiscence, unable even to recognize its true end. The second is the intense feeling of "creature-consciousness" in an experience of the ineffable transcendence of God eliciting the response of felt dependence and the need for surrender which in turn effects a willed reorientation of life<sup>108</sup>. As Otto<sup>109</sup> further writes the awareness of the numinous has to be aroused in man, and Pascal clearly saw himself, in the Apology, as the instrument of both an intellectual and spiritual awakening, guiding those favoured by God through each step of the conversion experience as it is recorded in this short text.

#### Perseverance

Pascal's unequivocal insistence that both conversion and perseverance result solely from the divine mercy does not preclude, however, the attribution of God's abandonment of the justified to His justice and to man's deliberate choice. In Sur la conversion du pécheur the converted soul pleads for grace to persevere, yet Pascal affirms that the true good "ne peut lui être ôté que par son propre consentement", and "le refuser c'est le perdre"<sup>110</sup>. In the fifth letter to the Roannez he deplores the fate of those "qui tomberont de leur gloire, et qui laisseront prendre à d'autres par leur negligence la couronne que Dieu leur avait offerte..."<sup>111</sup>. This ambivalent attitude to the role of the human will in the act of redemption can be seen, in the seventh of these letters, to result in absurd inconsisten-

cies reminiscent of the "Double Délaissement des Justes" in the Ecrits sur la Grâce<sup>112</sup>, which merely underline the irrationality and rigid determinism inherent in the Augustinian doctrine of grace. Deprived of the victorious attraction of grace, the justified must necessarily succumb to the force of concupiscence, yet the reason Pascal proposes is their deliberate preference for worldly pleasures.

Car de même que ceux qui quittent Dieu pour retourner au monde ne le font que parce qu'ils trouvent plus de douceur dans les plaisirs de la terre que dans ceux de l'union avec Dieu, et que ce charme victorieux les entraîne, et les faisant repentir de leur premier choix les rends des pénitents du diable, ..."113.

Fear of abandonment is therefore the dynamic force which motivates every action in the Christian life, and can be regarded as a divinely ordained instrument to ensure the perseverance of the justified. The sight of others falling away, who received grace only for a time, strikes terror into the hearts of the elect, reminding them of their radical dependence and driving them back to God in prayer<sup>114</sup>, and Pascal concludes the fifth letter, "Bienheureux est l'homme qui est toujours en crainte..."<sup>115</sup>. In the seventh letter Pascal reminds the Roannez that the elect must work unceasingly to conserve a balance between the joy of election and the fear of abandonment, so that when one becomes dominant, they should incline towards the other to redress the imbalance. Broome describes this fear as "simply a logical element in a religion of hope and love which is great enough to contain and transcend it"<sup>116</sup>. That interpretation fails to recognize the motivational power of fear in Pascal's own life. The asceticism and excessive pre-

occupation with charitable works of his latter years bear witness to an almost obsessive anxiety about salvation, which is reflected in Prière pour demander à Dieu le bon usage des maladies, where there is no assurance of God's love and forgiveness, and suffering is seen as a possible mark of divine favour.

Perseverance depends, therefore, upon a continuous infusion of grace in response to unceasing prayer, which itself is a divine gift dependent upon total submission to God and renunciation of the world. In the sixth letter to the Roannez, Pascal states that grace is a continual flux which Scripture compares to a river, and to the light which the sun<sup>117</sup> incessantly sends out, which is ever new, so that if the sun were to cease shining for an instant, all the light which we have received would disappear and we would remain in darkness. He is here echoing the view expressed in an early letter to Mme Périer (Nov.5, 1648).

Ainsi la continuation de la justice des fidèles n'est autre chose que la continuation de l'infusion de la grâce, et non pas une seule grâce qui subsiste toujours; et c'est ce qui nous apprend parfaitement la dépendance perpétuelle où nous sommes de la miséricorde de Dieu, puisque, s'il en interrompt tant soi peu le cours, la sécheresse survient nécessairement<sup>118</sup>.

Here Pascal insists that the understanding of supernatural truth hidden in the Scriptures and revealed only to the elect, unlike that of natural truths which need to be understood and retained only once, must be continually kept alive by the action of grace in the hearts of the faithful. Christians should, therefore, never refuse to hear or read a discourse on Scripture, for God often avails himself of external means to vivify by his spirit what would other-

wise remain in our memory as "un corps inanimé et judaïque". In a similar way grace continually renews the beatitude of the Blessed in Heaven and eternally recreates Christ's essence in the substance of the Eucharist.

The knowledge that perseverance does not result from a single grace which lives forever, but from a continuous infusion which may cease at any moment, reminds Christians of their perpetual dependence. In the interests of their salvation and repose, they ought, therefore, to live only in the present.

Le présent est le seul temps qui est véritablement à nous, et dont nous devons user selon Dieu. C'est là où nos pensées doivent être principalement comptées.... Notre Seigneur n'a pas voulu que notre prévoyance s'étendit plus loin que le jour où nous sommes. C'est les bornes qu'il faut garder, et pour notre salut, et pour notre propre repos<sup>119</sup>.

Moreover, they must continually renew their efforts, using one grace to effect the inner purification which is the condition of acquiring the next.

Ainsi nous devons veiller à purifier sans cesse l'intérieur, qui se salit toujours de nouvelles taches en retenant aussi les anciennes, puisque sans le renouvellement assidu on n'est pas capable de recevoir ce vin nouveau qui ne sera point mis en vieux vaisseaux<sup>120</sup>.

#### The Church as the Body of Christ

Pascal's insistence upon the total inability of man to aspire to a true and saving knowledge of God through reason and the natural world, meant that man can know God only through the grace of Christ, for only he bridged the gap between man and God, between the natural and supernatural orders of being<sup>121</sup>. Since Christ's death and resurrection, salvation is, therefore, available only through his Body, the Church, which perpetuates his redemptive work and



mediates the grace of conversion. The concept of the Church as the Body of Christ, composed of all individual Christians of whom the Pope is the head, is given particular emphasis in Pascal's correspondence. In his letter to the Périers on the death of his father, he describes it as the society of the faithful into which Christ entered from the moment of his Incarnation, and which every Christian enters at baptism.

Dès le moment que nous entrons dans l'Eglise, qui est le monde des fidèles et particulièrement des élus, où Jésus-Christ entra dès le moment de son incarnation par un privilège particulier au fils unique de Dieu, nous sommes offerts et sanctifiés<sup>122</sup>.

In his suffering, death and ascension into glory, Christ became the model for every Christian, whose life must also be a perpetual sacrifice made complete only at death.

C'est un des grands principes du christianisme, que tout ce qui est arrivé à Jésus-Christ doit se passer et dans l'âme et dans le corps de chaque Chrétien; ...<sup>123</sup>.

Nous savons que la vie, et la vie des Chrétiens, est un sacrifice perpétuel qui ne peut être achevé que par la mort; ...<sup>124</sup>.

In the Mystère de Jésus, Pascal states that Jesus will be in agony until the end of the world, that the Christian life must be an imitation of Christ's and a participation in his suffering. Suffering is therefore a sign of discipleship, for it is the medium through which Christ is united to his members, living in them and completing his passion until the perfect consummation of His Body.

Unissez-moi à vous; remplissez-moi de vous et de votre Esprit-Saint. Entrez dans mon coeur et dans mon âme, pour y porter mes souffrances, et pour continuer d'endurer en moi ce qui vous reste à souffrir de votre Passion, que vous achevez dans vos membres jusqu'à la consommation parfaite

de votre Corps; afin qu'étant plein de vous ce ne soit plus moi qui vive et qui souffre, mais que ce soit vous qui viviez et qui souffriez en moi, ô mon Sauveur: et qu'ainsi, ayant quelque petite part à vos souffrances, vous me remplissiez entièrement de la gloire qu'elles vous ont acquise, ...<sup>125</sup>.

The Church must be regarded, then, as a product of history, consisting of the whole company of the elect from the time of the Incarnation, and constituting a perpetual source of merit and grace of which it is the sole mediator. Pascal reminds Mlle de Roannez in the sixth letter that her conversion can be attributed to this continuous redemptive work to which she must now contribute by her own prayers.

Il y a seize cents ans qu'elle gémit pour vous. Il est temps de gémir pour elle, ...<sup>126</sup>.

Car c'est l'Eglise qui mérite, avec Jésus-Christ qui en est inséparable, la conversion de tous ceux qui ne sont pas dans la vérité; et ce sont ensuite ces personnes converties qui secourent la mère qui les a délivrées<sup>127</sup>.

Pascal here reaffirms his own loyalty to the Catholic Church and the Pope<sup>128</sup>, from whom separation was, for him, unthinkable since it inevitably implied separation from the redeeming grace of Christ.

Le corps n'est plus vivant sans chef, que le chef sans le corps. Quiconque se sépare de l'un ou de l'autre n'est plus du corps, et n'appartient plus à Jésus-Christ<sup>129</sup>.

For Pascal, as for Augustine, all human effort, all natural virtues and all austerities are useless without the transforming power of grace, and he is ever conscious of his absolute dependence upon God to remain within the number of the elect.

Faites-moi la grâce, Seigneur, de joindre vos consolations à mes souffrances, afin que je souffre en Chrétien. Je ne demande pas d'être exempt des douleurs; car c'est la récompense des saints: mais je demande de n'être pas

abandonné aux douleurs de la nature sans les consolations de votre Esprit; car c'est la malédiction des Juifs et des Païens<sup>130</sup>.

Pascal here clearly follows Augustine's view of human suffering, as the punishment imposed by God for sin, which, if joined to that of Christ, may become a source of redemption<sup>131</sup>.

Mais, Seigneur, faites aussi qu'ils en soient le remède, en me faisant considérer, dans les douleurs que je sens, celle que je ne sentais pas dans mon âme, quoique toute malade et couverte d'ulcères<sup>132</sup>.

Burnaby points out that Augustine extended the Old Testament principle "without the judgement of God no one is slow in mind or crippled in body", until the position was reached where the whole life of man is a punishment for the first sin of Adam, and offered this in his doctrine of Original Sin as the only tenable explanation of the fact of human suffering<sup>133</sup>.

#### The Church and the World

Many of the shorter works reflect the extremely pessimistic assessment of the human condition, to be given such emphasis in the first section of the Apology, and which leads to an evaluation of the present life as worthless in relation to the next, and of the world as a prison house<sup>134</sup> in which God justly punishes the transgressions inevitably resulting from the first sin of Adam. Pascal's insistence in the "Pari" fragment that the indifferent should opt for an eternity of happiness in preference to the transitory and illusory pleasures of the world is anticipated in his view of death, as something to be longed for with hope, as the beginning of a truly real existence.

Ne considérons plus un homme comme ayant cessé de

vivre, quoi que la nature suggère; mais comme commençant à vivre, comme la vérité l'assure<sup>135</sup>.

Whilst the soul of the Christian is raised to new life in baptism, the body attains to blessedness only at death<sup>136</sup>, as the Mystère de Jésus also affirms: "Souffre les chaînes de la servitude corporelle. Je ne te délivre que de la spirituelle à présent"<sup>137</sup>. In his letter to the Périers, Pascal goes on to explain that both love of life and horror of death were appropriate only to Adam in his innocence, since his life then was wholly pure and death meant separating a holy body from a holy soul. Since the Fall, however, the Christian has every reason to welcome death, which separates and delivers a soul made holy in baptism from an impure body. The root of sin, inseparable from the body during life, makes the body worthy only of hate.

cette malheureuse racine qui en est inséparable pendant la vie, fait qu'il n'est pas permis de les honorer alors, puisqu'ils sont plutôt dignes d'être haïs. C'est pour cela que la mort est nécessaire, pour mortifier entièrement cette malheureuse racine, et c'est ce qui la rend souhaitable<sup>138</sup>.

In Prière pour demander à Dieu le bon usage des maladies III, Pascal believed that at the end of his life, by the incapacity induced by his illness, he was being wrenched by God from all worldly attractions and drawn back to Himself.

The Christian life consists, then, in the destruction of the old Adam and the recreation, day by day, of a new life in Christ which will be perfected only in eternity<sup>139</sup>. Pascal saw Christ's prediction of the ruin of the Temple, in Mark 13, as foretelling what must happen to every member of his Church, in whom no passion will remain, just as the

entire universe will ultimately be destroyed to make way for a new heaven and a new earth<sup>140</sup>. He compares the inner turmoil experienced by those who give themselves to God, to a state of civil war which must be suffered throughout life. Before they are granted the grace of election, the weight of lust anchors men to the earth, so that when God draws them upward, this bond is stretched and undergoes heavy strain. Suffering results from the resistance of the body still shackled by concupiscence and released only by death. In the ninth letter to the Roannez Pascal compares the violence of this warfare between grace and the evil remaining in the Christian, to the suffering of a child whom thieves try to wrench from the loving arms of its mother<sup>141</sup>. Though painful, this struggle can, in fact, be regarded as peace with God.

...on peut dire que cette guerre qui paraît dure aux hommes, est un paix devant Dieu; car c'est cette paix que Jésus-Christ a aussi apportée<sup>142</sup>.

The theme of the Church and the world as mutually exclusive societies, central to Pascal's attack on the Jesuits in the Provinciales, is also emphasised in the letters to the Roannez, written at about the same time. Hatred of the present life and renunciation of worldly temptations and attachments are therefore obligatory for the elect.

"Qu'il ne faut pas examiner si on a vocation pour sortir du monde, mais seulement si on a vocation pour y demeurer, comme on ne consulterait point si on est appelé à sortir d'une maison pestiférée ou embrasée"<sup>143</sup>.

Natural affections and relationships must be surrendered in favour of the truly spiritual bond which joins members of Christ's Body.

Jésus s'arrache d'avec ses disciples pour entrer dans l'agonie; il faut s'arracher de ses plus proches et des plus intimes, pour l'imiter<sup>144</sup>.

In his letter to the Périers, Pascal reminds them that they had already lost their father when he entered the Church, since from then on he belonged to God; and that their grief, which springs from natural affections must be regarded as a sacrifice for the life of the Church<sup>145</sup>. To Mme Périer (1648) Pascal affirms that, in fact, only since grace joined them in the new world of the spirit, (which alone has true reality), can they consider themselves as truly related.

C'est en quoi nous devons admirer que Dieu nous ait donné et la figure et la réalité de cette alliance; car, comme nous avons dit souvent entre nous, les choses corporelles ne sont qu'une image des spirituelles, et Dieu a représenté les choses invisibles dans les visibles<sup>146</sup>.

The neo-Platonic influence upon the thought and expression of Augustine<sup>147</sup>, which led him to see the things of this world as mere shadows of their supernatural counterparts, which alone have true reality, is very evident in Pascal's conception of the world and the Church as irreconcilably opposed. He reminds us that in the early days of the Church this essential distinction was recognized.

On connaissait alors par ce procédé une distinction essentielle du monde avec l'Eglise.

On considérait alors le monde et l'Eglise comme deux contraires, comme deux ennemis irréconciliables dont l'un persécuté l'autre sans discontinuation ...<sup>148</sup>.

As Pascal stresses in the Pensées, the world exists only for the exercise of God's mercy or judgement<sup>149</sup> as the instrument of his predestinatory will. Here the "reprouvés", to whom the "Dieu caché" does not reveal himself, in virtue

of their inherited culpability, miserably await death, enslaved by concupiscence which blinds them to God.

Pascal cites the authority of Augustine: "Sur quoi saint Augustin dit que c'est un effet de sa justice qu'il ne soit point connu du monde<sup>150</sup>."

Redemption consists, as Pascal demonstrates in Sur la conversion du pécheur, in the healing of this blindness by grace which enlightens the intellect so that the illusory and transitory nature of worldly goods is revealed and they are recognized as pointers to man's true good, God. For the elect, then, to whom God shows mercy, the world is a training ground for heaven<sup>151</sup>, for evidence of God's compassionate will can be perceived in all events and afflictions, which serve as divine instructions for securing release from imprisonment and servitude.

C'est pourquoi nous devons bien ménager l'avantage que la bonté de Dieu nous donne de nous laisser toujours devant les yeux une image des biens que nous avons perdus, et de nous environner dans la captivité même où sa justice nous a réduits, de tant d'objets qui nous servent d'une leçon continuellement présente.

De sorte que nous devons nous considérer comme des criminels dans une prison toute remplie des images de leur libérateur et des instructions nécessaires pour sortir de la servitude; mais il faut avouer qu'on ne peut apercevoir ces saints caractères sans une lumière surnaturelle; car comme toutes choses parlent de Dieu à ceux qui le connaissent, et qu'elles le découvrent à tous ceux qui l'aiment, ces mêmes choses le cachent à tous ceux qui ne le connaissent pas<sup>152</sup>.

Pascal returns here to the Augustinian theme of "use" and "enjoyment" of worldly goods, linked with the Platonic view of the world as a mere image of reality, and to the equivocal attitude to the question of grace and freedom characteristic of his mentor. "Une lumière surnaturelle" is the absolute prerequisite for the perception of these

goods as mere images, yet those who, "par un aveuglement brutal", remain attached to them, are, in Pascal's view, guilty of sacrilege and idolatry, since they accord to the creature the honour due only to God as their sole and true principle - the most heinous of crimes and worthy of God's vengeance. Yet, in the third letter to the Roannez<sup>153</sup>, he states categorically that men do not choose to be faithful to God as to an earthly king, who must show gratitude for their loyalty, but are made faithful and should be therefore infinitely obliged to Him if a continuation of grace allows them to remain in His service. In the fifth of his prayers, Pascal describes the fate of the worldly and of the elect, which is apparently the result of deliberate choice.

...Comme les uns périront avec les objets périssables auxquels ils se sont attachés, les autres subsisteront éternellement dans l'objet éternel et subsistant par soi-même auquel ils se sont étroitement unis.

Yet in the next prayer all is attributed unconditionally to God.

Achievez, ô mon Dieu, les bons mouvements que vous me donnez. Soyez-en la fin comme vous en êtes le principe. Couronnez vos propres dons; car je reconnais que ce sont vos dons<sup>154</sup>.

Pascal clearly sees no contradiction between the two apparently irreconcilable aspects of the divine nature: the absolutely gratuitous quality of God's mercy to His elect and the arbitrary and unjust character of His justice towards the damned, whom Pascal roundly slates as impious idolaters.

In a letter to Mme Périer (1648)<sup>155</sup>, Pascal writes that those enabled to perceive the images of God in the natural



world, must use them in order to avoid sin and possess God. The essence of sin, he explains in the third letter to the Roannez, consists in a failure to follow the revealed will of God.

Car enfin, la raison pour laquelle les péchés sont péchés, c'est seulement parce qu'ils sont contraires à la volonté de Dieu: et ainsi l'essence du péché consistant à avoir une volonté opposé à celle que nous connaissons en Dieu, il est visible, ce me semble, que quand il nous découvre sa volonté par les événements, ce serait un péché de ne s'y pas accommoder<sup>156</sup>.

In the Mystère de Jésus, Pascal indicates that it is in the exigencies and events of daily life that these pointers are to be found and must be followed.

Si Dieu nous donnait des maîtres de sa main, O qu'il leur faudrait obéir de bon coeur. La nécessité et les événements en sont infailliblement<sup>157</sup>.

Such an attitude would seem to require a fatalistic and uncomplaining acceptance of all circumstances as bearing the mark of God's will. He tells the Périers that the death of their father and, indeed, all events, must be viewed in this light, as "de tout temps prévu et préordonné en Dieu;"<sup>158</sup> and develops this thought further in a letter to Florin Périer (1657)<sup>159</sup>, by affirming that resistance to adverse circumstances constitutes a denial of the omnipotence of God, since such obstacles are clearly permitted by Him to impede their progress. The toleration of such hindrances can, in fact, be interpreted as a clear indication that we are motivated by grace and in tune with God's will.

The illumination of grace provides the Christian with a new perspective so that he can view both prosperity and affliction with equanimity as the result of God's compassion. Miracles can be appreciated only by the elect, as a measure

of the glory prepared in the next life<sup>160</sup>. Honours conferred upon those chosen to serve God have a reality of which worldly honours are only the image<sup>161</sup>, and the consolation of grace in affliction provides far greater pleasures than those of the world.

...on ne quitterait jamais les plaisirs du monde pour embrasser la croix de Jésus-Christ, si on ne trouvait plus de douceur dans le mépris, dans la pauvreté, dans le dénuement et dans le rebut des hommes, que dans les délices du péché<sup>162</sup>.

Both suffering and pleasure are thus necessary components of sanctification and Pascal prays that he may experience both, "car c'est le véritable état du Christianisme"<sup>163</sup>. The elect occupy a position between the Jews and pagans, who suffer without the consolation of grace, and the saints, who are exempt from all suffering. Just as man and God were united in the humanity and divinity of the "Homme-Dieu", so, through grace, the Christian shares Christ's divinity, and Pascal sees the Christian life as compounded of these opposed states. Thus grace brings to the elect the presence of Christ in the bread of the Eucharist, consolation in bodily suffering and the joy of the Blessed, mingled with sadness for the sin which remains in them<sup>164</sup>.

Clearly Pascal's conception of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ is a faithful and detailed replication of the Augustinian doctrine already outlined<sup>165</sup>. Emile Mersch insists that, in their revival of this doctrine in seventeenth century France, the Jansenists enhanced the annihilation of self and the passivity of the elect under the rule of grace, "se vider de soi pour être en capacité et en capacité pure de Jésus, se défier de soi pour subir pleinement l'influence de Jésus"<sup>166</sup>. In Mersch's view two

consequences follow from this adherence to Christ as sole source of all virtue: firstly a pessimistic depreciation of human nature generally, even that of Christ, demanding an austere renunciation of self in rigorism and asceticism; and secondly, the emphatic assertion of the hiddenness of God, veiled especially beneath the substance of the "Homme-Dieu" in the sacrifice of the Mass, through which alone access to God is possible.

Dans l'oeuvre du salut, à les [the Jansenists] entendre, la part de l'homme est de s'abstenir, de se retirer, de ne rien faire: tout amour humain, toute spontanéité naturelle, toute affection pour la créature, toute joie et toute expansion, toute recherche de bonheur personnel, toute initiative même sont péchés, ou du moins déchéances ou maladresses, comme autant d'empiètements sur le domaine universel de Dieu<sup>167</sup>.

Mersch attributes this attitude to the structure of French society under the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV: "les respects et les effacements des courtisans devant les majestés humaines donnent une image commode pour représenter l'attitude à prendre devant le roi des rois"<sup>168</sup>. These fundamental assumptions of the Augustinian doctrine would, however, seem to have their genesis and warrant in the experience of "creatureliness" or self-depreciation in the face of the transcendent, omnipotent God, which, as Otto demonstrated, are the essential characteristics of all such "twice-born" religious experience.

### Conclusion

An analysis of Pascal's correspondence and shorter works reveals two factors which can be seen to coalesce in the Pensées, and which are predominant in determining the framework and expression of his theology of grace. The numinous element in Pascal's own conversion in November,

1654, recorded in the Mémorial and amplified in Sur la conversion du pécheur, consisting in a profound experience of the absolute "otherness" and transcendence of God, clearly set the seal of approval upon the view latent in Augustinianism, that all rational theology constitutes an attack upon the omnipotence and sole causality of God. It furnished Pascal with conclusive proof that reason cannot give religious certainty which comes only from a living awareness of God. The importance of the theme of the "Dieu caché" in his work bears witness to his belief in the wholly gratuitous character of the divine self-revelation. The mathematical perspective which he applied to the field of theological truth, and which is most evident in the doctrine of the three orders, emphasises, in the absolute discontinuity between the orders, the inaccessibility and transcendence of God. The conclusions of Préface. Sur le Traité du Vide and De l'esprit Géométrique reinforce this disproportion between man and God, in a logical extension of that demonstrated between man and the natural world. These works establish: the limits of natural reason in the sphere of natural knowledge where it can only work upon given principles or self-evident facts; the heart as the capacity in man for the intuitive reception of such truth; and the infinities in number, space, time and motion as incomprehensible but nevertheless existing, and which reason must therefore accept. In analysing the mechanics of assent, De l'Art de Persuader demonstrates the relationship between reason and the will in the acquisition of belief, supporting the Augustinian view that reason can only choose the good if the will is first healed, since reason

follows and rationalizes the will's choice. The Entretien avec M. de Saci points up the inadequacies of reason in the rational doctrines of philosophy, which fail to recognize the corruption of the will and the need for grace to empower it if it is to choose the good.

Yet, in the Comparaison des Chrétiens des premiers temps avec ceux d'aujourd'hui, Pascal underscores the primacy of reason in the conversion experience for then its assent to the content of Revelation is what precipitates the necessary renunciation of the world. Pascal objects to infant baptism on the grounds that this consent is clearly impossible before the age of reason, when, as moral consciousness and arbiter of religious truth, reason can recognize Christian principles as superior to those of the world. Similarly, in the Factum pour les curés de Paris, when Pascal defends the law of the Gospel as an absolute against which all acts should be measured and which the Jesuit casuists threaten to annihilate, he again points to such a moral consciousness in man. It is in the light of this that he sets the Jesuit moral principles below even those of infidels and savages, who are outside both the natural and supernatural law.

Ce qu'il y a de plus pernicieux dans ces nouvelles morales, est qu'elles ne vont pas seulement à corrompre les mœurs, mais à corrompre la règle des mœurs, ce qui est d'une importance tout autrement considérable<sup>169</sup>.

The dialectical style adopted in the Entretien avec M. de Saci, which points to Revelation as alone providing man with an explanation of, and remedy for, the human condition, anticipates an even more important role accorded to it in the Pensées, that of establishing the supremacy of Christ as sole

mediator between man and God, and in whom alone the natural and supernatural orders of being are united. By implication, Christ's Body, the Church, in whose members he continues his redemptive suffering, alone mediates to the elect the grace of conversion and perseverance, so that, for Pascal, separation from it inevitably implied damnation. In the Comparison des Chrétiens des premiers temps avec ceux d'aujourd'hui, he stresses the uniqueness of the Church's role as the instrument of the illumination in which conversion essentially consists. Detachment from the world is thus obligatory for the Christian, for whom the world constitutes a training ground for heaven, as the instrument of God's predestinatory will. From the perspective of the supernatural order to which they are elevated by grace, the elect perceive worldly attachments, goods and pleasures as transient and lacking true reality, as images by which God enables them to rise to Him. As Chevalier observes, "le chrétien parfait, illuminé par le soleil invisible, aperçoit l'ordre derrière le désordre, la fin derrière le mécanisme, la cause première derrière les causes secondes..."<sup>170</sup>.

Pascal's correspondence portrays the Christian life as one of striving, suffering and submission. Suffering is indispensable, not only as a source of grace by continuing the redemptive work of the Church, but also as a means of inner purification, so that the life of the elect is a continual penitence for the sins of the flesh from which they are delivered only by death. The fear of abandonment by God, clearly a dominant influence on the thought and conduct of Pascal from the time of his second conversion until the end of his life, when, in the Prière pour demander à Dieu

le bon usage des maladies, it assumes obsessive proportions, coerces the elect into both action and submission. Thus, whilst Pascal urges the Christian to make good use of each grace to avoid sin and merit the next, in this way continually striving towards sanctification, he also stresses the passivity required of the Christian in accepting all events and circumstances as evidence of God's will, acknowledging even the faith which responds to the revelation of the "Dieu caché" as a divine gift. "Nous assistons, en notre être, aux mouvements qu'un autre y cause victorieusement, et la grâce laisse notre activité naturelle aussi étroitement repliée en son insignifiant néant qu'elle même est parcimonieusement octroyée"<sup>171</sup>.

Yet Pascal affirms that the true good can only be lost with man's consent, and he accuses those who fall away of deliberately committing sacrilege and idolatry. The two delectations which, in the Ecrits sur la Grâce, are the instruments of the divine will, are presented here as the free choice of the "endurcis" or "elect". As with Augustine, the non-rational apprehensions of Pascal's conversion experience, the felt certainty of deliverance which makes all salvation appear a sheer gift of God, and the feeling of unworthiness demanding renunciation and purification for a continuation of that gift, all issue in inconsistencies and irrationalities in his theology of grace. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most profoundly spiritual of his shorter works, Prière pour demander à Dieu le bon usage des maladies, best illustrates the ambivalence.

Oh qu'heureux sont ceux qui avec une liberté entière et une pente invincible de leur volonté aiment parfaitement et librement ce qu'ils sont obligés d'aimer nécessairement!<sup>172</sup>.

NOTES

## CHAPTER II

1. L308, B,793.
2. O.C., p.230.
3. O.C., p.230.
4. J. Russier, La Foi selon Pascal. (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1949), p.384.
5. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, pp.134-138.
6. St. Augustine, Confessions, pp.170-171.
7. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, p.27.
8. Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.3.
9. O.C., p.230.
10. J. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal (Paris, Editions Elzévir, 1950), pp.15-16.
11. O.C., p.230.
12. Allen in The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.160, observes that Augustine's views on Original Sin, Baptism and Predestination were considered at the time innovations as well as a dangerous disturbance of the Church. Clearly the views of the seventeenth century French Augustinians were regarded as equally innovative and disturbing.
13. cf. fragments L105, B342; L107, B343; L112, B344. See also Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.110 where he discusses this meaning of the word "instinct" in Pascal.
14. *ibid.* p.116.
15. see E. Gilson, The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy (London, Sheed and Ward, 1950), p.389. Gilson observes that Christian thinkers naturally measured progress in relation to a single end. The entire human race was thus conceived as a single man growing from Adam to the end of the world "until it should attain the perfect age, which shall be that of its future glory".
16. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.26.
17. J. Chevalier, Pascal (Paris, Librairie Plon, 1922), pp.185-186.



18. O.C., p.201.
19. O.C., p.201.
20. A. Krailsheimer, Pascal (Oxford, University Press, 1980), p.26. see also page 273 where a similar view, held by Strowski and Chevalier, is discussed.
21. O.C., p.466.
22. O.C., p.279.
23. O.C., p.280.
24. Chevalier, Pascal, p.87.
25. O.C., p.348.
26. O.C., p.349.
27. cf. L110, B282. Chevalier in Pascal, p.262, note 2, discusses these two functions of reason in Pascal where "raison" distinguishes man from animals who rely on "instinct", and "instinct" in man denotes the capacity, remaining from his pre-Fall state, to "connaître la vérité et d'être heureux".
28. cf. L512, B1; L513, B4.
29. Russier, La Foi selon Pascal, pp.78-83.
30. O.C., p.352.
31. B. Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules, ed. L. Brunschvicg (Paris, Classiques Hachette, 1956), p.184, note 1.
32. O.C., pp.354-355.
33. H. Davidson, The Origins of Certainty (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979), p.129.
34. L418, B233. O.C., p.550.
35. L149, B430. O.C., p.521.
36. L131, B434.
37. Chevalier, Pascal, p.198, note 1.
38. see Russier, La Foi selon Pascal, p.99. Campbell in On Selfhood and Godhood, pp.279-280 totally rejects the Augustinian premise that the facts demonstrate a natural depravity in man and writes: "On the very kindest interpretation, the 'facts' they appeal to must be of a highly selective order". Similarly Voltaire in Lettres Philosophiques (Oxford, Blackwell, 1956), p.99 disagrees most strongly with Pascal's conclusions on the condition of man. "Pourquoi nous faire horreur de notre être?" etc. For Newman, the

Augustinian doctrine perfectly explains the facts of the human condition as he saw them. see page 25.

39. O.C., p.355.
40. cf. L520, B375.
41. O.C., p.355.
42. L308, B793.
43. see Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.84-85.
44. O.C., p.356.
45. O.C., p.355.
46. see H. Davidson, Blaise Pascal (Boston, Twayne Publishers, 1983), p.127.
47. O.C., p.382.
48. O.C., p.355.
49. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.146-147.
50. L298, B283.
51. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.147.  
cf. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine, p.245. Pascal's method is that of Augustine.
52. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.158.
53. Russier, La Foi selon Pascal, p.183, note 1.
54. L308, B793.
55. Russier, La Foi selon Pascal, p.226.
56. Chevalier, Pascal, pp.13-25.
57. H. Gouhier, Blaise Pascal Commentaires, pp.85-98. In this excellent analysis of the Entretien avec M. de Saci, Gouhier demonstrates convincingly Pascal's intention to use it as part of the frameworth of an apology.
58. *ibid.* p.88.
59. Chevalier, Pascal, p.163.
60. Gouhier, Blaise Pascal Commentaires, p.97.
61. O.C., p.296.
62. Gouhier, Blaise Pascal Commentaires, pp.93-94.
63. O.C., pp.292-293.

64. cf. L140, B466; L146, B350.
65. O.C., p.293.
66. O.C., p.293.
67. As C.C.J. Webb writes in Pascal's Philosophy of Religion, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1929), pp.23-24, Montaigne was especially attractive to Pascal because "he put before his readers with a singular depth of insight and wealth of illustration the spectacle of human life without religion; and this was just what Pascal wanted, if he was to estimate the value of religion to human life...".
68. Pascal sketches the ethic characteristic of the lax society to which the apology will be directed.
69. Gouhier, Blaise Pascal Commentaires, p.95.
70. O.C., p.296.
71. O.C., p.296.
72. O.C., p.297.
73. Chevalier, Pascal, pp.208-209.
74. see Miel, Pascal and Theology, p.123.
75. L308, B793.
76. In Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.163, Laporte points to Pascal's definition of human intelligence as, by destination, "'dépositaire' du vrai" in L131, B434.
77. Davidson, The Origins of Certainty, p.130.
78. O.C., p.282.
79. L424, B278.
80. L539, B99.
81. O.C., p.279.
82. O.C., p.364.
83. Davidson, The Origins of Certainty, p.46.
84. cf. Ecrits sur la Grâce, O.C., p.315.
85. cf. C.A. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, pp.15-16.
86. Mme Périer, Vie de Blaise Pascal. In Pensées et Opuscules, p.24. see also II<sup>e</sup> Provinciale, O.C., p.378.
87. O.C., p.267.

88. O.C., p.267.
89. Gouhier, Blaise Pascal Commentaires, p.189.
90. Russier, La Foi selon Pascal, p.194.
91. Gouhier, Blaise Pascal Commentaires, p.190.
92. J. Burnaby in Amor Dei (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1960), pp.196-197 writes, "The principle is the right of the creditor at his sole discretion not to demand payment of a debt; and Augustine forgets that this is precisely what justice is not, .... The returning of good for evil is a mark not of God's justice but of His goodness". Burnaby deplores the attribution of a retributive justice to God by Augustine, but fails to comment upon the arbitrary, unjust and niggardly dispensation of the divine mercy.
93. IV<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.267.
94. *ibid.*
95. O.C., p.363.
96. Chevalier, Pascal, p.94.
97. Davidson, Blaise Pascal, p.123.
98. Chevalier, Pascal, p.248.
99. O.C., p.266.
100. O.C., p.290.
101. O.C., p.291. cf. L919, B553. also St. Augustine, Confessions, pp.194-195. Augustine's account of his ecstatic experience at Ostia resembles that recorded in Sur la conversion du Pécheur.
102. Prière XIV, O.C., p.365.
103. III<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.266.
104. O.C., p.291.
105. *ibid.*
106. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.331.
107. cf. L427, B194.
108. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, pp.10-11.
109. *ibid.* pp.7, 43-44.
110. O.C., p.291.
111. O.C., p.268.

112. see pages 128-129.
113. O.C., p.269.
114. cf. Ecrits sur la Grâce, O.C., p.333.
115. O.C., p.268.
116. J. Broome, Pascal (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1965), p.236.
117. O.C., pp.268-269. cf. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine, p.78.
118. O.C., p.274.
119. O.C., p.270.
120. O.C., p.274.
121. The unique role of Christ is central to the Pensées. cf. L189, B547; L416, B546; L417, B548.
122. O.C., p.277.
123. O.C., p.278.
124. O.C., p.276.
125. Prière XV. O.C., p.365.
126. O.C., p.269. cf. Mersch, Le Corps Mystique du Christ, Tome II, pp.106-110. "La chrétienté entière, à travers l'espace et à travers les siècles, ne fait qu'un seul suppliant, immense et perpétuel" (p.110).
127. O.C., p.268.
128. cf. XVII<sup>e</sup> Provinciale, O.C., p.454.
129. O.C., p.268.
130. Prière XI, O.C., p.364.
131. cf. Lettre à M. et Mme Périer (1648), O.C., p.275 where God is "l'unique et véritable cause" of all misfortunes, and IX<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.270, "cette peine temporelle garantirait de l'éternelle, par les mérites infinis de Jésus-Christ, qui la souffre et qui se la rend propre ...".
132. Prière VI, O.C., p.364.
133. Burnaby, Amor Dei, pp.202-203.
134. L434, B199.
135. Lettre à M. et Mme Périer, O.C., p.277.

136. II<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.266.
137. O.C., p.621. L919, B553.
138. 1<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.266. C.C.J. Webb in Pascal's Philosophy of Religion, pp.92-96 deploras Pascal's hatred of self as inconsistent with Christianity.
139. II<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannex, O.C., p.266.
140. I<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.265.
141. IX<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.270.
142. II<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.266.
143. I<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.266.
144. L919, B553. C.C.J. Webb in Pascal's Philosophy of Religion, pp.92-93 is highly critical of Pascal's disparagement of natural affections as closer to Stoic apathy than Christian charity. C.S. Lewis echoes this view in The Four Loves (London and Glasgow, Collins, 1960), p.111 with respect to a similar opinion expressed by Augustine in his Confessions, pp.57-58.
145. O.C., p.278.
146. O.C., p.273.
147. see pages 30-31.
148. O.C., p.360.
149. L461, B584.
150. Fragment d'une Lettre de Pascal (1657), O.C., p.281.
151. cf. Prière III, O.C., p.362. "O Dieu, qui ne laissez subsister le monde et toutes les choses du monde, que pour exercer vos élus, ou pour punir les pécheurs".
152. Lettre à Mme Périer (1648), O.C., p.273.
153. O.C., p.267.
154. O.C., p.363.
155. O.C., p.273.
156. O.C., p.266. Pascal would seem to imply here an ability in the will freely to follow or to transgress the known will of God. cf. Provinciales. see pages 220-222.
157. L919, B553.
158. O.C., p.275.

159. O.C., p.281.
160. I<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.266.
161. VII<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.269.
162. *ibid.*
163. Prière XI, O.C., p.364.
164. VII<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.269.
165. see pages 21-23.
166. Mersch, Le Corps Mystique du Christ, Tome II, pp.319-320.
167. *ibid.* p.321.
168. *ibid.* p.322, cf. P. Bénichou, in Morales du Grand Siècle (Paris, Librairie Gallimard, 1948), p.116, who affirms that Jansenist autonomy of conscience maintained a strong individualism in the face of an absolutist crown and papacy.
169. Factum pour les Curés de Paris, O.C., p.471.
170. Chevalier, Pascal, p.249.
171. Mersch, Le Corps Mystique du Christ, Tome II, p.324.
172. O.C., p.363.

## CHAPTER III

## ECRITS SUR LA GRACE

Background

The question of grace in the works of Pascal is given explicit and detailed treatment in the Ecrits sur la Grâce, where Pascal's intention is clearly to demonstrate conclusively that the Augustinian teaching on Grace and Predestination is not only the true doctrine of the Church, but also unequivocally endorsed as such by Scripture, the Fathers and the Councils of the Church<sup>1</sup>. Bremond<sup>2</sup> suggests that it was written expressly to reassure the nuns and friends of Port-Royal who, because of the identification of their teaching with that of Jansen, through their association with St.-Cyran, were greatly disturbed by accusations of Calvinism levelled at them by the Jesuits in respect of the five condemned propositions. The long-standing debate between Molinists and Thomists on the question of grace, temporarily silenced in 1607 by Paul V, when a truce was declared and both parties permitted to teach their own view as legitimate doctrine, flared up again with the publication in 1640 of Jansen's Augustinus, quite openly directed at the Jesuits, and purporting to be the pure Augustinian teaching of the Church on grace.

The Augustinus<sup>3</sup> was the blueprint for the movement of spiritual renewal masterminded by Jansen and St.-Cyran, and already introduced by the latter to the nuns of Port-Royal, with its emphasis upon a conscious relationship, through prayer and devotion, with the person of Christ as the centre of the religious life, and on the need for a more personal



assurance of grace, and for reaffirming, in a life of humility and service, a true relation between religion and morality<sup>4</sup>. This constituted within the Church a part of the wider movement of the Reformation, in its attack upon a mechanistic view of grace and sanctification by means of instruction and external observances mediated by the Church, rather than by a conversion of the heart to God.

The Jesuits, on the other hand, believed that in his work, Molina was entirely faithful to the teaching of Augustine, and that in his conception of the "scientia media" he had explained and reconciled the co-existence of freewill and absolute predestination affirmed as realities by Augustine, thus allowing some scope for self-determination and moral effort<sup>5</sup>. The need to accommodate the Christian doctrine to the exigencies of their missionary work at home and abroad led the Jesuits to try to temper the pessimistic and deterministic bias of the Augustinian doctrine. It is clearly the more radical interpretation of Molina taught by Lessius and condemned by the Faculty of Louvain in 1587<sup>6</sup>, with which Pascal is particularly concerned, for it goes beyond a mere congruism and affirms a predestination in prevision of the acceptance of grace, not only for the beginning of faith, but also for perseverance, on the grounds that efficacious grace destroyed free will. For Jansen and the Augustinians of Port-Royal this merely represented a renewal of the Semi-Pelagian heresy since, in their view, it made the efficacy of grace depend upon the consent of the human will, thus detracting from the majesty and mystery of God.

The Jesuits responded to the publishing of the Augustinus

by claiming that it was a distortion of the teaching of Augustine, and accused Jansen of Calvinism, with specific instances listed in the five condemned propositions, a move which Port-Royal interpreted as a veiled attempt to undermine further the authentic Augustinian doctrine of the Church. With the death of Jansen in 1638, it fell to Port-Royal to defend a work which, Delumeau<sup>7</sup> suggests, the nuns themselves had probably never read. Laporte states that the chief concern of the theologians of Port-Royal was to distance their own doctrine from both Calvinism and Molinism, since they were only too conscious that these constituted "les extrémités logiques par rapport auxquelles se situe sa propre position"<sup>8</sup>. The deliberations of the Council of Trent, moreover, would appear to have done nothing to resolve the problem, for under pressure from both Jesuits and Thomists, that Council affirmed both the freedom of the will and efficacious grace and, in effect, endorsed both doctrines<sup>9</sup>. The apologetic purpose of the Ecrits would seem to consist specifically in the exposition and defence of a traditional Augustinian stance, thus reassuring the nuns and friends of Port-Royal that, in their devotion to Augustine, and in their reverence for the Scriptures and the authority of the Church, they were, in fact, more orthodox than the Jesuits, with their "nouveaux dogmes", who would condemn them. In their reassertion of the primitive Augustinian doctrine, the difficulty facing Port-Royal was that the Jesuit view of the will had gained general acceptance and was widely regarded as orthodox, so that it is the Augustinian doctrine of grace which now in fact appeared innovative, as it had in Augustine's own time<sup>10</sup>.

### Reason and Revelation

Both method and matter in the Ecrits sur la Grace are underpinned by the basic Augustinian distinction between nature and grace, reason and revelation.

The method which Pascal adopts is that set down in the Traité du Vide<sup>11</sup>, where Pascal posits the only criterion by which the truth of theological statements may be judged, namely, the tradition of the Church, and, in a secondary and limited role, the use of reason. In Pascal's view, the only reliable guide in dealing with truths belonging to the supernatural order, which must of necessity derive from a supernatural source, is to be found in the sacred writings of the Fathers, in Scripture and in the Councils and Prayers of the Church.

La règle que nous prendrons pour cet effet sera la tradition successive de cette doctrine depuis Jésus-Christ jusqu'à nous.

...Ainsi nous nous fonderons sur la pierre inébranlable de l'Évangile et des saintes Écritures: mais nous ne l'expliquerons pas suivant notre esprit propre, mais suivant celui des anciens Pères, des Papes, des Conciles, des prières de l'Église<sup>12</sup>.

Although reason is considered inadequate to deal with the truths of a higher, supernatural order, it is nevertheless believed to perform a valuable function in clarifying the interpretation of certain passages, where the meaning may be ambiguous, and misinterpreted by "les uns et les autres"<sup>13</sup> to lend a false authority to their teachings. Reason will also, Pascal claims, allow him to give such a sound, rational basis to the Augustinian doctrine that it will be wholly acceptable to the "sens commun" of the reader.

Et quoique le sens commun ne doive pas entrer en concurrence avec une matière de foi, nous ne laisserons pas de répondre aux objections des uns

et des autres. Et enfin nous ferons voir combien cette doctrine est conforme au sens commun même<sup>14</sup>.

#### Method

In the introduction to the text, Lafuma<sup>15</sup> cites Nicole's belief that in the Ecrits, Pascal wished to temper the rigidity of the Augustinian doctrine, rendering it "si plausible", that it would have a wider acceptance. He would appear, in fact, to have explored to the limit, what Miel<sup>16</sup> aptly calls "the possibilities of verbal equivocation", in his efforts to prove the logical acceptability of his own stance. Nevertheless the often lengthy, repetitious and convoluted arguments in the Ecrits do serve to underline Pascal's own position with regard to the role played by grace in the work of Redemption.

The method is that of Augustine, an analysis of which is to be found in De l'Art de Persuader<sup>17</sup>, namely, an appeal to the facts of experience to establish the nature of the problem; the presentation of the solution in Christian Revelation, to which an act of commitment is sought by the agency of grace; and finally rational argument to convince the mind.

The debate is briefly established as focusing upon the question of whether Predestination is determined by the divine or human will.

From the outset Pascal adopts the subtle dialectical style of the Pensées, favoured by the theologians of Port-Royal and already tested in the Entretien avec M. de Saci<sup>18</sup>, first setting the Augustinian doctrine firmly between the extremes of Molinism and Calvinism, the one claiming that salvation is the work only of man, and the other that it is

the work only of God. Pascal's thesis in the Ecrits is, that in Augustine's teaching on Grace, we have a synthesis of these partial truths, and that in this synthesis consists the complete and authentic doctrine of the Church on the question of Grace.

The reader is then progressively drawn by a series of logically demonstrated conclusions to an acceptance of the doctrine as the only one possible on traditional, rational and moral grounds, and thence to an assumption that it is, in fact, the Church's true teaching, the two heresies of Calvinism and Molinism serving only to underline its authenticity. Having assumed a position of orthodoxy, Pascal proceeds to give it the stamp of ecclesiastical authority, adducing proofs from Scripture and certain Fathers of the Church, and in the second Ecrit underlining the degree of conformity shown by Molinism and Calvinism with the Church's (Augustine's) doctrine. Clearly Pascal's intention in these two Ecrits is to distance the theology of Port-Royal as much as possible from that of Calvin. It would also seem likely that, by adopting a more kindly attitude towards the Molinists, and underlining their continued submission to the Church, compared to the disaffection of the Calvinists, Pascal hopes to evoke in the reader a sympathetic attitude to the faithful of Port-Royal in view of their own avowed loyalty<sup>19</sup>.

In the third and fourth Ecrits Pascal resorts to the extensive rational argument which occupies the major portion of the work, to interpret and clarify the proposition in Sessio VI C.XI of the Council of Trent, claimed by the

Molinists to uphold their own doctrine, and he proceeds to defend on theological and linguistic grounds the Augustinian interpretation.

Que les commandements ne sont pas impossibles aux justes.

### Grace and Predestination

The question of grace, for Pascal, is inextricably linked with that of predestination, and in the opening lines of the first Ecrit he sets down the basic assumptions of the Augustinian doctrine concerning the character and motivation of God with respect to salvation, which will be defended as orthodox in the Ecrits. For Pascal, as for Augustine<sup>20</sup>, observation of the human condition affords conclusive proof that some men are saved and others damned, and that this is due both to the will of God and to the will of man, underlining here man's free cooperation with God in the process of Redemption, and man's total accountability for the sins by which he freely merits damnation, antecedent to any willing on God's part.

Il est donc évident que la volonté de Dieu et celle de l'homme concourent au salut et à la damnation de ceux qui sont sauvés ou damnés. Et il n'y a point de question en toutes ces choses<sup>21</sup>.

There is, then a concurrence of wills between God and man in relation to salvation and damnation, and Pascal poses the question which is central to the whole of the work, namely, that of determining which is "dominante et maîtresse de l'autre", and which must, therefore, shoulder the ultimate responsibility in the matter.

Il est question de savoir si la volonté de l'homme est la cause de la volonté de Dieu, ou la volonté de Dieu la cause de la volonté de l'homme. Et

celle qui sera dominante et maîtresse de l'autre sera considérée comme unique en quelque sorte: non pas qu'elle le soit, mais parce qu'elle enferme le concours de la volonté suivante. Et l'action sera rapportée à cette volonté première et non à l'autre<sup>22</sup>.

Clearly, to preserve God's omnipotence, He must be given a dominant role in determining the final destiny of His creation, but, in order to save His goodness and justice, He cannot be seen to will their damnation.

Before entering upon a detailed discussion of the alternative solutions offered by the Calvinists and Molinists, Pascal illustrates this concurrence of wills with a selection of Augustine's own proof-texts, chiefly from St. Paul. Pascal's appeal to the authority of either Scripture or Tradition is clearly slanted to those passages which support his theological bias. In spite of accusations levelled at Molinists and Calvinists of selectivity in their choice of proof-texts<sup>23</sup>, Pascal himself is plainly guilty of the same crime, in spite of Cailliet's impassioned defence of the "objectivity, the integrity, and the erudition of Pascal's research..."<sup>24</sup>. As N.P. Williams<sup>25</sup> indicates, Augustine's doctrine was a hardening of St. Paul's teaching and it is inevitably to him that Pascal looks as principal Scriptural authority. In his exegesis of the apparently paradoxical words of St. Paul, "Je vis, non pas moi, mais Jésus-Christ vit en moi"<sup>26</sup> [Gal.II, 20], he defines the relationship between the wills of God and man, underlining the radical dependence of man upon God and the necessity for grace in the performance of good works.

J'ai travaillé, non pas moi, mais la grâce de Jésus-Christ qui est avec moi [1 Cor., XV, 10] .

In a mysterious synthesis of the divine and human wills Christ lives in St. Paul and performs good actions, by preparing the will so that it chooses the good, yet allowing the free cooperation of the human will so that it may thereby merit salvation. God, however, must be regarded as origin and source.

...mais la grâce de Dieu a été celle dont on peut dire qu'elle a travaillé, ... puisqu'elle a été l'origine et la source de son travail<sup>28</sup>.

Pascal thus illustrates the *modus operandi* of the will of God in the process of Redemption, which satisfies the two basic requirements at the heart of the Augustinian doctrine: the preservation of the image of God as omnipotent, just and loving; and the reality of the contribution made by the free will of man. Clearly, in Augustine's reconciliation of these apparently irreconcilable factors, Pascal found a satisfying explanation of the facts of the human situation in the light of his own experience<sup>29</sup>.

Having stated the basic principles of the Augustinian teaching, Pascal examines and compares the three answers currently offered to the question at the heart of the problem of Predestination, namely, the will of God for man with respect to salvation.

Si ce qu'il y a des hommes sauvés et damnés procède de ce que Dieu le veut ou de ce que les hommes [le] veulent<sup>30</sup>.

### Calvinists

The first opinion is that of the Calvinists who assert that God, creating man with an absolute will to save some and damn others, without prevision of merit in order to execute His will, caused Adam, and in him all men, to sin.



God sent Christ to earn the grace of redemption only for those predestined to salvation, while those destined for damnation were abandoned by God and deprived of grace throughout their lives. Pascal underlines how this appalling heresy, the arbitrary predestination of the elect to salvation and of the reprobate to hell, and the powerlessness of both to resist the inevitable impulsion to good or evil, not only offends the ordinary conception of justice, but is also incompatible with the idea of God as merciful and just.

Voilà l'opinion épouvantable de ces hérétiques, injurieuse à Dieu et insupportable aux hommes<sup>31</sup>.

### Molinists

The Molinists, on the other hand, revolted by such a harsh doctrine, and in an effort to right the damage done to God's image, have overreacted and gone to the opposite extreme. They believe that God had a conditional will to save all men at creation; that Christ was born to redeem all without exception; and, furthermore, that it depends upon the will of man, and not of God, whether the grace offered to all is accepted or rejected. Predestination is in accordance with prevision of the good or bad use made of these graces by the free will, so that God has no absolute will to save or damn any of his creation.

The Molinists err, in Pascal's view, in exaggerating the power of human reason ("Elle flatte le sens commun")<sup>32</sup>, attributing to it a competence in the supernatural order which makes man the sole author of his own salvation, at the same time excluding any willing on the part of God and thus denying His omnipotence.

Between the two immoderate extremes of these heresies,

Pascal claims, lies the restraint and reasonableness of the teaching of Augustine, the key to which is to be found in the Augustinian view of human nature before and after the fall of Adam, and the response which each of these states elicited from God. The error of the Molinists and Calvinists springs from their failure to distinguish these two states. Created "saine, sans tache, juste et droite, sortant des mains de Dieu, duquel rien ne peut partir que pur, saint et parfait", human nature became, by the first sin and revolt of Adam, "souillée, abominable et détestable aux yeux de Dieu"<sup>33</sup>. Pascal underlines the moral constraints imposed upon God by his justice, with respect to these two states of human nature. God could not damn man in the state of innocence or refuse him the grace sufficient for salvation, but He could justly damn the whole of mankind in the state of corruption.

In the state of innocence, then, God had a general and conditional will to save all men, provided that they themselves willed it by the right use of their freewill aided by sufficient grace, which enabled them, but did not infallibly determine them to persevere in the good. Adam, however, by his own freewill and without any impulsion from God, which was quite unthinkable in Pascal's view, made bad use of this grace and revolted against God, thereby corrupting and infecting the whole of mankind, so that he became the just object of the indignation and anger of God. Although all men were guilty and worthy of damnation, God, by a wholly gratuitous act of mercy, willed to save a part of this mass, leaving the remainder, by an act of

preterition rather than actual reprobation, in their damnation, where he could with justice have left the whole mass, in prevision of the sins they would commit, or at the least, because of the guilt inherited by participation in the first sin, because of their seminal identity with Adam. God is thus absolved by Pascal from the injustice inherent in the Calvinist scheme by the distinction made between "faire" and "permettre"<sup>34</sup>, since He did not actually will the damnation of mankind, but allowed Adam to do so.

God sent Christ, therefore, to save absolutely and by very efficacious means only those chosen and predestined from this mass, who alone would merit salvation by Christ's death, the rest simply remaining in the mass of perdition. Some of the latter, however, though not of the number of the elect, were granted a limited grace to participate in the redemptive work of Christ by leading others to salvation, but inevitably rejoining those destined for universal perdition, since they have not received the efficacious graces necessary to persevere. With a singular lack of regard for ordinary justice the blame for their failure is placed firmly at their own door.

Que c'est la faute de ces personnes de ce qu'ils ne persévèrent pas; qu'ils le pourraient, s'ils le voulaient, mais que n'étant pas du nombre des élus, Dieu ne leur donne pas ces grâces efficaces sans lesquelles ils ne le veulent jamais en effet<sup>35</sup>.

In the Augustinian scheme three distinct groups of men result, therefore, from the distribution of divine graces, by the agency of which God effectively works out His purpose for mankind in the economy of salvation<sup>36</sup>: those who never come to the faith; those who come but do not persevere and

die in a state of mortal sin; and, lastly, those who persevere in charity until their death, thus attaining salvation. The fate of each group is determined by the bestowal or withholding of grace in accordance with the Divine will.

Jésus-Christ n'a point eu de volonté absolue que les premiers reçussent aucune grâce par sa mort, puisqu'ils n'en ont point en effet reçu.

Il a voulu racheter les seconds; il leur a donné des grâces qui les eussent conduit au salut, s'ils en eussent bien usé, mais il ne leur a pas voulu donner cette grâce singulière de la persévérance, sans laquelle on n'en use jamais bien.

Mais, pour les derniers, Jésus-Christ a voulu absolument leur salut, et il les y conduit par des moyens certains et infaillibles"<sup>37</sup>.

The existence of this intermediate group in the Augustinian scheme of Predestination, introduces an element of uncertainty which was particularly responsible for the mixture of fear and joy with which, Pascal later insists, the justified must view their own election. Paradoxical as it may appear, in view of the complete finality of the divine decree, Pascal states that all men are, nevertheless, obliged to believe that they are of the small number of the elect, although their belief must always lack complete certitude and be tinged with fear, since the final discernment of the elect must always remain an impenetrable secret of God. Similarly, no one must judge others, however impious, to be outside election as long as they are living, and must attempt to make a positive contribution towards their salvation. Pascal succinctly summarizes the Augustinian teaching on Predestination.

Voilà leur sentiment, suivant lequel on voit que Dieu a une volonté absolue de sauver ceux

qui sont sauvés, et une volonté conditionnelle et par prévision de damner les damnés; et que le salut provient de la volonté de Dieu, et la damnation de la volonté des hommes<sup>38</sup>.

He then moves on immediately to an assumption that that teaching is, in fact, the true doctrine of the Church, dismissing other views as aberrations of human reason,

Voilà le sentiment des disciples de saint Augustin, ou plutôt celui des Pères et de toute la tradition et par conséquent de l'Eglise, les autres ne devant être considérés que comme des égarements de l'esprit humain<sup>39</sup>.

From this standpoint of assumed orthodoxy he assesses the attitude of the Church towards these different groups. A degree of tolerance, Pascal affirms, is possible towards the Molinists who, remaining within the Church ("ses enfants"), are open to correction through the authority of the Fathers, but a stronger line of reasoning must be adopted towards the Calvinists, who have placed themselves beyond this authority. Pascal adds that from the outset the Christian Church has been exposed to injury from "des ennemis contraires", who have advanced contrary claims for the absolute divinity or humanity of Christ. If left to themselves such opposing claimants will destroy each other, but meanwhile they serve a useful function in establishing the true doctrine.

Elle se console en ce que ces erreurs contraires établissent sa vérité; qu'il suffit de les abandonner à eux-mêmes pour les détruire, et que les armes que ces divers ennemis employent contre elle ne lui peuvent nuire, et ne peuvent que les ruiner<sup>40</sup>.

In the second part of the first Ecrit Pascal summarizes the views of the three doctrines with respect to the question of Predestination.

Ainsi, les Molinistes prétendent que la prédestination et la réprobation sont par la prévision des mérites et des péchés des hommes. Les Calvinistes prétendent que la prédestination et la réprobation sont par la volonté absolue de Dieu. Et l'Eglise prétend que la prédestination vient de la volonté absolue de Dieu et la réprobation de la prévision du péché<sup>41</sup>.

### Appeal to Tradition

Pascal appeals to the tradition of the Church to place the stamp of Patristic authority on the Augustinian doctrine, defending, in particular, as conclusively orthodox, the Augustinian teaching on the limited number destined by God to receive, by Christ's death, the grace of election, which had come under attack from the Jesuits and had been branded heretical in the five condemned propositions. As in his treatment of Scripture, Pascal's theological bias inevitably seeks validation in the "twice-born" Western tradition, headed by Augustine and his disciples, for whom divine omnipotence is paramount. Pascal's inclusion of St. Thomas reflects the evolution towards a Thomistic stand on the question of the universality of the divine will which can be detected in the Provinciales<sup>42</sup>. He makes a sweeping claim,

...que tous les Docteurs en tous les temps ont établi comme une vérité constante que Dieu ne veut pas sauver tous les hommes ou que Dieu ne donne pas à tous les hommes des grâces suffisantes pour leur salut, ou que la prédestination est sans la prévision des oeuvres<sup>43</sup>

and appeals first to the censure, by the Faculty of Douai, of the Jesuit proposition that, after the first sin, God offered to all men sufficient means of salvation, and to the Scriptural text with which the Faculty rebuts it.

Je ne prie point pour le monde, mais pour ceux

que vous m'avez donnés<sup>44</sup>.

Furthermore, in reply to the Jesuit claim that Scripture is full of precepts exhorting men to turn to God, Pascal cites Augustine's<sup>45</sup> argument that God commands the impossible so that we shall know what we must ask of Him. If grace were available before it is even asked for, this would make a nonsense of the prayer life of the Church.

Qu'y a-t-il de plus ridicule que de demander, que de prier, pour accomplir ce qui est en notre puissance<sup>46</sup>.

Moreover, in a similar censure by the Faculty of Louvain, the sufficiency of Christ's redemptive act is stated to consist only in the price of his blood, and not in a general help offered indiscriminately to all men, since this would necessarily have to be attributed to infants who die before they are brought to Baptism, which is the fountainhead, as it were, of this grace<sup>47</sup>, and therefore redemption could not be given for all. Pascal underlines in texts cited from Thomas Aquinas and Peter Lombard the absolutely arbitrary, though completely orthodox, nature of the distribution of the grace of election, in which, without any prevision of merit, God bestows mercy on those he wishes to save, and exercises his justice in allowing the reprobate to remain in the "masse corrompue". If that appears unfair Pascal reminds us in the second Ecrit,

Tous les hommes étant dans cette masse corrompue également dignes de la mort éternelle et de la colère de Dieu, Dieu pouvait avec justice les abandonner tous sans miséricorde à la damnation<sup>48</sup>.

As N.P. Williams rightly observes,

If prevenient grace is absolutely necessary for salvation, and if God only wills to bestow it upon a given number of men, it irresistibly

follows that He must be deemed to will the non-salvation of those on whom He does not bestow it...<sup>49</sup>.

Citing the authority of Peter Lombard Pascal sets out to absolve God from any responsibility for the damnation of those left in this mass, appealing to the occult nature of the divine justice, by which He can justly withhold the divine mercy. This divine justice is of a different order from the human conception of justice and is therefore incomprehensible and mysterious.

..."et il est dit qu'il les endurecit, non pas qu'il les pousse à pécher, mais qu'il n'en prend pas pitié, et il ne prend pas pitié de ceux auxquels il a jugé de ne donner point sa grâce par une justice très occulte et très éloignée du sens humain, laquelle l'Apôtre ne nous [dit] pas, mais qu'il a admirée quand il s'écrit: O Altitudo etc"<sup>50</sup>.

As Williams<sup>51</sup> indicates elsewhere the Augustinian conception of God in the doctrine of Predestination reflects "the influence exerted upon his convictions by the less admirable traits of his own character", for as F.R. Tennant<sup>52</sup> concludes, "it bespeaks divine parsimony when there appears to be no conceivable reason why the gift should not be bestowed universally". Two things emerge from Pascal's dialectical proof of Augustinian orthodoxy. The first is his unconscious recognition of the validity of reason as arbiter of religious truth<sup>53</sup> when he himself condemns the Calvinist doctrine of Predestination as unacceptable on moral grounds, acknowledging thereby an analalogical relation between human justice and divine justice which, as has already been pointed out, he nevertheless brands incomprehensible and hidden. The second is his insistence upon rejecting Molinism with the moral accountability it



implies, and upon attempting to make Augustinianism acceptable in spite of its immoral determinism, underlining the non-rational ground of his doctrine, the unshakeable conviction of divine omnipotence and human weakness borne out for Augustine and Pascal and other "twice-born" individuals by their own experience. These coexistent assumptions at different levels of consciousness appear to account for the inconsistencies and irrationalities which occur throughout his work.

In the second Ecrit Pascal elaborates further upon this theme of a closed list of elect in his exegesis of the apparently contradictory Pauline text "Who will have all men to be saved" [1 Tim. II, 4], twisting the meaning into a semblance of conformity with the Augustinian teaching on election. "Tous" becomes,

...un nombre d'hommes de tout sexe, âges, conditions, complexions, de tous les pays, de tous les temps, et enfin de toutes sortes<sup>54</sup>.

He exploits the possibilities of meaning in the word "tous", in order to avoid any inconsistency with Scriptural authority, interpreting it in a limited collective sense to denote simply the totality of the disparate group which comprises the elect, and applicable in a similar way to the "délaissés". Thus, while both groups are designated a "totalité", the elect, Pascal affirms, are always few in number while the damned are always many. This dubious form of linguistic analysis, or perhaps "verbal jugglery"<sup>55</sup>, whereby the natural meaning of the word is assumed to confer an Augustinian interpretation to any statement, becomes an invaluable tool in the hands of Pascal in the third and fourth Ecrits.

Augustinian Doctrine of Grace: Pre-Fall Adam

In the second Ecrit Pascal gives a succinct exposition of the three doctrines, underlining the differences and similarities which the Molinist and Calvinist systems bore to that of Augustine, explaining in greater detail the catastrophic consequences of the Fall for mankind, and the nature and modus operandi of the graces given to Adam in the pre- and post-Fall states. In addition to all the surpassing physical, moral and intellectual gifts with which Adam was endowed in the state of righteousness, together with a nature in a perfect state of harmony and a will indifferent to good and evil, God had created Adam with a desire for beatitude, which could find satisfaction only in the supernatural good.

Désirant sa béatitude, et ne pouvant ne pas la désirer<sup>56</sup>.

In spite of his superior gifts, however, Adam was incapable of observing the commandments without the addition of a special help from God. Having set Adam a supernatural goal, God in justice had to grant him the grace necessary to enable him to persevere in goodness and attain that end. Pascal points out that Adam could not have been held morally responsible for his transgression if he had not been granted this help, though Pascal does emphasize that the measure of this grace was the bare minimum required for him to fulfil the precepts and persevere in justice

...outré laquelle aucune autre n'était nécessaire pour accomplir les préceptes et demeurer dans la justice<sup>57</sup>.

This "sufficient" grace was placed under the control of Adam's will, to render it efficacious or not according to

the good or bad use he made of it. Clearly the efficacy of Adam's grace is dependent upon the direction of his will towards the good, or God, while perseverance towards the supernatural goal is conditional upon acknowledging a continuous radical dependence upon his Creator. If Adam had persisted in the right exercise of his will, he would not only have merited the glory of the angels, but would have passed on to his descendants a similar possibility of attaining eternal beatitude.

### The Fall

Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that Adam's nature had no particular bias towards evil, but had only to perceive the good in order to be able to move towards it, "il n'avait aucun chatouillement au mal, et ... il lui suffisait de connaître le bien pour s'y pouvoir porter"<sup>58</sup>, he deliberately succumbed to the temptation of the Devil, and rebelled against God to become his own master, turning from love of the transcendent good to love of creatures, thus heaping upon himself and all mankind with him, the catastrophic consequences of this first sin. The pride which prompted Adam to seek independence from and equality with God, blinded him to the fact that all true beatitude must flow from his relationship of dependence upon God, and the enormity of his sin lies in his failure to recognize this.

Abandoned by God in the love of creatures as a punishment for his rebellion, Adam immediately became liable to physical and spiritual death since he was now cut off from the source of grace needed to attain beatitude. Now under

the tyranny of concupiscence, his whole nature became scarred and vitiated by the corrupting influence of that concupiscence. His intellect once "très fort, très juste, très éclairé", is now clouded by ignorance, so that his will, formerly indifferent to good and evil, is no longer able to perceive and choose its true good, and now inevitably chooses evil. Furthermore, inasmuch as the whole of the human race existed in Adam at the moment of his transgression, all men sinned in him ("comme un fruit sortant d'une mauvaise semence")<sup>59</sup>, and therefore justly share in the guilt and the consequences, enslavement to ignorance, concupiscence and death.

#### Free Will

Yet Pascal goes on to claim, following Augustine<sup>60</sup>, that, in spite of this, the free will still retains a flexibility to good and evil, but surely only in a very abstruse sense, since the will cannot now even perceive its good, and, under the powerful and seductive influence of concupiscence, is tricked into believing that its good actually resides in evil, which it freely, joyfully and infallibly chooses.

...maintenant il a une suavité et une délectation si puissante dans le mal par la concupiscence qu'infailiblement il s'y porte de lui-même comme à son bien, et qu'il le choisit volontairement et très librement et avec joie comme l'objet où il sent sa béatitude<sup>61</sup>.

The will may technically retain a potentiality for choosing the good but, under a necessity of sinning, there seems no possibility of this choice becoming a reality. Since the Fall, in fact, concupiscence inevitably impels men to find their satisfaction and happiness in material goods rather than in God, the transcendent good and only

source of beatitude. As N.P. Williams aptly expresses it, "The will of fallen man is free, but in point of fact it always freely chooses evil under the overwhelming influence of concupiscence, or of the devil's power"<sup>62</sup>.

#### The Grace of Redemption

Pascal outlines in detail the nature and operation of the grace merited by Christ's death for the redemption of the elect. In view of the enormity of Adam's transgression and the corruption wrought upon human nature by concupiscence, it is not surprising that a very powerful help is required to pluck the elect from the "masse corrompue", and bring them to salvation. Pascal underlines this,

Et le péché d'Adam transmis à toute sa postérité est si énorme qu'encore qu'on n'en puisse concevoir la grandeur, il suffit de dire qu'il a fallu, pour l'expier, qu'un Dieu se soit incarné et qu'il ait souffert jusqu'à la mort pour faire entendre la grandeur du mal en le mesurant à la grandeur du remède<sup>63</sup>.

The sufficiency of the grace given to Adam before the Fall bears no relation to that required by the elect, for, whereas Adam's grace allowed him to persevere in the good if he had so wished, since election is now the effect purely of God's infallible decree, the grace given to fallen man must be wholly efficacious, in fact the gift of perseverance itself. It must be immeasurably stronger in view of the double function it is required to perform: first, healing the will of the effects of the Fall; and secondly, moving the will infallibly to choose and persevere in the good. Pascal describes it as "la grâce médicinale", since it heals and restores freedom to the will by enabling it to substitute good choices for the evil ones towards which it is inevitably determined by concupiscence since

the Fall. Grace acts upon the will as "une suavité et une délectation dans la loi de Dieu", charming the will with the promise of sweetness and pleasures greater than those offered by concupiscence. The language which Pascal uses to describe the action of grace is, in effect, identical to that used of concupiscence ("une suavité et une délectation si puissante dans le mal"), the difference between them residing only in the degree of power exerted by the stronger attraction in the seduction of the will.

...la grâce de Jésus-Christ, qui n'est autre chose qu'une suavité et une délectation dans la loi de Dieu, répandue dans le coeur par le Saint-Esprit, qui non seulement égalant, mais surpassant encore la concupiscence de la chair, remplit la volonté d'une plus grande délectation dans le bien, que la concupiscence ne lui en offre dans le mal, et qu'ainsi le libre arbitre, charmé par les douceurs et par les plaisirs que le Saint-Esprit lui inspire, plus que par les attrait du péché, choisit infailliblement lui-même la loi de Dieu par cette seule raison qu'il y trouve plus de satisfaction et qu'il y sent sa béatitude et sa félicité<sup>64</sup>.

Grace, therefore, is a love of the good, shed in the heart of the elect by the action of the Holy Spirit, infallibly drawing the will to turn from the love of creatures to the love of God. This corresponds to the Augustinian definition of grace, as H. Rashdall has it, as "a divine influence upon the soul without which it is incapable of the smallest good action"<sup>65</sup>. He adds that in Augustine "justification" meant a "making righteous" and not merely a "declaring righteous" as in St. Paul, and Pascal insists that it is the infallible efficacy of this grace which is of prime importance, and not the way in which it influences the will to achieve the end result.

Et c'est pourquoi on dit indifféremment ou que le

libre arbitre s'y porte de soi-même par le moyen de cette grâce, parce qu'en effet il s'y porte, ou que cette grâce y porte le libre arbitre, parce que toutes les fois qu'elle est donnée, le libre arbitre s'y porte infailliblement<sup>66</sup>.

Every step in the process of redemption is the work of this efficacious grace: the reorientation of the will from evil to good; the choice and performance of every good action by which the elect merit salvation; and perseverance itself. Yet Pascal insists upon the positive contribution of the freewill not only in meriting glory,

...par leur propre choix et le mouvement de leur libre arbitre qui s'y est porté de soi-même volontairement et librement

but also in meriting damnation or,

...là mort éternelle, puisqu'ils ont choisi le mal par leur propre et libre volonté<sup>67</sup>.

For the will to be deemed free in the Augustinian sense it would appear to need only the freedom to choose spontaneously, free from any external constraint, but always in accord with its interior determination<sup>68</sup>. As N.P. Williams succinctly expresses the Augustinian view of freewill, "We are free to do what we like, but we are not free to like what we ought to like"<sup>69</sup>, and elsewhere, "no liberty can resist His plans, though liberty retains always the power of damning itself"<sup>70</sup>. The will is, in fact, the opposite of "free" in the sense of having the freedom of indetermination enjoyed by Adam in the paradisaal state.

Pascal concedes that the Molinists are in agreement with St. Augustine on the conditional will of God for man at creation, the nature of Adam, and the reason for his fall, but he maintains they fail to take account of the effect of the Fall on the attitude of God. They believe that God's

justice would be destroyed, unless He offered all men after the Fall the grace needed to redeem themselves; that it would be immoral of God to discern the elect from the damned without prevision of merit; and that the free will of man would be destroyed if God's precepts were accomplished by the agency of efficacious grace. God's will for man after the Fall was, then, still conditional upon the choice of the good by Adam's freewill, and by the good use of the grace offered to it. Because of the effects of concupiscence and ignorance a stronger grace was now required, and Christ died to merit this and make it available to all ("sans exception d'un seul")<sup>71</sup> throughout their lives. This grace ("générale et suffisante")<sup>72</sup> is sufficient to prompt belief in God and prayers for his assistance, and if used well elicits from God further graces, called either sufficient or efficacious, which enable men to perform good actions and merit salvation, while those who reject the initial grace remain in the "masse corrompue". Pascal claims that, in their desire to preserve the justice of God, the Molinists have denied His omnipotence and made salvation and damnation subject to the will of man<sup>73</sup>.

The Calvinists also failed to take account of the two states of man, Pascal emphasizes, but their doctrine bears no relation at all to that of Augustine. God's will for man ("la plus noble de ses créatures") at Creation was an unambiguous intention to save some and damn others, the purpose of this decree being simply to demonstrate his omnipotence. However morally unacceptable that may appear, it is the Calvinist claim, Pascal implies, that anything



which enhances God's glory must be just. God's justice required, nevertheless, that He could not do this without prevision of merit or sin, and He therefore did not merely permit, but actually decreed the sin of Adam, rendering him and all men liable to eternal death and completely destroying his free will, so that it had no flexibility to good, even with the help of efficacious grace. Pascal underlines the fact that sin was passed on to Adam's posterity, not as the natural consequence of his free fall, but by the will of God.

Que le péché d'Adam s'est communiqué à toute sa postérité non pas naturellement, comme le vice d'une semence au fruit qu'elle produit, mais par un décret de Dieu...<sup>74</sup>.

Christ was born to merit, by his death, the salvation only of the elect, and the grace which they are given cannot be withdrawn. Since the will was destroyed by the Fall, it cannot cooperate with this grace which, in fact, takes over its function and performs good actions in its place, carrying the will along with it "comme une pierre, comme une scie, comme une matière morte", and "malgré sa répugnance". The will itself, capable only of choosing evil, merits eternal death, and it is the merits of Christ imputed and applied to the elect which bring them salvation.

Ainsi ceux à qui cette grâce est une fois donnée, sont infailliblement sauvés, non par leurs bonnes oeuvres ou bonne volonté, car ils n'en ont aucune, mais par les mérites de Jésus-Christ qui leur sont appliquées.

...Et ceux à qui cette grâce n'est point donnée sont infailliblement damnés pour les péchés qu'ils commettent par l'ordre et décret de Dieu qui les y incline pour sa gloire.

...Tous les hommes étant également innocents de leur part, lorsque Dieu les a discernés<sup>75</sup>.

In the Augustinian view of grace, then, the will is irresistibly but spontaneously drawn towards the good by a delectation more powerful than that of concupiscence, induced in the heart of the elect by the Holy Spirit. For the Molinists grace could be described as a power, placed at the disposal of the human will allowing it to advance or not, as it pleases, towards salvation. In the Calvinist understanding, however, grace suppresses the will, taking its place to earn the merit which will be imputed to the elect to bring them to salvation.

The third and fourth Ecrits represent the final step in the Augustinian method, namely, proof by way of logical demonstration in the interpretation and clarification of the content of Revelation, in this instance of the apparently ambiguous proposition in Chapter XI of the Sixth Session of the Council of Trent, "Que les commandements ne sont pas impossibles aux justes". The Jansenist<sup>76</sup> denial of a "pouvoir prochain" in the justified, to persevere in the good, was the subject of the first of the five condemned propositions and of Arnauld's second Lettre à un duc et pair, which precipitated his censure by, and threatened expulsion from, the Sorbonne and Pascal's writing of the Provinciales.

The Molinist claim that the Fathers originally intended the statement to be understood in a general sense, rather than as refuting a particular heresy, and to imply "toujours possibles", thereby endorsing their own doctrine, posed a serious challenge to the orthodoxy of the Augustinian teaching.

In the third Ecrit Pascal defends as orthodox, in particular, those aspects of the Augustinian theology attacked by the Jesuits in the five propositions taken from Jansen's Augustinus, and alleged to be heretical on the grounds that they implied a necessity of sinning in the Lutheran sense. Having already dealt, in the first two Ecrits, with the question of predestination and the semi-Pelagian error that Christ died for all men without exception, the points now in question are: that the righteous do not always have the grace to perform good actions; that grace is irresistible, efficacious and absolutely necessary for every step in the process of redemption, and that, since the Fall, the will no longer has a freedom of indifference but freedom only from constraint.

#### Perseverance

As in the first Ecrit, Pascal leads the reader from an unauthorized and extreme stance to the balanced orthodoxy of Augustinianism, undertaking on the Church's behalf the task of clarifying those passages of Scripture, the Fathers and the Council of Trent which have been wrongly interpreted, and pointing out to the Jesuits the error of their ways.

Elle [the Church] sait, que, pour les Molinistes, il suffit qu'elle parle par la bouche de ses papes et de ses Conciles, que la tradition de l'Eglise leur est en vénération, qu'ils n'entreprennent pas de donner aux paroles de l'Ecriture des interprétations particulières, et qu'ils ont dessein de suivre celles que la foule et la suite de ses saints docteurs et de ses papes et de ses Conciles y ont données<sup>77</sup>.

The tone he adopts towards his correspondent is conciliatory and persuasive, assuming with him, that, on the face of it, the Molinist interpretation,

...que le juste, considéré en un instant de sa justice, a toujours le pouvoir prochain d'accomplir les commandements dans l'instant suivant, ...<sup>78</sup>.

does, in fact, appear at first glance to be the more natural one. But Pascal then goes on to demonstrate that "l'autre sens qui ne s'offre pas avec tant de promptitude",

...que le juste agissant comme juste et par un mouvement de charité, peut accomplir les commandements dans l'action qu'il fait par charité<sup>79</sup>.

is, nevertheless, that intended by the Council. Pascal insists that, however unbelievable it may seem, the need for the Council to feel obliged to state such a self-evident truth, is clear when the Lutheran heresy is recalled. Then it will be apparent that the statement in question was intended simply to refute the Lutheran error, namely, that the actions of the righteous, even under grace, are always sins. The mistaken inference drawn from it by the Molinists, has now placed the Church in the position of fighting two heresies. The Council, therefore, opposed the Lutheran error in Canons 18 and 25 of Chapter XI, simply affirming the possibility of the commandments under grace, without implying any ability to persevere in righteousness. It opposed the Molinist error in Canons 16 and 22 of Chapter XIII, condemning as anathema the claim that the justified can persevere in righteousness without a special help and therefore that it is not common to all. This was particularly directed at the Molinist teaching that, after the Fall, God gave all men "une grâce suffisante seulement pour croire en Dieu et pour prier Dieu de les aider", with the promise of further graces always available in response to prayer.

Pascal rejects, out of hand, the possibility of a "pouvoir prochain" implied by Chapter XI and insists on an Augustinian sense.

Ainsi son objet, dans ce Chapitre XI est seulement de faire voir que le juste agissant par l'amour de Dieu peut faire des oeuvres exemptes de péché; et qu'ainsi il peut observer les commandements, s'il agit par charité, et non pas qu'il a toujours le pouvoir prochain de conserver cette charité qui les rend possibles<sup>80</sup>.

Pascal affirms that a special help is needed, not only for "la persévérance actuelle", i.e. each individual act of goodness, but also for the ability to persevere in goodness, which is simply the continuation of individual acts of goodness.

...puisque persévérer n'est autre chose qu'accomplir les commandements dans les instants suivants...<sup>81</sup>.

By a series of inferences drawn from Canon 22, Pascal enters upon a vindication of the Augustinian teaching on the question of perseverance. He urges his correspondent, first of all, to examine the whole of Chapter XI for proof that the words are intended to apply only to present acts of the justified, when they are actually under grace, with no suggestion that this possibility should have validity for the future.

...car il est bien dit que ceux qui aiment Jésus-Christ au temps présent observent ses commandements dans le même temps présent où ils l'aiment, mais non pas qu'ils auront le pouvoir de les garder à l'avenir.

Furthermore, it would even appear, Pascal claims, that the Council, anticipating possible abuse of its pronouncement, added in Canon 18 the qualification, "et qui est constitué sous la grâce", "afin qu'on ne pût pas croire qu'il parlât de cette possibilité pélagienne"<sup>83</sup>, something

it would do only to make its intention and meaning clear and unequivocal, since the canons are always expressed in the briefest terms. The words themselves are from the works of Augustine, who is named as source in the text, and they would, therefore, certainly not have a meaning contrary to that intended by him, which was to emphasize specifically the need to receive grace in order to keep the commandments.

Canon 22 also necessarily refutes the Molinist view that the justified always have the "pouvoir prochain" to persevere in prayer, since there can be no difference between persevering in prayer and persevering in justice, as the Scriptures assure us of obtaining infallibly the justice necessary for salvation if we ask for it through the spirit of grace. Their view is, therefore, contrary to the decision of the canon. Clearly prayer itself is the grace by which perseverance is possible, the "secours spécial" of Canon 22.

...et qu'ainsi, si tous les justes ont le pouvoir prochain de persévérer à prier, ils ont aussi tous le pouvoir prochain de persévérer dans la justice, qui ne peut être refusée à leur prière? Ce qui est formellement contraire à la décision du canon<sup>84</sup>.

It is thus, Pascal argues, clearly untrue to say that God never leaves the justified without the "pouvoir prochain" to persevere in prayer, and therefore in justice, for the Council expressly states that the righteous have neither perseverance itself, nor the power to persevere without a special help from God, and that, therefore, it is not common to all men.

### Double Délaissement des Justes

From this chain of inferences Pascal, following Augustine, deduces the theory of the "Double Délaissement des Justes"<sup>85</sup>, that while it is true in one sense that God never abandons the justified, if He is not first abandoned, i.e. that God never refuses grace to those who ask for it in prayer, it is nevertheless true in another sense that God does sometimes leave the justified before they have left Him. In other words, God does sometimes withhold the grace to persevere in prayer, and Pascal again appeals to the evidence of human experience for incontestable proof that many of the justified do not, in fact, persevere in goodness and are, therefore, clearly abandoned by God.

...ne paraît-il pas qu'il y a des justes que Dieu laisse sans ce pouvoir pendant qu'ils sont encore justes, ...<sup>86</sup>.

In Pascal's view, this surely precludes the possibility that, at their justification, they receive the "pouvoir prochain" to persevere. In an extraordinary passage Pascal claims to have reconciled the Augustinian teaching, condemned in the five propositions - that the commandments are possible to the justified only under grace which is sometimes withheld by God - with the proposition of the Council of Trent.

D'où nous concluons donc que, suivant le Concile, les commandements sont toujours possibles aux justes en un sens; et qu'en un autre sens, les commandements sont quelquefois impossibles aux justes; que Dieu ne laisse jamais le juste, s'il ne le quitte, et qu'en un autre sens, Dieu laisse quelquefois le juste le premier, et qu'il faut être ou bien aveugle ou bien peu sincère, pour trouver de la contradiction dans ces propositions qui subsistent si facilement ensemble, puisque ce n'est autre chose que dire que les commandements sont toujours possibles à la

charité, que tous les justes n'ont pas toujours le pouvoir de persévérer: ce qui n'est point contradictoire; et que Dieu ne refuse jamais ce qu'on lui demande bien dans la prière, et que Dieu ne donne pas toujours la persévérance dans la prière: ce qui n'est en aucune sorte contradictoire<sup>87</sup>.

Pascal's transparent attempt to explain away the paradoxical character of this argument - "les propositions qui sont contradictoires dans les paroles, ne le sont pas toujours dans le sens"<sup>88</sup> - is an illuminating instance of the way he allows the assumed correctness of the Augustinian interpretation to dominate his thought.

The apparent contradictions are both reconciled and explained, Pascal affirms, by the fact that each step in the process of salvation involves participation by both man and God; that there are two types of perseverance to be considered, one in prayer and one in charity.

Il ne faut que remarquer qu'il y a deux manières dont l'homme recherche Dieu; deux manières dont Dieu recherche l'homme; deux manières dont Dieu quitte l'homme; deux dont l'homme quitte Dieu; deux dont l'homme persévère; deux dont Dieu persévère à lui faire du bien, et ainsi du reste<sup>89</sup>.

God initiates the redemptive process by giving man the first grace, "les faibles commencements du foi" so that he will cry out to God and receive in response the grace necessary to break the bonds of concupiscence and begin to move towards his supernatural goal. Up to this point Molinists and Augustinians agree. It is on the question of perseverance that they differ, because, Pascal explains, instead of viewing the redemptive process as a succession of individual acts, linked by cause and effect, the Molinists wrongly view it as a whole. Both man and God are operative in this chain of actions but, as St. Thomas



stated, the whole must be attributed only to the divine will.

...la grâce est donnée pour mériter la gloire et que la gloire est donnée parce qu'on l'a méritée par la grâce: mais le don de la gloire et de la grâce ensemble en commun n'a aucune cause que la volonté divine<sup>90</sup>.

Pascal further bolsters his interpretation of the proposition by citing other passages from Augustine, many of them referring to Scripture, which appear to have both a semi-Pelagian and Augustinian interpretation, and must be clarified in the light of others from Augustine's work which are univocal. Thus the proposition "il est en notre pouvoir de garder les commandements", must be explained by another, "c'est Dieu qui opère le vouloir et l'action, suivant son bon plaisir". Similarly, "Dieu veut que tous les hommes soient sauvés" must be elucidated by "tous les hommes ne sont pas sauvés, non parce qu'ils ne le veulent pas, mais parce que Dieu ne veut pas". Pascal concludes triumphantly, that these univocal expressions of Augustine, "par un merveilleux avantage pour sa doctrine"<sup>91</sup>, necessarily cancel out any Semi-Pelagian interpretation of Scripture, used to support the Semi-Pelagian doctrine, and therefore endorse as orthodox that of Augustine.

In order to demonstrate that the commandments are possible to men only if the will is empowered by grace, Pascal explores the meanings implied by the word "puissance", which, he says, includes "toutes les opinions". The whole of this section rests upon the Augustinian conception of the will, as essentially a love or attraction in which it delights freely, reason simply following its choice and rationalizing<sup>92</sup> it, unlike the Scholastic view of the will as determined by the choice of reason<sup>93</sup>. When we talk of

something as being "en notre puissance", which is the natural way of speaking, it follows, in Pascal's view, that we normally mean we do something when we will to do so. In this sense it is in our power to keep the commandments and to change our wills, for as soon as we will a thing, not only does it happen, but, in fact, it must happen. If, however, we say that a thing is "en notre pouvoir", a power which is "prochain", the word with which "pouvoir" is naturally linked, then we will have this power only if it is given by God, so that the proposition of St. Augustine "Les commandements sont possibles aux justes" is Catholic in the first meaning and Pelagian in the second.

As Gilson<sup>94</sup> points out, love for Augustine is essentially active, and grace confers on the will the ability to will and carry out the good. Clearly for Pascal grace which is present, but inactive, is a contradiction in terms. Since we accomplish only those desires which the will actually follows, for the will to turn to the good, it must, Pascal states, be prepared by God, so that it has the power to will the good actions which were formerly impossible.

"Il est en notre puissance de mériter ou la récompense ou la peine; car rien n'est en notre puissance, que ce qui suit notre volonté, laquelle lorsque Dieu la prépare forte et puissante, la même bonne action devient facile, qui était difficile et même impossible auparavant"<sup>95</sup>.

In the fourth Ecrit, Pascal further pursues the possibilities of linguistic analysis to demonstrate that the potential within the will for choosing the good, can only be realized in action if the will is healed and empowered by grace. He examines the relation between "la possibilité"

and "le pouvoir", claiming that whilst such a relation can be present, it is far from being either general or necessary, citing as an example of the first possibility,

Ainsi il est possible qu'un homme sain et libre  
coure quand il lui plaît, et il est aussi en son  
pouvoir de le faire.

and of the second, where the relationship is neither necessary or continuous,

Mais on sait aussi qu'il est possible qu'un homme  
vive soixante ans, et que cependant il n'est au  
pouvoir de personne, non seulement d'arriver à  
cet age, mais de s'assurer d'un instant seulement<sup>96</sup>.

Thus, although it is within the power of a healthy, free man to run where he wills, the same cannot be said of that same man in chains, since his freedom, the breaking of his chains, though possible, does not depend on him.

Circumstances, then, may prevent the accomplishment of an act, and Pascal provides a rule to determine when, in fact, the relationship between possibility and power does occur.

Toutes les fois que la cause par laquelle un effet  
est possible est présente et soumise au sujet où  
il doit être produit, il y a relation de la pos-  
sibilité au pouvoir; c'est-à-dire que l'effet  
est au pouvoir de ce sujet, et non pas autrement<sup>91</sup>.

Clearly, infidels, uninstructed in the faith, or the justified who have been deprived of the grace to pray have not the power to keep the commandments; but, Pascal states, according to this rule, that always remains possible, since man's will is the immediate cause of the observation of the commandments. This, however, is explained by the fact that another, dominant cause, the will of God, must be present to empower man's will. Pascal concludes this contrived and specious proof,

De sorte que cette cause première et principale n'étant pas résidente dans l'homme, mais dans Dieu, ni dépendante de l'homme, mais de Dieu, il est manifeste, en ce sens, que l'observation des commandements n'est pas toujours au pouvoir des hommes<sup>98</sup>.

Similarly, whilst it is possible for a man to be of the elect, or to sin, or to die at any moment, it is absolutely "incompossible", in Thomas' view, Pascal tells us, for a man predestined to salvation to be killed in a state of mortal sin.

Salvation, therefore, is possible only when the chains of concupiscence have been broken by the power of grace, but even then this grace must be so efficacious that it not only shows us our duty, but supplies the will with the strength to perform it, for just as the eye with no interior indisposition needs light in order to see, so the soul of the justified man, which is no longer bound by the passions, needs the "secours actuels" in order to love God. Pascal comforts the justified who fail to receive from God this additional grace needed to perform the good, alleging that what they have received is better than none at all, just as a little light is better than darkness to the man whose eyes are enfeebled by sickness.

Et ainsi un homme, quelque juste qu'il soit, s'il n'est aidé d'une grâce assez puissante, ou pour user des termes du Concile, "d'une secours spécial de Dieu", il est véritable selon le même Concile, qu'il n'a pas le pouvoir de persévérer, parce qu'encore qu'il ait le pouvoir dans les divers sens qui en sont expliqués, il n'en a pas néanmoins le pouvoir plein et entier auquel il ne manque rien de la part de Dieu pour agir...<sup>99</sup>.

Pascal's insistence here upon the absolute sovereignty of God's will over all human willing, and upon salvation as subject to the arbitrary dispensation of this efficacious

grace, bring the Augustinian doctrine very close to that of Calvin. The theory of the "Double Délaissement des Justes", is clearly an attempt to mitigate the harsh implications for the image of God, inherent in the doctrine that a just and loving Father withholds from the righteous either temporarily or permanently, and for no apparent reason, the grace necessary to persevere in justice, by attributing at least some part of the responsibility to man. By introducing these two types of perseverance, and insisting that salvation can be achieved only with the cooperation of man, Pascal attempts to explain away a serious inconsistency in the Augustinian system, implied by the mutually exclusive conceptions of arbitrary election and efficacious grace on the one hand, and freewill and merit on the other, which if not reconciled, expose the doctrine to accusations of Calvinism<sup>100</sup>.

Pascal can resort only, in the final analysis, to the mystery inherent in all divine operations, claiming that, whilst there is nothing mysterious in the fact that God should abandon the man who has first left Him, yet that God should initiate this chain of events is "tout mystérieux et incompréhensible". For a precedent he again appeals to Augustine, who, he claims, treated this question with equal "netteté" when speaking of the abandonment of the justified, "car ils ont été abandonnés à leur libéral arbitre par un jugement juste, mais caché"<sup>101</sup>. The fact that God should first leave man can be understood only in terms of an occult justice, clearly incomprehensible and of a different order, and which should not therefore be enquired into, since "ce qui est d'une si grande force, que

je vous la laisse à exagérer"<sup>102</sup>. That God should subsequently abandon the man who has been forced to abandon Him, however, is quite explicable in terms of human justice! The mystery of this abandonment by God is dissolved, Pascal affirms with Augustine, by the consideration that God is not morally obliged to give to the justified any grace apart from that due to Adam in Paradise and

...pourvu qu'il lui donne le secours qui était suffisant à sa première condition, rien ne doit l'engager à lui donner tout ce qui lui est nécessaire dans la corruption où il s'est précipité<sup>103</sup>.

God owes the gift of prayer only to the elect, "aux enfants de la promesse"<sup>104</sup>, to whom He has promised it as an act of pure mercy.

The question of predestination then, involves a mystery, and the final state of man must remain the impenetrable secret of a hidden God who is transcendent and "wholly other". The abandonment of the justified, serves therefore, as a reminder of the attitude of humility and dependence which God demands of the faithful, and Pascal cites the Augustinian view that that abandonment was "permitted" in order to teach the elect to hope only in God.

"...Dieu par sa permission, ou par sa providence et par sa disposition, mêle parmi les élus des justes qui ne doivent pas persévérer, afin de tenir dans la crainte ceux qui demeurent, par la chute de ceux qui tombent"<sup>105</sup>.

The absence of this delectation for the good, Pascal states, is clearly proved by experience and affirmed by the fact that even the saints were healed of some vices only late in their lives, to remind them of the need for humble dependence. He insists that it would be an impertinence, against the omnipotence of God to assert that the justified have a

"pouvoir prochain", which allows them to abandon God before He "les ait un peu laissés à eux-mêmes"<sup>106</sup>, since, "la qualité essentielle de prochain est telle qu'elle met l'homme dans une [certitude] absolue de la réduction en acte"<sup>107</sup>. Anyway, there are clearly millions for whom this is not the case.

...il est moralement impossible qu'entre tant de milliers d'hommes qui ont ce pouvoir prochain, il n'y en aurait au moins un qui le réduise en acte...<sup>108</sup>.

Pascal indicates<sup>109</sup> that the "pouvoir prochain" of the Molinists cannot be equated to the "sufficient" grace of the Thomists which they themselves admit will never be "réduite en acte". The sufficient grace in the Thomist scheme merely indicated the sufficiency of Christ's death for the salvation of all men, since the doctrine of God's will to universal salvation had by then been accepted by the Church. God, in fact, saves only those who receive efficacious grace, and it is these antecedent and consequent willings of God which are the basis of the distinction between sufficient and efficacious grace<sup>110</sup>.

If man, by his misuse of grace, and not God, were responsible for this fall, it would engender no terror<sup>111</sup> in the hearts of the elect, since grace is still available to them, and the mystery of election would be destroyed. The withdrawal of grace is a clear indication that perseverance is never assured and that, therefore, fear of abandonment, and hope of a continuance of grace, must always coexist even in the most saintly. Pascal points out that, according to the new doctrines of the Molinists, the fear and hope of which St. Paul speaks in the passage, "Opérez votre salut

avec crainte", relates only to their good or bad use of grace, whereas the apostle intended it to remind them of their dependence upon God's absolute sovereignty in the dispensation of grace.

...c'est Dieu qui opère lui-même en nous ce vouloir, et il opère ce vouloir, non pas suivant la disposition de notre volonté, mais suivant sa propre volonté<sup>112</sup>.

Pascal dismisses as absurd the suggestion that the justified should pray for the gift of perseverance itself, for it consists of a series of actual graces in response to individual prayers<sup>113</sup>.

...c'est jouer des paroles. Car Dieu donne à ceux qui demandent, et non pas à ceux qui ont demandé et c'est pourquoi il faut persévérer à demander, pour obtenir; ...<sup>114</sup>.

Fear and hope, therefore, are essential since a justified man may fall at any moment, or a sinner be raised, and Pascal cites as examples the abandonment of St. Peter without grace and the conversion of the robber on the Cross. The justified must always stand humbly before God, as a beggar.

...tous les hommes doivent toujours s'humilier sous la main de Dieu en qualité de pauvres et dire comme David (Ps XXXIX, 18):

"Seigneur, je suis pauvre et mendiant"<sup>115</sup>.

Although, Pascal points out, King David was rich in worldly goods and in supernatural grace, his poverty consisted in his inability to be assured of beatitude, which depended wholly on the mercy of God, who might withdraw it at any moment.

#### Free Will in Fallen Man

In the third Ecrit Pascal discusses more fully the question of free will as it existed in man after the Fall.



The need for a wholly efficacious grace after the Fall is due to the fact that God no longer wished man to have the freedom of indifference of Adam's will.

...mais Dieu veuille qu'il n'appartienne plus qu'à sa seule grâce et que nous nous approchions de lui, et que nous ne nous en éloignons point<sup>116</sup>:

Adam's will enjoyed this freedom of indifference because it was not drawn by any concupiscence but was "entièrement libre et dégagé", to use the grace offered by God and to remain in justice, or not, as Adam pleased. Since the Fall concupiscence has made Adam the slave of sin, and only a more powerful delectation will deliver him and make him the slave of justice. Pascal follows the Augustinian conception of freewill based upon a literal interpretation of the Pauline imagery, taken from the Roman law of slavery in Romans (VI, 17, 18), where man is either the slave of sin or the slave of righteousness, and either freely sins or freely chooses the good<sup>117</sup>. That the will is determined by the stronger delectation is clearly proved both by common sense and Augustine, in Pascal's view, since it is self-evident that one always does, and therefore always wills what is most pleasing<sup>118</sup>. Even if the will appears occasionally to choose a lesser good, that is only due to the fact that demonstrating its power is more pleasing to it than the good it has forfeited, "étant impossible qu'elle veuille autre chose que ce qu'il lui plaît de vouloir". Pascal, in support of his view, appeals again to the authority of Augustine, "Quod amplius delectat, secundum id operemur necesse est"<sup>119</sup>.

In answering the objection that, faced with two equal delectations, the will must recover the "indifférence

prochaine aux opposites" of Adam, Pascal refutes any suggestion that the will of fallen man is capable, even with the help of grace, of this state of detached equilibrium. The will would simply be paralysed since it moves only in response to the stronger delectation.

Car comment ferait-il un choix entre deux délectations égales, lui qui ne veut maintenant que ce qui le délecte le plus?<sup>120</sup>.

Pascal illustrates this governance of the will by the metaphors of a man called from both sides by two friends, or restrained by each from moving by chains of equal length. If one of the chains were longer, however, he must infallibly follow the greater force drawing him. So man's will since the Fall is,

...hors d'état de se porter à Dieu, si ce n'est que le lien de sa grâce le tirant avec plus de force, rompe ceux de la cupidité<sup>121</sup>.

This does not fully explain the state of the will, Pascal explains, since in these illustrations, although the man's body is bound, his will can choose to go in the opposite direction, whereas in fallen man, the will can choose only the greater delectation. The comparison is valid only if the chain pulling the man in one direction, also fills the will with "un plaisir victorieux qui lui fît aussi infailiblement aimer celui qui l'attire, que sa chaîne attire infailiblement son corps"<sup>122</sup>. The will, in other words, chooses and follows that in which it sees its happiness to reside, and cannot act against that choice.

Man cannot, therefore, regain the equilibrium of his first state by the pull of equal and opposite attractions, but only by deliverance from them. Pascal rejects the

Molinist suggestion that man can deliver himself from sin in this life without the help of,

...une délectation plus puissante, non pas seulement aussi forte, mais plus forte et absolument victorieuse ...<sup>123</sup>.

Moreover, Pascal claims, the sufficient grace of the Molinists would always need to adapt to the changing attractions of the will, diminishing or increasing its strength according to the power of each attraction, "ce qui serait monstrueux à la grâce", for the dispensation of God's grace would be subject to the direction of a capricious and erratic human will. Although Pascal affirms, with Augustine, the freedom of the human will, the power is always reserved to God of directing its choice by His governance of the delectation. He rejects any suggestion of grace as a force compelling man to act contrary to his true inclination, for since willing implies the action itself, his desires determine both the movement and goal of the will. Original Sin precludes a freedom of indetermination for the will and this freedom is not the one with which Pascal is concerned. The freedom affirmed by Pascal and Augustine can only be effected by the power of a truly efficacious grace, substituting the love of God for the love of evil, and liberating the elect into the freedom of the children of God.

#### The Possibility of the Commandments

Pascal devotes the fourth Ecrit to a logical demonstration of the fact that, of the two meanings which naturally arise from the statement, "Les commandements ne sont pas impossibles aux justes", namely,

Qu'il n'est pas impossible que les justes accomplissent les commandements.

and

Que les commandements sont toujours possibles à tous les justes, de ce plein et dernier pouvoir auquel il ne manque rien de la part de Dieu pour agir<sup>124</sup>.

the first is the only acceptable meaning from the point of view of language and grammar, as well as of the decisions of the Councils and Fathers of the Church, who have not only upheld it to be the true one but have rejected the second. Pascal follows the method for the logical proof of propositions, as set down in De l'Art de Persuader<sup>125</sup>, which consists of three steps: the first is to examine the terms of the proposition in order to determine the meaning which they seem naturally to express; the second, to decide which meaning is the correct one in the light of the Council's intention; and the third, to establish the true doctrine from other passages of the Fathers and decisions of the Council. On linguistic and grammatical grounds Pascal denies that the proposition implies any but the first meaning. His argument is based upon the claim that "n'est pas impossible" cannot imply "toujours possible du plein et dernier pouvoir", and his proofs for this have been discussed in the relation between "la possibilité et le pouvoir". Pascal adds weight to his logic with a solemn warning, to those who interpret the force of the phrase to include "toujours", to remember "la malédiction qui menace ceux qui ajoutent aux paroles du Saint-Esprit", and "que Dieu ne punit pas seulement ceux qui font ces choses, mais aussi ceux qui y donnent leur consentement"<sup>126</sup>.

With regard to the intention of the Council of Trent, Pascal states that the Molinists do not contest the fact that it was simply a refutation of the Lutheran heresy, in which man is denied the possibility of observing the commandments, even with grace. However, they do claim that the same cannot be said of this decision found in the Fathers a thousand years earlier, for, in this instance, the Church had no particular heresy to refute, nor was there any circumstance to restrict the meaning of the expression, so that it can be taken generally and therefore understood in the Molinist sense<sup>127</sup>.

Pascal argues that, although at the time, there was not a particular heresy to refute, the Church was obliged to deny the accusations of Manicheism continually levelled at it by the Pelagians: of denying free will; of maintaining the impossibility of keeping the commandments; and that men are under an inevitable necessity of sinning. The writings of the Fathers are full of passages, Pascal affirms, revealing the outrageous language in which the Pelagians, "ces hérétiques", accused the Catholics of upholding this heresy; and in condemning such an error, the Church was not fighting a "chimère", or making a general statement, but simply refuting those who would impute such errors to them<sup>128</sup>.

Ne suffit-il pas qu'une erreur soit véritable, pour être un digne objet de son zèle; et pourquoi faut-il qu'elle soit obligée d'attendre à la condamner qu'elle se soit glissée dans le coeur de ses enfants?<sup>129</sup>

Pascal quotes numerous passages from the Fathers affirming the freedom of the will. He lists as chief among them

Augustine himself, the author of the doctrine, who, in the role of its principal defender, brought "une victoire glorieuse" to the Church.

Pascal concludes from this demonstration that the heresy of Luther is simply a recrudescence of Manicheism, "que Luther n'a pas inventée, mais renouvelée, 'que les commandements sont impossibles absolument'"<sup>130</sup>.

Il est donc hors de doute que tout ce que les Luthériens ont dit de la concupiscence était dit mille ans avant leur naissance, par ces anciens hérétiques, de cette mauvaise nature<sup>131</sup>.

De sorte que, ne différant que dans les causes, et non pas dans l'effet qui est le seul dont il est question en cette matière, on peut dire avec vérité que leurs sentiments sont semblables touchant la possibilité, et que les Manichéens étaient les Luthériens de leur temps, comme les Luthériens sont les Manichéens du nôtre<sup>132</sup>.

In the fourth Ecrit, Pascal claims that it was expressly to present the truth on the question of grace, "tout dégagée des erreurs contraires"<sup>133</sup>, that the Council formed two important decisions, affirming in Canon 18 of Chapter XIII, the possibility of the commandments under grace, and in Canon XXI, the impossibility without grace, thereby refuting forever the two opposed errors of Luther and the Pelagians. The Molinists, however, have presumed to elude this condemnation by "un artifice ridicule et impie". Since the Council did not expressly state whether this grace is always, never, or sometimes present, the Molinists have concluded that it is never absent. When asked for specific passages from the Council which support the doctrine, they have, Pascal states, nothing to offer, and rely for endorsement only upon a probability, which itself is inferred from a proposition expressly designed to refute their doctrine. Their doctrine

is not based on "une vérité solide et palpable, mais sur le néant, non sur des propositions mais sur une supposition", and is accordingly dismissed by Pascal. He suggests, "pour arrêter toute la vaine subtilité de leurs raisonnements"<sup>134</sup>, that another possibility be inferred, assuming in this case that grace is never present, thus endorsing the Lutheran heresy.

The two decisions of the Council, taken together, preclude any such interpretations, he states, for the one necessarily negates any inferences drawn from the other. The rejection of both errors is necessary if one is to arrive at the true doctrine of the Church on the question of grace, namely,

...que Dieu par sa miséricorde donne quand il lui plaît, aux justes, le pouvoir plein et parfait d'accomplir les préceptes, et qu'il ne le donne pas toujours, par un jugement juste quoique caché<sup>135</sup>.

The Augustinian doctrine, Pascal concludes, therefore upholds in perfect balance and harmony, the dignity both of God and of man, and the contribution each makes in the work of Redemption.

Apprenons par cette doctrine si pure à défendre tout ensemble la puissance de la nature contre les Luthériens, et l'impuissance de la nature contre les Pélagiens; la force de la grâce contre les Luthériens, et la nécessité de la grâce contre les Pélagiens, sans ruiner le libre arbitre par la grâce, comme les Luthériens, et sans ruiner la grâce par le libre arbitre, comme les Pélagiens<sup>136</sup>.

### Conclusion

In the first lines of the Ecrits, Pascal indicates very clearly the basic presuppositions about God and man, upon which the whole of the Augustinian doctrine is based, namely, God's omnipotence, justice, mercy and goodness and man's

essential sinfulness, impotence and absolute dependence upon God for salvation. It is in the light of all these assumptions that his solution to the enigma of the human situation must be viewed. Pascal clearly found in the Augustinian doctrine of Original Sin a satisfying explanation based upon the actual state of man, which accorded well with his own view, with his own temperament and with his conversion experience. His overwhelmingly pessimistic view of the powerlessness of human nature to save itself, without divine intervention, is vividly portrayed in the Platonic imagery of the man in chains, while his consciousness of the divine omnipotence and goodness is clear from the need, which informs his writing, to ascribe all salvation to God, as "principe" and source of all goodness, and all sin and damnation to man's willing.

Just as it was necessary for Augustine to affirm the freedom of the will against accusations of Manicheism, so, for Pascal and the Augustinians of the seventeenth century, some semblance of self-determination had to be preserved in man, against accusations of Calvinism, and the fully developed Augustinian doctrine, in Pascal's view, answered the needs of both. By developing the Fall theory, and postulating a pre-Fall state of Adam which goes far beyond that of Genesis III, Augustine had the perfect formula by which to account for the present sinful state of man, the introduction of evil into the world by Adam, and the apparently arbitrary election and damnation of men by God, whilst preserving His omnipotence, love and justice, by having Him create Adam in a state of natural righteousness



and justice, in the intention that Adam and all men should enjoy beatitude. The key to the two states of Adam, to the two wills of God for men, and to the two graces given to Adam is the supernatural goal, the desire for beatitude, written into his nature at creation, together with his radical dependence upon God for the ability to achieve this goal. The enormity of Adam's sin for Pascal, as for Augustine, resided in his denial of this dependence, and the vitiation of his present nature with its inescapable bias towards evil is thus perfectly explained by Adam's turning from the Supreme Good to the love of creatures, a crime requiring for its expiation nothing short of the incarnation and death of God Himself.

In the state of original righteousness, and in view of his superior endowments, Adam, because of his finitude, needed only a grace sufficient to allow him to achieve his supernatural goal, as healthy eyes need only light to see<sup>137</sup>. That grace God was bound by his justice to supply. It is with the grace needed for the salvation of the fallen and vitiated Adam that Pascal and Augustine are chiefly concerned, however, and, as Hastings Rashdall<sup>138</sup> points out, the whole of Augustine's theology is one of Redemption, resting upon the twin pillars of the Fall and the death of Christ, which he found in the writings of St. Paul (Rom., V, 12-21 and I Cor., XV, 2.). Augustine, Rashdall argues, follows Paul in his belief that, without the Fall, Christ would not have died, and for both God's omnipotence demands that it is from the death and resurrection of Christ, rather than from his life and example, that the grace of salvation

flows. Like them, Pascal sees the Atonement as satisfying God's justice and meriting the grace of redemption, by which the elect can be brought to glory. The Platonism, which led Augustine to view goodness as a participation in Divine Goodness, and being as a sharing in the being of God, also led him to set a similar interpretation upon the words of St. Paul "Je vis, non pas moi, mais Jésus-Christ vit en moi", where Paul implies that he is alive only in Christ, and that grace as it were divinizes him. For Pascal, as for Augustine, justification is the "making good" or sanctification of the elect by God, and the evidence of the gift of this grace is the resulting good action, for grace is always "réduite en acte".

Pascal does not distinguish explicitly between different types of grace in the redemptive process, as all are the gratuitous gifts of God's mercy. Redemption is initiated by the bestowal of a prevenient grace, by means of which the elect pray for and receive deliverance from the power of concupiscence, and which is seen as healing the will ("la grâce médicinale")<sup>139</sup>. Thereafter, the elect receive a series of graces through which they both desire and perform the salutary acts which will merit salvation ("Donc et la réception et le désir de la grâce est l'ouvrage de la grâce même")<sup>140</sup>. Pascal describes this salvific work of grace as operating by way of an irresistible attraction, a delectation in the law of God, infused into the heart by the Holy Spirit, so that it chooses the good "infailliblement". Clearly Pascal shares with Augustine the belief that those who have not been brought to baptism, and who are uninstruc-

ted in the faith are necessarily sinners. ("Il est nécessaire et inévitable que ceux qui ignorent la justice la violent")<sup>141</sup>.

As N.P. Williams<sup>142</sup> points out, arbitrary election implies and necessitates an efficacious grace, and it is by the distribution of such a grace that God arranges that His elect shall end up in glory, since grace ensures both perseverance in goodness and death in a state of justice. Pascal insists that, after the Fall, God decreed that perseverance would no longer be subject to the will of Adam, but depend solely upon the gratuitous gift of His grace<sup>143</sup>. Pascal distinguishes between those called to participate in the redemptive process for the good of the elect, and those predestined to glory.

In the "Double Délaissement des Justes", Pascal demonstrates that it is by the bestowal or withdrawal of the ability to pray for help that God arranges the final perseverance, and the temporary lapse or the abandonment of the justified. This represents, therefore, the linchpin of the mechanism by which God not only controls the perseverance of the justified, but transfers to those who fall away at least some of the responsibility for their non-perseverance, and further allows the justified a semblance of moral responsibility in choosing the good and meriting salvation. Since election is necessarily "hidden" in the Augustinian system, the uncertainty surrounding the bestowal of the gift of prayer makes it a weapon by which God can ensure an attitude of fear, hope, humility and absolute dependence in the elect.

However complex the chain of events by which the justi-

fied man either abandons God or perseveres, Pascal explicitly states<sup>144</sup> that the whole operation can have no other cause but the divine will. He describes prayer itself as "la grâce efficace"<sup>145</sup>, "ce secours"<sup>146</sup>, and also as an effect of efficacious grace<sup>147</sup>. The elect persevere by a grace "qui les fait persévérer très invinciblement"<sup>148</sup>, and perseverance in prayer is called "ce don spécial de Dieu"<sup>149</sup>.

Governed since the Fall by what it loves most, the will's freedom either to sin or to persevere in goodness, is determined by the absence or presence of grace. Pascal affirms the freedom of the will ("tous les hommes peuvent s'ils veulent")<sup>150</sup>, but with the implication that if the will chooses the good it is always "préparée par le Seigneur"<sup>151</sup>, which is, surely, a negation of free will in the ordinary sense, i.e. the freedom of indeterminism, and amounts simply to a euphemism for determination by God. The numinous quality of the religious experience of Pascal and Augustine, which demands absolute dependence upon divine grace as a prerequisite for participation in the supernatural good, necessarily precludes the autonomy for the human will claimed by the Molinists, to persevere or not in goodness, thereby sanctioning some degree of moral effort and self-determination in man, and without which merit cannot be attributed to him. Pascal's denial of the competence of the "sens commun" even to recognize the good of the supernatural order, and his conviction that grace alone can direct the will in this work of salvation, brings him very close to the Calvinist position, since the effect appears to be the same for both. His insistence that the love of the

good infused into the will is always and immediately "réduite en acte", and that the will always loves and follows the greater attraction, leaves little room for the exercise of reason or the deliberations of the moral consciousness. It is on the question of perseverance that the Augustinians disagree most vigorously with the Molinists, since the Molinist doctrine of a "pouvoir prochain" amounts to denying the need for a radical dependence upon God for all grace as a gift, which is, for the Augustinians, an experiential truth. The outrage with which Pascal rejects as absurd the possibility that perseverance should be subject to man's will is reflected in the numerous arguments in which he rebuts it, and this provides evidence of his unshakeable conviction of divine omnipotence, which forms the non-rational ground of his doctrine. Men would no longer stand before God in fear, humility and hope, the mystery of election would be destroyed, and there would be no difference between Adam's pre-Fall state and the present deplorable state of man. Disregard of such a demonstrably untrue proposition is the source, in Pascal's view, of the Molinist error.

Pascal rejects the Calvinist heresy on the grounds that it is injurious to God's love and justice and implies the complete suppression of the will, replacing it with grace which takes over the will to merit salvation, while man is entirely passive, St. Paul's clay in the hands of the Divine potter. Since God not only willed the damnation of the non-elect at the time of creation, but also caused Adam to sin, thus creating evil, Pascal finds the doctrine offensive to his idea of ordinary justice and concludes, by analogy,

that it must be even more offensive to God's justice. He clearly accepts that the idea of justice formulated by the moral consciousness of man has an ultimate validity as a symbol of the Divine justice.

However, when confronted with the problem of explaining the blatant injustice inherent in God's bestowal of the grace of election on only a few, leaving the majority of mankind in the mass of perdition for a sin they are alleged to have committed pre-natally in Adam, Pascal takes refuge in an appeal to an occult justice, which, since it transcends any human conception, is shrouded in the mystery that belongs to the numinous and must therefore be regarded as inscrutable. Pascal confesses, with Augustine, to be confronted with an even more astonishing mystery in God's blatant abandonment, for no apparent transgression on their part, of these justified who fall away. He absolves God on the grounds that He owes fallen man only the grace given to Adam in Paradise.

Clearly Pascal attributes to God a retributive conception of justice, and a niggardly distribution of the divine love, which fall far short of the absolute realization of human love and forgiveness portrayed in the parables of the Prodigal Son and of the Lost Sheep. He fails to realize that in his condemnation of the Calvinist view of God, as causing Adam to sin and thus introducing evil into the world, he is damning his own doctrine, for the expedient by which Augustine transfers the responsibility to Adam fails entirely to absolve God. That a perfectly balanced and surpassingly endowed being should reject what he knew to be his beatitude seems a contradiction in terms, though N.P. Williams suggests

that it is accounted for by Augustine's Platonism which requires evil to consist in a defect of goodness<sup>152</sup>.

Both Laporte<sup>153</sup> and N.P. Williams<sup>154</sup> conclude that there was virtually no difference between the Calvinist, Molinist and Augustinian doctrines, and that the authentic thought of Molina, in view of the "scientia media", was not so very different from that of Augustine himself. However, Miel<sup>155</sup> explains that it was the interpretation only of Bellarmine and Suarez, which developed into Congruism, which has an Augustinian meaning. Pascal was clearly attacking the interpretation of Lessius, who taught a predestination post praevisa merita, and a real freedom of indetermination for the will which could almost be termed Semi-Pelagian, since it represents the will as only minimally impaired by the Fall.

#### Augustinian Orthodoxy

It seems clear from the chapters on Grace, Justification and Perseverance in the Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, that the orthodoxy of the Augustinian doctrine, claimed by Pascal, was that affirmed by the Church at the Council of Trent, except that in their desire to refute the Lutheran heresy, the contribution of the freewill was strongly emphasised, giving an appearance of conciliar approval to the Molinist doctrine. In Session VI, Chapters one to six refute both Protestant and semi-Pelagian heresies, by reiterating the decisions of the Council of Orange, affirming the necessity of grace for every salutary act, not because of the difficulty man experiences because of the corruption of his nature, but because of a physical incapacity

in human nature, even in that of Adam before the Fall, who was dependent on God for grace to persevere in the good. Since the supernatural goal of man is the possession of God Himself, grace is necessary for every step of the redemptive process.

Yet in the same Council session the freedom of the will is affirmed,

la liberté est une propriété de la volonté et son exercice appartient à l'homme comme tel<sup>156</sup>.

Perseverance and election require a special help, "un don spécial de Dieu"<sup>157</sup>, and the three groups in the economy of salvation as outlined by Pascal, are described<sup>158</sup>. The hiddenness of election, and the need of dependence and of fear of backsliding are also anticipated in St. Paul's words "Travaillez à votre salut avec crainte"<sup>159</sup>, an inclusion in the Council's formulations which N.P. Williams attributes to the influence of the Reformers<sup>160</sup>. The selection of only the small number of elect is ascribed to the divine mystery (Rom., XI, 33)<sup>161</sup>.

Chapter V<sup>162</sup> affirms the real contribution of the will in consenting to and cooperating with grace, or in rejecting it, and states that the will is not inert, but nevertheless cannot move towards justice without grace, emphasising both the necessity of grace at the beginning of faith and the necessity for man's free cooperation.

The Dictionnaire states<sup>163</sup> that the majority of the Fathers of Trent acknowledged the effective role of free will and affirmed the necessity of grace, without, however, specifying the mode of its efficacy. It states that in Chapter XIII, Canon 18 was intended, as Pascal<sup>164</sup> claims, to



anathematize the Protestants, who claimed that the commandments were impossible even for the justified. The Dictionnaire indicates that the primary intention of the Council in Canon 22, which states that perseverance is possible for the justified with a "secours spécial", was to emphasize that it is as wrong to affirm that the justified can persevere without a special help, as to affirm that he cannot persevere if he is the recipient of such a special help<sup>165</sup>. According to the Dictionnaire<sup>166</sup>, the canon was very freely interpreted, and the nature of the "secours spécial" was not specified, except that it was added to the sanctifying grace, and interpreted by the Thomists as "grâce actuelle efficace", and by the Molinists as "pouvoir persévérer". The Dictionnaire also states that the Augustinian Fathers added the proviso: "que personne n'est abandonné de Dieu, s'il n'abandonne Dieu auparavant", which can surely be interpreted, in view of the theory of the "Double Délaissement des Justes" as an attempted rejection of the Molinist "pouvoir persévérer". Clearly the Church had moved since the time of Augustine towards what may be described as a Jesuit stance, but the Council's main intention was to refute the Protestant heresy. It states:

Cette mutuelle interaction, dans l'oeuvre du salut, de Dieu cause première et de l'homme régénéré par sa grâce caractérise la doctrine catholique, qui par là se place à égale distance entre le rationalisme pélagien qui supprime l'action divine et le mysticisme protestant où disparaît la collaboration humaine<sup>168</sup>.

Clearly Pascal and his fellow Augustinians of the seventeenth century found themselves in a position parallel with that of Augustine's first disciples, namely, that of defending their

doctrine against similar accusations levelled at them by the Pelagians of their own day, but with the important difference that the Augustinians of Pascal's time, like the Pelagians of Augustine's, are now themselves fighting a rearguard action against the incursion of the "nouveaux dogmes" of the Jesuits which threaten their orthodoxy.

The Ecrits sur la Grâce constitute, therefore, a passionate defence of a particular view of grace and of God based on the numinous quality of Pascal's religious experience and on his assessment of the human situation. As he himself admits<sup>169</sup>, within the Christian Church contrary opinions have always existed and been debated, and no doubt such opinions are similarly informed by temperamental bias. William James<sup>170</sup> argues that reason operates in the field of divinity just as it does in any of the wider affairs of life, where our passions or our mystical intuitions fix our beliefs beforehand, and where reason's role is to find arguments to support our belief, to define that belief and to give it plausibility. In both methods by which Pascal seeks to prove the authenticity of the Augustinian doctrine, this appears to be the role of reason. ("Et enfin nous ferons voir combien cette doctrine est conforme au sens commune même")<sup>171</sup>.

In following the method which Pascal claims is the only reliable guide in theology, namely, faithful exposition of Scripture, the Fathers and the Councils, reason is used in precisely the way he condemns in his opponents, who, he claims, interpret passages of Scripture to favour their view. As Pascal himself illustrates<sup>172</sup>, by the enumeration of

various passages from Scripture which can be interpreted either in an Augustinian or Semi-Pelagian sense, Scripture is a particularly fruitful field for furnishing proof-texts to bolster a particular doctrinal bias. This selectivity is also very apparent in Pascal's choice of Fathers - Fulgence, Prosper, Peter Lombard and, of course, the Faculties of Louvain and Douai - all dedicated to upholding the Augustinian tradition, while earlier Fathers of the Eastern tradition are ignored. Moreover, following Augustine, Pascal bases his theology almost exclusively on the writings of St. Paul, focusing on Christ's death as a vicarious punishment for the sins of the elect, and disregarding almost completely the example of his life and teaching.

Although Pascal denies reason any competence in the order of supernatural truth, he appears to consider it the appropriate instrument for making judgements about the nature of God's justice, will, love and omnipotence based upon his own assessment of the human situation and upon the deliberations of his own moral consciousness. In his appeal throughout this work to the reason of the reader, Pascal acknowledges its function as ultimate arbiter in the evaluation of religious truth and in the choice of doctrine.

In the fourth Ecrit he stresses the need for a careful linguistic and textual analysis to establish the meaning which the words of a proposition were originally intended to convey. In claiming Conciliar approval in this way for propositions from Augustine's work sanctioned by the Council of Orange, and reiterated by Trent, Pascal deliberately ignores other affirmations which modify their meaning,

by emphasising the possibility and obligation of man's free participation in the process of justification. Moreover, Pascal disregards the first rule of his own method, requiring consideration of the "natural" meaning of the words that make up any proposition, when he ignores the "natural" meaning of terms and attributes to them a peculiarly Augustinian meaning. Thus "tous" must be understood in the light of the Augustinian teaching on Predestination, and "vouloir" is assumed to imply a will empowered by efficacious grace, producing extraordinarily illogical statements, such as,

...qu'ils le pourraient, s'ils le voulaient, mais que n'étant pas du nombre des élus, Dieu ne leur donne pas ces grâces efficaces sans lesquelles ils ne le veulent jamais en effet<sup>173</sup>.

He uses the language of verbal equivocation to mask the true meanings of statements, and to mitigate or disguise the harshness of some aspects of his doctrine. The circumlocutions which Pascal uses to describe the two types of perseverance in the theory of the "Double Délaissement des Justes", in which man is apparently endowed with a degree of moral responsibility, which is then denied when all is attributed to the divine will, fails miserably to reconcile an efficacious grace with a true freedom for the will.

Il paraît donc que Dieu ne quitte que parce qu'il a été quitté, et que l'homme ne quitte que parce qu'il a été quitté; et qu'ainsi il est absurde de conclure que, dans les sentiments de saint Augustin, Dieu ne quitte jamais le premier, parce qu'il a dit que Dieu ne quitte point le premier; et que l'un et l'autre est ensemble véritable et qu'il quitte, et qu'il ne quitte point le premier, à cause des différentes manières de quitter<sup>174</sup>.

As Trethowan<sup>175</sup> states, "Theology may be mysterious but it must always make sense", and the obvious inconsistencies, and

the expedients to which Pascal is driven to disguise them, highlight that failure. Clearly Pascal, like Augustine<sup>176</sup>, experienced grace as the love of God, but could not conceive of an omnipotent, divine will yielding to that of man, and Burnaby<sup>177</sup> suggests a solution which both failed to consider.

If the reality of the consent to receive, and the possibility of refusal, be denied, there is an end of any understanding of grace as a loving relation between persons. Love is "irresistible" only in the sense that to overcome the resistance of pride, the pride whose essence is the refusal to receive, is possible to love and to love only .... But "irresistible grace" in the Jansenist sense, is as much a contradiction in terms as *cogi velle*. And Augustine never realised that his own conception of grace required nothing less than a revolution in his thought of the divine omnipotence.

Oman suggests that omnipotence might have a good deal of meaning without the all-inclusive potency which Augustine demands -

...to be able to rule men with wills of their own ... would at least not detract from God's omnipotence. But apparently to be omnipotent, he must cherish the mind of a parish beadle who thinks nothing rightly done unless he does it himself<sup>178</sup>.

## NOTES

## CHAPTER III

1. References for material on Jansenism: Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, Part II, Historical; J. Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire (London, Burns and Oates, 1977), pp.99-128. J. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle (Paris, Librairie Philosophique, J. Vrin, 1951), pp.88-96 and 106-108; Miel, Pascal and Theology, pp.45-63; A. Sedgwick, Jansenism in Seventeenth-Century France (Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1977); and Thouvenin, Jansénisme. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique. Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie (Paris, Librairie Le Touzey et Ané, 1924), cols. 318-330.
2. H. Bremond, Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux en France, Tome IV. (Paris, Bloud et Gay, 1916-1933), pp.323-324.
3. Thouvenin, Jansénisme. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, col. 318.
4. Brunschvicg, B. Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules, p.53.
5. Williams, The Grace of God, p.108.
6. O.C., p.315. cf. Miel, Pascal and Theology, pp.51-52.
7. Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, p.103.
8. J. Laporte, La Doctrine de Port-Royal, Tome II, vol.1, Exposition de la Doctrine (d'après Arnauld) (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1923), p.28, note 3.
9. see H.R. Mackintosh, Grace: Christian. In Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. ed. J. Hastings (Edinburgh, T. and T. Clarke, 1914), vol.VI, p.366.
10. In his article Jansénisme in Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, col.344, Thouvenin states the goal of Jansen and of Port-Royal theology, "Le but de Jansénius est donc uniquement de découvrir l'esprit de saint Augustin au sujet de la nature humaine, de la grâce et de la prédestination; il ne cherche point ce qu'il faut penser mais ce que saint Augustin a enseigné au nom de l'Eglise". see Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, pp.90-91, and Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.160.
11. O.C., p.230. cf. Thouvenin, Jansénisme. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, col.341.
12. O.C., p.314.

13. O.C., p.315.
14. O.C., p.315. This constitutes the third step in the Augustinian path to faith, namely, understanding of the content of faith. see Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine, p.29.
15. O.C., p.311.
16. Miel, Pascal and Theology, p.80.
17. O.C., pp.355-359. see Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.122.
18. see pages 52-59.
19. O.C., p.313.
20. see P. Sellier, Pascal et Saint Augustin (Paris, Librairie Armand Colin, 1970), p.434, and Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, pp.379-380.
21. O.C., p.311.
22. *ibid.*
23. O.C., p.315.
24. E. Cailliet, The Clue to Pascal (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1943), p.64.
25. Williams, The Grace of God, p.27.
26. O.C., p.311.
27. O.C., p.312.
28. *ibid.*
29. see page 26. Clearly the dual character of the numinous experience determined the major presuppositions of Pascal's doctrine as they did for Augustine.
30. O.C., p.312.
31. *ibid.*
32. *ibid.*
33. *ibid.*
34. *ibid.* see Miel, Pascal and Theology, pp.67-68.
35. O.C., p.313.
36. see Sellier, Pascal et Saint Augustin, p.274.
37. O.C., p.313.

38. *ibid.*
39. *ibid.*
40. *ibid.* cf. Entretien avec M. de Saci O.C., p.296.
41. O.C., p.314.
42. see pages 176-177.
43. O.C., p.315.
44. *ibid.*
45. cf. Thouvenin, Jansénisme. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, cols. 392-393. Thouvenin cites Augustine: "potest homo, si velit, esse sine peccato, adjutus a Deo".
46. O.C., p.315.
47. Allen in The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.160 points out that in the doctrine of Augustine the custom of Baptism in the Church assumed a dogmatic significance it never had before him.
48. O.C., p.318.
49. Williams, The Grace of God, p.68.
50. O.C., p.317.
51. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.330.
52. F.R. Tennant, Philosophical Theology (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1956), p.223.
53. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, p.15.
54. O.C., p.318. Sellier in Pascal and Saint Augustine, p.273 notes that Pascal kept three of Augustine's explanations. A discussion of these is to be found in Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, pp.25-26 and Thouvenin, Jansénisme. In the Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, cols. 397-399.
55. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.368.
56. O.C., p.317.
57. *ibid.*
58. *ibid.*
59. *ibid.*
60. see pages 18-19, and Gilson, The Christian Philosophy



of Saint Augustine, pp.160-164.

61. O.C., p.318. Thouvenin in Jansénisme. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, col.400 indicates that Jansen faithfully reproduces the Augustinian theory of the two delectations, which rests on texts of Scripture where grace is described as "suavité, délectation, dilection, douceur".
62. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.369.
63. O.C., p.314.
64. O.C., p.318.
65. Rashdall, The Idea of the Atonement, pp.341-342.
66. O.C., p.318. see Sellier, Pascal et Saint Augustin, p.348. "Ainsi sont affirmés par l'augustinisme le pouvoir éloigné qu'a le libre arbitre de résister à la grâce même efficace et victorieuse, l'infailibilité de l'action de la grâce, la spontanéité avec laquelle la volonté charmée s'élançe vers Dieu".
67. O.C., p.318.
68. see Burnaby, Amor Dei, p.227.
69. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.369.
70. Williams, The Grace of God, p.39.
71. O.C., p.318.
72. O.C., p.319.
73. see Laporte, La Doctrine de Port-Royal, Tome II, vol.1, Exposition de la Doctrine, p.231. "Car c'est faire de la Grâce une suite et une dépendance de la nature, et par là même, de quelques mots qu'on se couvre, réduire l'ordre de la Grâce à celui de la nature.
74. O.C., p.319.
75. *ibid.*
76. see Thouvenin, Jansénisme. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, cols.389-395 for Jansen's defence of this assertion of Augustine.
77. O.C., p.313.
78. O.C., p.319.
79. O.C., p.320.
80. *ibid.*

81. *ibid.*
82. *ibid.*
83. O.C., p.321.
84. *ibid.*
85. Laporte in Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.118 notes Pascal's extensive meditation upon Scripture and the works of the Fathers, especially Augustine, to which the Ecrits sur la Grâce bear witness. The fragments on the possibility of the commandments in his view "marquent un effort significatif pour élucider certains points spécialement délicats, en déterminant, avec une précision qui va jusqu'à la subtilité, le sens des termes employés". In Pascal et Saint Augustin, p.271, Sellier observes that much of this passage is taken directly from Augustine.
86. O.C., p.322.
87. *ibid.*
88. *ibid.*
89. *ibid.*
90. O.C., p.323.
91. *ibid.* In these paragraphs Pascal unwittingly underscores the predestinarianism inherent in the Augustinian doctrine.
92. see Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine, p.162. "A kind of inner weight draws the will to some objects rather than others; and this ... is actually its liberty".
93. see F.C. Copleston, Aquinas (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Penguin Books, 1955), pp.188-189.
94. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine, p.160.
95. O.C., p.324.
96. O.C., p.340.
97. O.C., p.341.
98. *ibid.*
99. O.C., p.344.
100. The conclusion of Campbell in Selfhood and Godhood, p.282 seems apposite here: "I am bound to say that none of the feats of intellectual acrobatics which aim at

- reconciling man's moral responsibility with man's natural depravity seems to me to accomplish more than a certain obscuring of the inherent contradiction by enveloping it in a bewildering cloud of irrelevant subtleties. It seems to me that when the mists have been dispelled the simple truth stands out clearly that if man cannot will the good save by God's grace, there is no longer any point in talking about man's moral responsibility".
101. O.C., p.327.
  102. *ibid.* Oman in Grace and Personality, p.161 observes, "To refer us to the inscrutable will of God is merely to ask us to be satisfied with arbitrariness".
  103. O.C., p.334.
  104. O.C., p.335.
  105. O.C., p.333.
  106. O.C., p.329.
  107. O.C., p.331.
  108. *ibid.*
  109. O.C., p.329.
  110. see Miel, Pascal and Theology, p.38.
  111. Burnaby in Amor Dei, pp.214-215 states that fear, in the view of Augustine, has a proper place in our spiritual training. "It is the needle which pricks an entry for the thread of love, the surgeon's knife which makes healing possible".
  112. O.C., p.334.
  113. O.C., p.325.
  114. O.C., p.335.
  115. *ibid.*
  116. O.C., p.331.
  117. Burnaby in Amor Dei, p.232, writes of the Augustinian ethic: "The moral choice is a choice of ruler: only in serving God does man escape servitude to the flesh". Burnaby fails to add that such a servitude is imposed by God Himself.
  118. This view is fully developed in De l'Art de Persuader, O.C., p.355.
  119. O.C., p.332.

120. *ibid.*
121. *ibid.*
122. O.C., p.333.
123. *ibid.*
124. O.C., p.335.
125. O.C., p.357.
126. O.C., p.336.
127. O.C., p.337.
128. Miel in Pascal and Theology, p.20, remarks that "it was St. Augustine's doctrine, as expressed implicitly in the Confessions in the year 400, which led the Pelagians to formulate their objections".
129. O.C., p.337.
130. *ibid.*
131. O.C., p.339.
132. O.C., p.340.
133. O.C., p.342.
134. *ibid.*
135. O.C., p.348.
136. *ibid.*
137. O.C., p.344.
138. Rashdall, The Idea of the Atonement in Christian Theology, pp.330-335.
139. O.C., p.318.
140. O.C., p.328.
141. O.C., p.343. see Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, pp.373-374 and Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.160.
142. Williams, The Grace of God, pp.34-35.
143. O.C., p.331.
144. O.C., p.323.
145. O.C., p.325.

146. O.C., p.324.
147. O.C., p.330.
148. O.C., p.328.
149. O.C., p.324.
150. O.C., p.327.
151. *ibid.*
152. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.371.
153. Laporte, La Doctrine de Port-Royal, Tome II, vol.1, Exposition de la Doctrine, p.173. "Ainsi, par des routes inverses, protestants et molinistes, s'écartent pareillement de l'enseignement de saint Paul...".
154. Williams, The Grace of God, p.114.
155. Miel, Pascal and Theology, pp.51-52.
156. J. Van der Meersch, Grâce. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VI, II<sup>e</sup> Partie, col.1591.
157. *ibid.*, col. 1594. "Le concile de Trente définit aussi que la persévérance finale est un don spécial de Dieu".
158. *ibid.*, col.1595. "Nous passerons successivement en revue différentes classes de personnes: les justes, ceux qui sont déjà en état de grâce; les pécheurs, ceux qui, par leur faute personnelle, ont perdu l'état de grâce; les infidèles, notamment ceux à qui la révélation chrétienne semble n'être pas parvenue".
159. *ibid.*, col.1677. The uncertainty of election is underlined elsewhere. cf. J. Rivière, Justification. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 11<sup>e</sup> Partie, cols.2186-2187. "Car, de même qu'aucun chrétien pieux ne doit mettre en doute la miséricorde de Dieu, le mérite du Christ, la vertu et l'efficacité des sacraments, ainsi chacun ... peut craindre au sujet de son état de grâce ...".
160. Williams, The Grace of God, p.106.
161. Van der Meersch, Grâce. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 11<sup>e</sup> Partie, col.2176. "Ainsi Dieu touche le coeur de l'homme par l'illumination du St.-Esprit de telle façon que l'homme lui-même ne reste pas absolument inerte sous le coup de cette inspiration; car il peut aussi bien la repousser, et que cependant sans la grâce de Dieu il ne peut se mouvoir vers la justice devant lui par le libre effort de sa volonté".
163. *ibid.*, col.2177. "Il affirme la nécessité de la grâce,

mais sans dire le mode de son efficacité; la possibilité et l'obligation de notre libre concours, donc la valeur de nos oeuvres préparatoires à la justification, mais en évitant de prononcer, malgré l'avis favorable de la majorité de théologiens, qu'elles constituent un mérite de congruo".

164. O.C., p.321.
165. A. Michel, Persévérance. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome XII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, col.1283. "Il est aussi faux de prétendre que, sans ce secours, le juste peut persévérer, que d'affirmer qu'il ne le peut avec ce secours".
166. *ibid.*, col.1284. "Une grande liberté est donc laissée aux théologiens dans l'interprétation de ce canon, en ce qui concerne le sens précis à donner à l'expression 'secours spécial'".
167. *ibid.*, col.1280.
168. Rivière, Justification. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 11<sup>e</sup> Partie, col.2191. see also Stewart, Les Lettres Provinciales, p.XIX.
169. O.C., p.313. In the fourth Ecrit Pascal discusses earlier instances of such contrary opinions in the Church.
170. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, p.419.
171. O.C., p.315.
172. O.C., p.323.
173. O.C., p.313.
174. O.C., p.325.
175. I. Trethowan, An Essay in Christian Philosophy, (London Longmans, Green, 1954), p.153.
176. O.C., p.346.
177. Burnaby, Amor Dei, p.230.
178. Oman, The Natural and the Supernatural, p.288.

## CHAPTER IV

## LETTRES PROVINCIALES

The Aim of the Work

The Augustinian theology of grace, given such a detailed and comprehensive defence in the Ecrits sur la Grace as doctrinally orthodox, receives equally zealous, if somewhat wittier and more entertaining, attention in the Provinciales, where a direct appeal is again made to the moral consciousness of the reader to sanction the doctrine, but this time in the light of the morality which it prescribes. Orthodoxy hinges upon establishing grace as the sole authority in moral theology, both to understand Christian Revelation and to practise the precepts there laid down, as opposed to the rational moral theology of the Jesuits which, according to Pascal threatens to overthrow Christendom itself. Further developments of the Augustinian distinction particularly relevant to the Provinciales are those of the Church as the Body of Christ and sole source of grace (and by implication of the truly moral life), and of the Church and the world as mutually exclusive societies, a concept blatantly denied, at least as Pascal would have it, by the Jesuits.

In the Provinciales, then, the relative claims of grace and nature are exemplified in, on the one hand, the Christ-centred life of the nuns of Port-Royal, and on the other hand, in the life of the rich and aristocratic members of society, where Christian morality and spirituality are subordinated to the enhancement of personal ambition and honour in lives dedicated primarily to the glorification of

the individual "moi". The theological and moral aspects of the Provinciales are intricately linked, for Pascal clearly seeks to demonstrate in the practical and moral interpretation of doctrine the affirmation or denial of its authority. Renunciation of the world and the adoption of the austere life-style and spiritual discipline of Port-Royal, effected at the time of his own conversion by the gift of grace, had furnished him with ample proof both of the validity of the Augustinian doctrine<sup>1</sup>, and of the fact that purity of life is indeed the condition for the continued reception of the free and unmerited grace of salvation. This conviction forms the basis of the case he argues in both the Provinciales and the Pensées<sup>2</sup>.

#### Background to the Provinciales<sup>3</sup>

The immediate cause of Pascal's embarking upon the Provinciales was the imminent censure of Arnauld's second Lettre à un Duc et Pair by the Sorbonne and his threatened expulsion from that body. This crisis represented the climax in the long conflict between Jansenists and Jesuits brought to a head by the Papal Bull Cum occasione, in 1653, condemning as heretical the five propositions purportedly extracted from Jansen's Augustinus. As Pascal underlines in the Ecrits sur la Grace<sup>4</sup>, it was but a recrudescence of the conflict between the two views of grace reflected in the Eastern and Western traditions of the Church, begun in the fifth century between Pelagians and Augustinians and waged fiercely between the disciples of Duns Scotus and Thomists in the Middle Ages<sup>5</sup>. At the Council of Trent, convened in 1545 to counter the Lutheran revolt, pressure from a strong Scotist faction in the Council resulted in decisions representing a compromise



between the two parties, so that the decrees were open to either a Thomist or Scotist interpretation. This represented, in real terms, the official sanctioning, by the Church Councils, of the Semi-Pelagian view, until then officially branded heretical, that man's will, though weakened by the Fall, is capable of responding to grace or rejecting the offer. Salvation, therefore, would no longer result solely from the arbitrary bestowal of an irresistible grace by an omnipotent God, but rather from the free choice of the human will.

The latter view formed the basis of the doctrine of grace embraced by the Society of Jesus, founded in 1534, and propounded in Molina's Concordia, which became the norm for Jesuit teaching on grace<sup>6</sup>. Molina's "sufficient grace"<sup>7</sup>, both operant and cooperant, given by God to all men, became efficacious as the result of man's own effort, thereby allowing a true freedom of will and genuine personal responsibility in meriting salvation. The ensuing battle over the relative merits and orthodoxy of these opposing doctrines was finally quelled in 1607, when Pope Paul V declared the peace of the Church and allowed the teaching of both doctrines of grace<sup>8</sup>.

The powerful influence exerted by the Jesuits, both in Rome and in the French society of the seventeenth century, resulting from their extensive missionary activities abroad and from their success as educators and confessors of the rich and aristocratic, encouraged the assumption that their doctrine was sanctioned as the true Catholic teaching. As Abercrombie<sup>9</sup> points out, the Jesuits formed the "left wing" of the Counter Reformation, and their doctrine of grace found a favourable reception in the lax social and moral climate of the time. In turn it prompted a resurgence of

strict Augustinianism, embodied in the spiritual life of Port-Royal under the guidance of St.-Cyran, and it was the "irritant" which determined Jansen to write the Augustinus<sup>10</sup>.

Jansenism posed the serious threat to Thomists of receiving, by association, the stigma of Calvinism and heresy, and led to the coalition of Thomists with the Jesuits which is the subject of the first three letters. Port-Royal, therefore, saw itself as a last bastion of the Augustinian theology of grace<sup>11</sup>, and of the conception of the Church as the Body of Christ on earth. Accordingly, it attracted support from clergy and devout people shocked at the Jesuit tolerance of moral laxity<sup>12</sup>. The Provinciales are not merely a defence of Arnauld, or of Port-Royal, but an attempt to discredit publicly a Society which Pascal believed threatened the very Church itself, by dispensing altogether with the need for the supernatural grace accruing from the death of Christ, as the unique source of truth, Christian morality and merit for salvation, and by replacing that with a purely natural ethic determined by human reason following the dictates of the individual human will.

#### Method

As in the Ecrits sur la Grâce, Pascal adopts the Augustinian method of persuasion, outlined in De l'Art de Persuader<sup>13</sup>, to prove the orthodoxy of the Port-Royal stance, seeking to undermine the will's enslavement to worldly values so that grace may inspire a reorientation to love of God. The need to entertain the worldly audience to whom the letters were primarily addressed precluded any lengthy exposition of doctrine or citation of Scripture and

Tradition. Pascal again looks to St. Paul and the Western Fathers, but it is rather to the more familiar law of the Gospel (i.e. love of God and neighbour) which he represents as the apotheosis of the natural concepts of love and justice, or to the Ten Commandments, that he most frequently appeals. The method is therefore weighted in favour of an extensive appeal to experiential evidence to point up the need for a return to the authority of Tradition (i.e. the Augustinian doctrine) in moral theology, making grace, rather than reason, the source of all true morality. Similarly, brilliant and witty rational argument occupies a major part of the work to expose the more extreme examples of casuistry and parry Jesuit counterattacks, all designed to convince the reader of the fundamental immorality and unacceptability of Jesuit rational moral theology. As Bénichou writes:

La théologie janséniste est destinée à écraser, non pas le matérialisme, mais plutôt toute forme d'idéalisme, même chrétien, qui ne s'accompagne pas d'une négation absolue des valeurs humaines, toute forme de vertu ou de grandeur suspecte de pactiser avec la nature et avec l'instinct.... C'est là le véritable adversaire du jansénisme, qu'il faut reconnaître et situer lui-même si l'on veut s'expliquer Port-Royal<sup>14</sup>.

#### Reason and Revelation in Theology

##### Jansenist Orthodoxy

The theological aspect is concerned primarily with proving the orthodoxy of the Jansenist doctrine of grace, for the signing by the inhabitants of Port-Royal of their assent to the Bull on the question of "droit" did not reduce the pressure upon them from the Jesuits, who with a majority in the Sorbonne, increased by the introduction of "quelque quarante moines mendiants"<sup>15</sup>, pressed for

Arnauld's expulsion. It is clear in the Ecrits sur la Grâce<sup>16</sup> that the five propositions condemned as heretical do, in fact, express the substance of the Augustinian doctrine to which the Jansenists subscribed, a view with which Sellier concurs<sup>17</sup>. The distinction made by Arnauld, and again raised by him in his second Lettre à un Duc et Pair, between "fait" (the accuracy of the five propositions as a valid interpretation of the Augustinus), and "droit" (whether they, in fact, constitute a heresy), allowed Port-Royal to declare its loyalty to the Pope and the Church by affirming the latter, and to the strict doctrine of Augustine by denying the former.

The debate in the Sorbonne on the question of "fait", and on the orthodoxy of the extract from Arnauld's letter: "Que la grâce sans laquelle on ne peut rien, a manqué à S. Pierre dans sa chute", are interpreted by Pascal as a personal attack on Arnauld, and as an attempt to condemn the whole Augustinian doctrine of grace as heretical, thereby sanctioning the Jesuits' own "sufficient grace". Pascal has M. le Moine reveal this stratagem:

Cette proposition, lui a-t-il excellement répondu, serait catholique dans une autre bouche; ce n'est que dans M. Arnauld que la Sorbonne l'a condamnée. Et ainsi admirez les machines du molinisme, qui font dans l'Eglise de si prodigieux renversements, que ce qui est catholique dans les Pères devient hérétique dans M. Arnauld; que ce qui était hérétique, dans les semi-pélagiens devient orthodoxe dans les écrits des Jésuites; que la doctrine si ancienne de saint Augustin est une nouveauté insupportable, et que les inventions nouvelles qu'on fabrique tous les jours à notre vue, passent pour l'ancienne foi de l'Eglise<sup>18</sup>.

#### "Sufficient" Grace

Since Arnauld's appeal to the authority of Augustine and Chrysostom have failed, Pascal's aim in the first three

letters is to break up the powerful ruling coalition of Thomists and Jesuits by exposing the self-interest upon which it is founded: the fundamental dishonesty of the Thomists, when they promote the idea of a "sufficient" grace which will be generally assumed to carry for both Thomists and Jesuits the "natural" meaning normally given to it by the Jesuits; and the deceit of the Jesuits who seek official sanction for their doctrine by merging with Thomist orthodoxy. Pascal demonstrates that the Thomists and Jansenists are, in fact, in complete agreement on the meaning of the terms "pouvoir prochain" and "grâce suffisante", which lie at the heart of the debate. Both affirm the Augustinian meaning of the "pouvoir prochain", as the ability in the righteous to pray for help so that they may accomplish the good, but "il leur faut de plus une grâce efficace qui n'est pas donnée à tous, et qui détermine leur volonté à prier"<sup>19</sup>. In the Ecrits sur la Grâce, where Pascal tries to mitigate the determinism of Augustine in his treatment of the "pouvoir prochain", the deprivation of St. Peter and the saints for a time by God of this special help, is explained as a necessary and salutary measure designed to induce humility by reminding them of their dependence upon Him<sup>20</sup>.

The Jesuit sufficient grace, however, implies the ability, in all men, to pray for help, "sans qu'il soit nécessaire qu'ils aient aucune nouvelle grâce de Dieu pour prier"<sup>21</sup>. Pascal uses the Augustinian illustration to demonstrate that the Jesuit doctrines of "pouvoir prochain" and "grâce suffisante" are a denial of the Augustinian

doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin, and are the equivalent of the Pelagian heresy. In the doctrine of Augustine<sup>22</sup>, the sufficient grace which Adam received in a state of original righteousness was as light is to healthy eyes, for his will had a true freedom of indetermination. The grace given to Adam and the saints after the Fall, however, must open blind eyes and give them light, for a much stronger grace is needed both to free the will from the bonds of concupiscence, and to turn it to God. Not only do the Jesuits deny this corruption of the will after the Fall, but they make men independent of God; while for Augustine and his followers, the condition of receiving grace is their continuous and limitless dependence on Him. As Abercrombie observes: "The notion of good, for Augustine, had no meaning except as a real and positive participation in universal, omnipotent good, in the divine"<sup>23</sup>.

Pascal has his Thomist Father concede that the Thomists share with the Jansenists the orthodox understanding of the term, and that the Jesuit-Thomist coalition is purely political since both parties agree only on terminology not on meaning. In the second letter, Pascal points up the treachery of the Thomists in proclaiming with the Jesuits as the consensus teaching of the Church, what they themselves believe to be heresy, and allowing themselves to be duped.

Car le monde se paye de paroles: peu approfondissent les choses; et ainsi le nom de grâce suffisante étant reçu des deux côtés, quoique avec divers sens, il n'y a personne, hors les plus fins théologiens, qui ne pense que la chose que ce mot signifie soit tenue aussi bien par les

Jacobins que par les Jésuites. Et la suite fera voir que ces derniers ne sont pas les plus dupes<sup>24</sup>.

Pascal traces in the Thomist doctrine the apparent move away from a strict Augustinianism with the introduction of a "sufficient" grace, and the affirmation that Christ died for all men, in response to the increasing emphasis on human merit and the freedom of the will in the Middle Ages, and, after the Lutheran heresy, in response to accusations of Calvinism from the Jesuits. While sheltering under the wings of the Jesuits, the Thomist "sufficient grace", in fact, corresponds to the "grâce inefficace" given to the intermediate group in the Augustinian economy of salvation, described in the Ecrits sur la Grâce<sup>25</sup>. Their "sufficient grace" is, as Pascal points out, a contradiction in terms,

C'est-à-dire, lui dis-je, que tous ont assez de grâce, et que tous n'en ont pas assez; c'est-à-dire que cette grâce suffit, quoiqu'elle ne suffise pas; c'est-à-dire qu'elle est suffisante de nom, et insuffisante en effet<sup>26</sup>.

#### Pascal and Thomism

Just as, in the second letter, Pascal's Thomist Father admits an apparent reconciliation with Molinism solely to avoid charges of Calvinism, so Pascal himself moves from insistence in the early letters upon the need for an efficacious grace, not given to all men<sup>27</sup>, to the claim in the fourteenth that the Church respects all men as "rachetés d'un prix infini, pour être faits les temples du Dieu vivant"<sup>28</sup>. This becomes in the seventeenth letter a vigorous denial of accusations that he holds Christ died only for the predestined<sup>29</sup>, and evolves even further in the direction of Thomism in the eighteenth letter with his concession that,

...non seulement ils tiennent qu'on résiste effectivement à ces grâces faibles, qu'on appelle excitantes, ou inefficaces, en n'exécutant pas le bien qu'elles nous inspirent, mais qu'ils sont encore aussi fermes à soutenir contre Calvin le pouvoir que la volonté a de résister même à la grâce efficace et victorieuse, qu'à défendre contre Molina le pouvoir de cette grâce sur la volonté, aussi jaloux de l'une de ces vérités que de l'autre<sup>30</sup>.

As Abercrombie observes<sup>31</sup>, Augustine did not deny the existence of a "sufficient grace", and considered freedom of choice the inalienable prerogative of human nature<sup>32</sup>. Man is always, he alleges, free to sin or to do good. But if he is to do good freedom by itself will not suffice when the power to do good is withheld from him<sup>33</sup>. The full statement of Pascal's theology of grace in the eighteenth letter, however, suggests that, like the Thomists themselves in a similar life and death situation, these apparent concessions in no way represent a true modification of his stance in the early letters, but are merely a verbal alignment with the Thomist doctrine for the purpose of public identification with Thomist orthodoxy, and with that of the whole tradition of the Church<sup>34</sup>. He cites the authority of St Thomas in the tenth letter, on the question of confession, and in the eleventh, on almsgiving and simony, whereas in the early letters it is only to the early Fathers of the Western Tradition that an appeal is made.

#### Freedom of Will in Augustine

The Jesuit response to Pascal's claim in the seventeenth letter, that the Jansenist upholding of "efficacious grace" was sanctioned by the Pope himself, while the five propositions were under scrutiny in Rome, was to differentiate between a Calvinist and Catholic interpretation of the term, in order to accuse the Jansenists of maintaining it with the



former meaning.

..."que Jansenius serait catholique, s'il défendait la grâce efficace selon les Thomistes; mais qu'il est hérétique, parce qu'il est contraire aux Thomistes et conforme à Calvin, qui nie le pouvoir de résister à la grâce"<sup>35</sup>.

Pascal clearly took up this challenge as an opportunity to vindicate once and for all the Jansenist doctrine, by demonstrating its conformity with the Fathers and with St. Thomas. His argument proving the will's freedom to reject efficacious grace is based upon Augustine's own attempt to resolve the paradox<sup>36</sup>. Here, however, the will is not unequivocally designated slave of concupiscence or slave of grace, as in the Ecrits. The emphasis is on man's natural freedom, rather than on the crippling power of concupiscence which inevitably turns the will to love of creatures. Pascal explains the mysterious operation reconciling omnipotence and freedom.

...mais que néanmoins quand il plaît à Dieu de le toucher par sa miséricorde, il lui fait faire ce qu'il veut et en la manière qu'il le veut, sans que cette infailibilité de l'opération de Dieu détruise en aucune sorte la liberté naturelle de l'homme, par les secrètes et admirables manières dont Dieu opère ce changement, que saint Augustin a si excellement expliquées, et qui dissipent toutes les contradictions imaginaires que les ennemis de la grâce efficace se figurent entre le pouvoir souverain de la grâce sur le libre arbitre et la puissance qu'a le libre arbitre de résister à la grâce<sup>37</sup>.

Pascal goes on to explain how the will invariably inclines towards whatever gives it greatest pleasure, and it is by the introduction of just such an infallible attraction, that God, through the action of the Holy Spirit, converts the will of man to Himself.

...Dieu change le coeur de l'homme par une douceur céleste qu'il y répand, qui, surmontant la délectation de la chair, fait que l'homme sentant d'un côté sa mortalité et son néant, et découvrant de l'autre la grandeur et l'éternité de Dieu,

conçoit du dégoût pour les délices du péché, qui le séparent du bien incorruptible; et trouvant sa plus grande joie dans le Dieu qui le charme, il s'y porte infailliblement de lui-même par un mouvement tout libre, tout volontaire, tout amoureux; de sorte que ce lui serait une peine et un supplice de s'en séparer<sup>38</sup>.

Pascal reflects in this passage the intense experience of the numinous at the time of his own conversion, and that of all "twice-born" Christians, of the felt nothingness of man before the transcendent God, and of the love which elicits the free surrender of the will<sup>39</sup>. In such a conversion the two apparently irreconcilable sides of the paradox, omnipotence and freedom, are felt to be reconciled<sup>40</sup>, a belief which clearly has only a subjective validity for a particular religious type<sup>41</sup>. Since Pascal himself falls into this category, he can with conviction cite such a belief as "les divins principes de saint Augustin et de saint Thomas"<sup>42</sup>, upheld by Pope Clement VIII as the true Catholic doctrine and thereby refute Calvin. For Pascal, the question of merit is entirely explicable on this view, for he can affirm both God as first principle of our actions, and the free choice of the will by which man acquires merits which are genuinely his own and also gifts of God, as the Council of Trent and St. Paul maintain.

Pascal brilliantly concludes his argument with the affirmation that the Jansenist doctrine accords not only with the continuing tradition of the Church up to the neo-Thomist teaching of Alvarez, but even with that of the Jesuit Father Pétau.

De sorte qu'on voit aujourd'hui, par une espèce de prodige, les défenseurs de la grâce efficace justifiés par les défenseurs de Molina: tant la conduite de Dieu est admirable, pour faire

concourir toutes choses à la gloire de sa vérité!<sup>43</sup>. The Jesuits are consequently hoist with their own petard, as it were, for their alliance with the Thomists has simply served to confirm the orthodoxy of Jansenism. This lengthy argument by which Pascal demonstrates Jansenist conformity not only with the whole Catholic tradition but even with his enemies, would appear to prove that his apparent change of stance in the direction of Thomism, seen also in the Pensées, can be regarded as primarily political in intention<sup>44</sup>. And, as in the stratagem employed earlier by the Thomists, modifications are introduced into popular belief, when, in fact, none have been made.

#### Pascal and Jansenism

Many writers<sup>45</sup> have interpreted these concessions as a move by Pascal in the direction of a more humanist position and away from Jansenism. Sellier notes the progression of this accord and observes that "la formule saint Augustin et saint Thomas constitue une sorte de refrain dans la Dix-huitième Lettre"<sup>45</sup>. He nevertheless affirms elsewhere<sup>47</sup>, "Nous pouvons donc conclure qu'aucun texte pascalien ne permet sérieusement de mettre en doute la permanence de la pensée théologique exprimée dans les Ecrits sur la Grâce". H.F. Stewart goes even further and aligns St. Thomas and St. Augustine with Calvin: "Jansen, following St. Augustine, admitted that man has the power to resist Grace, if he will. But so did Calvin. What Calvin maintained was that man cannot will to resist Grace, since it is Grace itself which determines his will. But this is the position of Alvarez, St. Thomas, and St. Augustine himself"<sup>48</sup>. Strowski<sup>49</sup> and Chevalier claim that Pascal moved away from the Jansenism of

his youth, the latter observing: "Pascal n'est pas janséniste: il a tempéré le jansénisme par l'humanisme"<sup>50</sup>. Chevalier believes that in certain Pensées Pascal expressed his belief in God's will to universal salvation, and that the human will, thanks to the Augustinian reconciliation, has a true freedom of responsibility<sup>51</sup>. Yet throughout the Provinciales Pascal indicates that he holds strictly to a Jansenist belief in efficacious grace. In fragment L911, B781<sup>52</sup>, Pascal affirms the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice for all men, but not the efficacy. Laporte interprets Pascal's stance as a firm adherence to Port-Royal and to the Jansenist belief in the sovereignty of divine grace, tempered only by the observations that "Dieu suit habituellement un ordre dans la distribution de ses dons", and that humility usually elicits the gift of grace, for it is "sa conduite ordinaire"<sup>53</sup>.

Further proof of Pascal's move away from Jansenism is assumed in his protestations in the later letters that he is not of Port-Royal, but acting quite independently of the nuns or any other group within the Church. In the second letter Pascal clearly saw himself, however, as part of a particular body raised up by God's grace to defend the Augustinian doctrine of "efficacious grace", since the Thomists had abdicated their responsibility as its guardian, and this body is clearly the community of Port-Royal<sup>54</sup>. Pascal rejects any suggestion of Port-Royal constituting a faction within the Church, but rather insists that the loyalty of all Jansenists, whose number is not confined to Port-Royal, is primarily to God, the Pope and the Catholic Church, outside of which he believed, there was no salvation.

...je vous déclare que vous n'en pouvez rien conclure contre moi, parce que, grâce à Dieu, je n'ai d'attache sur la terre qu'à la seule Eglise catholique, apostolique et romaine, dans laquelle je veux vivre et mourir, et dans la communion avec le pape son souverain chef, hors de laquelle je suis très persuadé qu'il n'y a point de salut<sup>55</sup>.

In the second letter Pascal underlines the devoutness and purity of the nuns' lives, exemplifying the teaching which he defends, and in the sixteenth letter he refers to their veneration of the Eucharist and belief in its uniqueness as a source of Christ's redemptive grace. His protestations also highlight the fact that the Jesuits' first allegiance is not to conscience, but to the head of their Order, a body which sanctions principles and teaches a doctrine of grace which desecrate the Eucharist and deny the need for the blood of Christ.

Il y a bien de la différence entre les Jésuites et ceux qui les combattent. Vous composez véritablement un corps uni sous un seul chef...<sup>56</sup>.

Pascal's attitude to "conscience" in the Provinciales appears to be somewhat ambivalent. On the face of it his moral theology, like his doctrine, rests upon the fundamental Augustinian distinction between nature and grace. Natural justice, therefore, when evaluated in relation to that of God is no better than that of the pagans.

Est-ce donc que la morale de Jésus-Christ est plus cruelle et moins ennemie du meurtre que celle des païens, dont les juges ont pris ces lois civiles qui le condamnent?<sup>57</sup>

As Pascal underlines in the doctrine of the three orders in the Pensées<sup>58</sup> all natural virtues lumped together cannot make the smallest measure of charity, which is of a different, supernatural order. Reason, Laporte points out<sup>59</sup>, cannot find principles in the field of morality any more

than it can in science, for its function is restricted to intuiting such principles and working upon them. It is the will for Pascal which determines the moral code by its love<sup>60</sup>. "Le coeur, donc, ou le sentiment, est seul apte à décider des principes de la morale"<sup>61</sup>.

In the Provinciales conscience in natural man is clearly reason following and rationalizing the choices of concupiscent wills, and Bénichou<sup>62</sup> observes that Nicole and St.-Cyran denied any objective validity to the deliverances of this conscience. Reason is unreliable and easily swayed by the passions which, Pascal claims, can delude men into wrongly believing that they are fighting for the truth, "sans que leur conscience leur rende sur l'heure d'autre témoignage"<sup>63</sup>. For the Jansenist, however, conscience is plainly the intellect illuminated by grace so that it understands the law of the Gospel, which the will embraces. The source of this grace is prayer, meditation upon Scripture<sup>64</sup>, purity of life and pious observance of the sacraments, all marks of humility. The anguish of the Prière pour demander à Dieu le bon usage des maladies underscores the absolute dependence of the Christian upon God for every step in the moral life, and makes it plain that choices for the Christian were not between good and evil, but between different Christian duties<sup>65</sup>. In the words of Laporte,

Attendre dans un absolu désintéressement, la clarté que notre coeur, en s'élevant vers Dieu, ne pourra manquer de trouver en Lui, tel est le véritable moyen de dissiper les cas de conscience<sup>66</sup>.

Pascal therefore replies to the Jesuit tolerance of duelling which the King himself has forbidden: "Mais on doit louer Dieu de ce qu'il a éclairé l'esprit du roi par les lumières

plus pures que celles de votre théologie"<sup>67</sup>.

Pascal attacks the Jesuits on the grounds that, as agents of Christ and mediators of his grace in confession, and as directors of conscience, they do not encourage this close relationship. He implies in the Jesuits and their followers an ability to turn back freely to the true morality of the Gospel as an optional moral code open to conscience. Similarly he assumes in man an ability freely to reject grace, and deliberately to sin against the light<sup>68</sup>. In the fifth letter he addresses the Jesuit father:

-Vous parlez donc, continuai-je, contre votre conscience?

-Point du tout, dit-il: je ne parlais pas en cela selon ma conscience, mais selon celle de Ponce et du Père Bauny<sup>69</sup>.

Yet, in the fourteenth letter, the upshot of Pascal's argument is that it is possible to adopt a moral code quite freely, in the same way that a judge, when handing down judgements, is guided by the civil law, rather than by personal moral convictions, and is said by Pascal to act "en conscience" as he does so<sup>70</sup>. Similarly the remorse felt by transgressors, contradicting the claim that concupiscent wills have no consciousness of sinning, would seem to be proof of just such a freedom<sup>71</sup>. In the tenth letter Pascal writes,

Et ainsi, après vous avez montré dans toutes nos conversations précédentes comment on a soulagé les scrupules qui troublaient les consciences...<sup>72</sup>.

In the fourteenth he says of rebels,

Ils n'auront plus à vaincre les remords de la conscience, qui arrêtent la plupart des crimes dans leur naissance...<sup>73</sup>.

While consciously adhering to the Augustinian distinc-

tion therefore in his use of "conscience", Pascal nevertheless unconsciously assumes an objective validity for the deliverances of conscience, and an ability in natural reason to judge the law of the Gospel as divinely given, as well as a freedom of will in man to accept or reject the voice of God in conscience or Scripture<sup>74</sup>. Delumeau<sup>75</sup> observes that it is the insistence of the Jansenists upon the sovereignty of individual conscience in religion and politics, that caused them to be regarded as an opposition party by the King himself, when the controversy in the Sorbonne and the Provinciales had aroused public opinion to exert pressure on the royal power. It is, clearly, in Pascal's interests, therefore, to affirm his loyalty to the Holy See and demonstrate the doctrinal unity of Thomists, Jesuits and Jansenists.

Pascal concludes his long defence of the Port-Royal position in the eighteenth letter by insisting that the Jesuits are making a point of law and heresy from what is simply a question of fact. The onus is on them to point out the passages in the Augustinus which confirm that Jansen's meaning is heretical. Pascal develops the Augustinian distinction<sup>76</sup> between the roles of reason and authority in the discernment of religious truth, with the former the rightful judge of fact, as in science, and with the latter the rightful judge of things supernatural and revealed. Truths of faith, however, in Scripture for example, must never conflict with the evidence of the senses or with reason, or religion would become an object of scorn and conversion would be impossible. Pascal is using his own scientific method here to promote the clarification of supernatural truth when he



requires empirical evidence for proof of a hypothesis<sup>77</sup>. He cites the fact that Popes have erred on many occasions by failing to observe the distinction between fact and supernatural truth (as in the condemnation of Galileo), and suggests that the proposed condemnation of the Augustinus on the question of fact would constitute a similar aberration, since it is the truth of the facts which makes a Bull authoritative. Until such a question of fact is established Port-Royal will be,

...sans blâme sur ce point de fait, comme ils sont sans erreurs sur les points de foi; catholiques sur le droit, raisonnables sur le fait, et innocents en l'un et en l'autre<sup>78</sup>.

#### Reason and Revelation in Morality

Just as Revelation is the only reliable guide in the domain of theological truth, so grace is the sole source of Christian virtue, mediated by Scripture, the tradition of the Church and its Sacraments. For Augustine, as Abercrombie observes, "This grace of God, whereby we receive goodness and persevere in it, not only brings it about that we can do what we will, but that we will also this that we can do"<sup>79</sup>. In his attack on the Jesuit doctrine and on the moral laxity it condoned, Pascal calls for a return to a purity of life, founded upon love of God and neighbour which is the condition for the reception of this grace.

In his History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages Gilson<sup>80</sup> outlines the nature of the Augustinian ethic, to which Port-Royal and the Jansenists were dedicated. In the Augustinian view, "moral conscience and the knowledge of virtues are not enough to achieve moral life. Man is not an intellect only, he is also a will, and so long as his

will does not conform to the prescriptions of moral truth, there is no morality". Only the Christians empowered by grace can achieve moral righteousness, and besides being members of a temporal society, in which their temporal needs are served, they belong to the "City of God", united in love of God and with the beatific vision as their spiritual goal. The feeling of deliverance experienced by Pascal in his own conversion, his ability to renounce the world, furnished proof of the need for a special grace which, as Strowski<sup>81</sup> points out, he felt as the sign of individual election: "la goutte de sang que le Christ dans son agonie a versé pour l'âme élue, choisie, distinguée, entre toutes les autres"<sup>82</sup>.

Gilson also indicates that from the time of the thirteenth century, Augustinians have struggled to maintain their philosophical position against the rising tide of Aristotelianism. In Studies in Self-Interest, Krailsheimer traces the development of the humanism which resulted from the rediscovery of Aristotle and the works of classical antiquity. For the Christian humanist, the latter furnished a model for the potential of human effort, while the New Testament provided its orientation. With Montaigne, however, God was no longer at the centre, but above, and respect for authority and custom were replaced by an automatic obedience and outward conformity. Descartes'<sup>83</sup> mechanistic view of the universe, according to which, as Pascal observes, God withdraws after setting the universe in motion, made the "moi" the centre of man's orientation, while the deliberations of reason, dedicated to the service of the individual ego, replaced the objective moral standards

of Christ as the sole authority in Christian morality. The linking of "intérêt" and "amour-propre" in the maxims of La Rochefoucauld indicates, in Krailsheimer's view, the nature of man's aberration.

It is not merely transient selfishness, or miscalculation of moral values, but the permanent and radical reorientation of man's spiritual eye on to himself. There can be no religion when man becomes his own God, but equally there can be no ethics when man's self occupies the place properly taken by some transcendental, or at least, objective, standard<sup>84</sup>.

"Honnêteté", "gloire" and "honneur" had thus become, by Pascal's time, values devoid of moral connotation, with God transformed into an apotheosis of self and salvation into an extension of earthly life.

In the Semi-Pelagian tradition, the bias of Jesuit doctrine tended, from the time of the Society's formation, towards an optimistic view of the value of human effort in earning salvation, with the Jesuits more disposed than the Augustinians to make allowances for the shortcomings of their flock. In Augustinianism and Modern Theology, de Lubac traces the profound influence of Renaissance humanism upon the theology of the Jesuit Order, in a gradual evolution from the time of Bellarmine to that of Lessius and Pascal himself, in the direction of naturalism. Whilst this influence was effectively opposed by Thomas Aquinas in his Christianization of Aristotle, the Jesuit moral theologians, by assimilating the fundamental assumptions of the time into their theology, relegated the supernatural to the class of the miraculous<sup>85</sup>.

The adoption of just such a naturalism by the Jesuits is the subject of the fourth letter, in which Pascal attacks

the fundamentally heretical presuppositions upon which their theology of grace is founded. The "grace actuelle" taught by the Jesuits as given for individual acts, was both prevenient and cooperant, "une inspiration de Dieu par laquelle il nous fait connaître sa volonté et par laquelle il nous excite à la vouloir accomplir"<sup>86</sup>. According to Jesuit teaching this grace was given to all men on the occasion of each temptation: "une action ne peut être imputée à péché, si Dieu ne nous donne, avant que de la commettre, la connaissance du mal qui y est, et une inspiration qui nous excite à l'éviter"<sup>87</sup>. "Grâce actuelle" is clearly equated by the Jesuits with the deliberations of the moral consciousness<sup>88</sup>; it represents for them an illumination of the natural reason, which ensures that an act is committed with a deliberate intention. This amounts for Pascal to a denial of the whole Augustinian doctrine of Original Sin, of the corruption of the will and of the need for a Redeemer, and of the inability of man to love God or perform the good without an efficacious grace. It accords natural reason a role in the work of salvation expressly denied by the fundamental Augustinian distinction between reason and Revelation developed in Pascal's doctrine of the three orders<sup>89</sup>, where reason, without grace, is useless in true moral endeavour since it follows the will ruled by concupiscence. The Jesuit doctrine of "grâce actuelle" is clearly founded on the view that, unless man is to be regarded as a puppet manipulated by God, some degree of moral responsibility and freedom of will must be accorded him. For Pascal, however, it had much more sinister connotations, and went far beyond Pelagianism in the direction of a naturalism which did away

with sin and its Redeemer, and, by implication, threatened the whole conception of the Church as the Body of Christ and mediator of His grace.

In his definition of the principle upon which the grace is founded, Pascal underlines the essentially natural Aristotelian ethic underlying the Jesuit moral theology, with its distinction between voluntary and involuntary acts, and its insistence on the primacy of reason over the will in all intentional acts. An act is defined by Aristotle as voluntary when the will follows the choice which the reason makes, after reflection upon possible options<sup>90</sup>. In an involuntary act, however, the will moves spontaneously and without such deliberation, and such acts are classified as morally neutral. However, Aristotle also classed as involuntary and, therefore, not culpable, any act committed without guilty intention, but which, because of particular circumstances, results in moral wrong. Pascal quotes from Father Bauny the Aristotelian principle "qu'une action ne peut être imputée à blâme lorsqu'elle est involuntaire"<sup>91</sup>, and demonstrates that the Jesuit interpretation of this allows such scope in the direction of souls, that every type of excess can be excused by ignorance of the moral law, and sin itself is virtually abolished, which represents a denial of Aristotle's true ethic<sup>92</sup>.

Quoi! mon Père, il ne suffit pas, pour agir volontairement, qu'on sache ce que l'on fait, et qu'on ne le fasse que parce qu'on le veut faire; mais il faut de plus "que l'on voie, que l'on sache et que l'on pénètre ce qu'il y a de bien et de mal dans cette action?" Si cela est, il n'y a guère d'actions volontaires dans la vie; car on ne pense guère à tout cela. Que de jurements dans le jeu, que d'excès dans les débauches, que d'emportements dans le carnaval, qui ne sont point

volontaires, et par conséquent ni bons, ni mauvais, pour n'être point accompagnés de ces "réflexions d'esprit sur les qualités bonnes ou mauvaises" de ce que l'on fait! Mais est-il possible, mon Père, qu'Aristote ait eu cette pensée? Car j'avais ouï dire que c'était un habile homme<sup>93</sup>.

With this new type of redemption, Pascal insists, all sins committed without any thought of God, can always be excused, and incomparably more people will be justified by ignorance and forgetfulness than by grace and the sacraments, and Father Bauny himself will be hailed as: "Ecce qui tollit peccata mundi"<sup>94</sup>.

Pascal points out that the logical extension of this teaching is a reversal of the traditional doctrine of the Church and of the Scriptures. Simply by virtue of having no thought of God, hardened and avowed sinners, philosophers who boast of the power of nature, Epicureans who deny divine providence, idolators and atheists, are all justified. The very people whom the Jesuits confess, the aristocracy and ruling class, sin in their thousands without the least sign of regret. Pascal warns the Jesuits, that when experience convinces people that this principle, which they claim to be an article of faith is wrong, the disillusionment will extend to the whole doctrine of the Church, and religion will be discredited.

The true role of the Church, in Pascal's view, is not to save people by their excesses, but to show them their infirmity and the physician who can cure it; to teach them to desire spiritual health and pray that God will grant it. Pascal again appeals to the "sens commun" of the reader to decide whether the laxity of those who have Jesuit spiritual directors, or the austerity, piety and purity of the Jansen-

ists, is the correct prescription for spiritual health. It is the abdication of reason and submission to the teaching of Revelation, required for such purity of life, that he argues are the prerequisites for receiving the grace of Christ, which is morality itself.

J'avais toujours pensé qu'on péchât d'autant plus, qu'on pensait le moins à Dieu. Mais, à ce que je vois, quand on a pu gagner une fois sur soi de n'y plus penser du tout, toutes choses deviennent pures pour l'avenir<sup>95</sup>.

By making grace available to all men, the Jesuits, as Laporte<sup>96</sup> points out, have made it "une fontaine publique". For Pascal and the Jansenists, reason's competence in the moral domain is restricted to acts of natural goodness which, as for Augustine, are no better than vices since they are useless for salvation<sup>97</sup>. Any sin, whether of surprise, ignorance or deliberate intent is culpable, for it is performed by a will under the rule of concupiscence. Saints themselves are at times trapped by concupiscence to sin quite unintentionally, when they sincerely believe they are yielding to necessity or acting in the interests of truth. Pascal's ambivalence to the role of the human will is pointed up in this passage, where, though the saints yield to sin, it is simply because grace has been withdrawn, so that

...les plus saints doivent toujours demeurer dans la crainte et dans le tremblement, quoiqu'ils ne se sentent coupables en aucune chose, comme saint Paul le dit de lui-même?<sup>98</sup>.

This is pure determinism which makes a nonsense of the appeal Pascal makes to will and reason in the Pensées and the Provinciales, and can only be attributed to the need of "twice-born" Christians such as Pascal, Augustine and St. Paul

himself to attribute all the mercy of God. Grace, in Pascal's view, is a continuous infusion directly related to purity of life and heart<sup>99</sup>, but neither sinners, nor the most righteous, have the knowledge, desires and inspirations of "grâce actuelle" on every occasion of sin.

For proof of the authenticity of the Jansenist doctrine and of the essentially heretical character of the Jesuit teaching, and of the threat posed by such naturalism to the Body of Christ, Pascal looks to Scripture and to Augustine. His strongest appeal is to the facts of experience and it is from the moral consciousness of the reader, not necessarily enlightened by divine grace, that he seeks a favourable judgement.

Croira-t-on, sur votre parole, que ceux qui sont plongés dans l'avarice, dans l'impudicité, dans les blasphèmes, dans le duel, dans la vengeance, dans les vols, dans les sacrilèges aient des véritables désirs d'embrasser la chastité, l'humilité, et les autres vertus chrétiennes?<sup>100</sup>.

For Pascal purity of life is clearly both the condition and the gift of grace.

#### Jesuit Casuistry: Probabilism

Having established the philosophical basis of the Jesuit doctrine of grace, Pascal turns in the fifth letter to the question of Jesuit casuistry and the moral laxity which it has condoned, and even encouraged, in seventeenth century French society. The material for Pascal's attack was furnished by the work of Escobar, a collection of the opinions of twenty-four Jesuit casuists, and by Arnauld's Théologie des Jésuites published in 1643<sup>101</sup>. In this work, Strowski states, "Arnauld avait dégagé le double caractère de la casuistique: le probabilisme d'abord et l'innovation



ensuite", and it is the practical implications of these two aspects for society and for the Church that Pascal is concerned to denounce.

Casuistry, as H.F. Stewart states<sup>102</sup>, developed as the inevitable accompaniment of the sacrament of penance, since the confessor was obliged not only to give counsel but also to judge between mortal and venial sins, by investigating the circumstances which could mitigate the seriousness of a particular sin. The ability to consult a recognized authority provided guidelines for the confessor while safeguarding the penitent. Books of casuistry, therefore, became a necessity, and probabilism evolved out of this practice. Where a difference of opinion existed among authorities on a particular question of moral law, a confessor could follow the most strictly legal opinion (Tutorist), a less safe but still probable opinion (Probabiliorist), or an opinion with even less probability (Probabilist). It is the latter group with which Pascal is most particularly concerned, for probabilism gave a confessor the excuse for absolving the penitent while still allowing him to follow his inclinations with no true amelioration of life-style. Stewart points out that St. Thomas' development of the Aristotelian virtue of "epieikeia" or "reasonableness", the equivalent of equity in the law, gave probabilism further moral sanction by encouraging such codification. The moral laxity of the aristocracy, many of whom had Jesuit confessors, as Pascal stresses<sup>103</sup>, was notorious and Arnauld attacked it in 1643 in La Fréquent Communion, protesting against the unworthy reception and inevitable profanation of the sacrament, thus precipitating

his censure.

The Jesuit principles cited by Pascal in the Provinciales are those perceived by him, and by Jansenists generally, to be in direct contradiction to the law of the Gospel, to love of God and neighbour, and amounting to nothing short of the overthrow of Christendom itself since: "ils ont changé la face de la chrétienté"<sup>104</sup>. The whole thrust of the Jansenist movement was towards a return to the simplicity of the early Fathers, Augustine, Chrysostom, Ambrose and Jerome, who were closer, in Pascal's view, to the Apostles. As Pascal points out in the fifth letter, when he asks the Jesuit Father if he were speaking against his conscience in citing Father Bauny, the Jesuits no longer follow the law of the Gospel as their guide in morality, but the principles sanctioned by their own Order. Pascal's Jesuit Father remarks, "Et vous pourriez les suivre en surêté; car ce sont d'habiles gens"<sup>105</sup>.

In Pascal's view it is the overriding ambition of the Jesuits to govern the consciences of everyone, especially those of the rich and powerful, thereby gaining universal credit, which has made them use probabilism as a means of accommodating all types and abandon the certainty of Revelation. "La doctrine des opinions probables", says Pascal's Jesuit Father, "C'est le fondement et l'a.b.c. de toute notre morale"<sup>106</sup>. Whilst some of the Fathers are as faithful to the Gospel precepts as others are opposed to them, Pascal claims that the former, unfortunately, cannot be counted as representative of the whole Society, which he sees as officially tolerating those who are lax. Ambition dictates that there should be precepts suited to all, evan-

gelical or worldly,

C'est par cette conduite "obligeante et accommodante", comme l'appelle le P. Pétau, qu'ils tendent les bras à tout le monde.

...Par là ils conservent tous leurs amis, et se défendent contre tous leurs ennemis<sup>107</sup>.

Pascal underlines the self-interest which has replaced God for the Jesuits in their modifications of the traditional teaching of the Church in their missionary activities in the East, where, to gain converts, they have adapted to local religious beliefs and suppressed the scandal of the Cross, preaching only Christ in glory and not Christ in agony<sup>108</sup>. This is a denial of the Jansenist view of the Church as the Body of Christ, continuing the sufferings of Christ as a continual source of grace<sup>109</sup>. Under the cloak of probabilism the Jesuits are promoting a purely natural ethic in the guise of Christian virtue, for pride, the root of all evil for Augustine, has led them to substitute human reason for God as their true principle<sup>110</sup>. Instead of presenting the faith, and the tradition which maintains it, as one and immutable in all times and in all places, they regard it as a rule which can be bent to accommodate any need, so that absolution results from corruption of the law of the Lord.

...au lieu "que la loi du Seigneur, qui est sans tache et toute sainte, est celle qui doit convertir les âmes", et les conformer à ses salutaires instructions!<sup>111</sup>.

The probabilists have, in fact, replaced the Christian moral rule with one catering to the individual "moi"<sup>112</sup>, which, as Krailsheimer<sup>113</sup> observes, is the centre of its own universe, where the moral grounds for an action are discovered arbitrarily within the self. The will of that "moi" is "quasi divine". Christian virtue has been set aside in

favour of a purely pagan morality and a mechanistic observance of religion in tune with the self-sufficient temper of the times, in a world from which God has been banished. Charity has been replaced by the law and reason which are grace enough, as Pascal satirically notes, to achieve what amounts to a wholly natural virtue, since only the power of efficacious grace can free the will and convert it from love of worldly affections and unite it to God.

Comme leur morale est toute païenne, la nature suffit pour l'observer.... La loi et la raison sont des grâces suffisantes pour ces effets. Mais pour dégager l'âme de l'amour du monde, pour la retirer de ce qu'elle a de plus cher, pour la faire mourir à soi-même, pour la porter et l'attacher uniquement et invariablement à Dieu, ce n'est l'ouvrage que d'une main toute puissante<sup>114</sup>.

There can be no compromise for Pascal, in the attainment of the sovereign good, between the rule of charity, arbitrarily bestowed and irresistible, and the power of natural reason. For reason, though unaffected by the Fall<sup>115</sup>, and competent in its own order in dealing with scientific and mathematical truth, has no such competence in the field of theology or morality where, subordinated to the will, it follows the choice of grace or concupiscence. Pascal points this up by having his Jesuit Father compare the truth of an opinion of a casuist with that of an account of an event which has occurred in Rome.

La plaisante comparaison, lui dis-je, des choses du monde à celles de la conscience<sup>116</sup>.

The Jesuits have abandoned the true teaching of the Church by which sinners are humbled and turned to God, and they have replaced Christ's grace with reason, which absolves the sinner by rationalizing the choices of wills ruled by concupiscence, in the opinions of casuists, and by virtually

abolishing sin itself.

La diversité des jugements est si grande.... "Si quelque dieu nous presse, un autre nous délivre"<sup>117</sup>.

Absolution, moreover, is guaranteed, since a confessor cannot refuse a penitent armed with a probable opinion without himself committing a mortal sin. The conscience of the confessor, supposedly illuminated by the law of the Gospel, is released from any such constraint.

Je croyais que vous ne saviez qu'ôter les péchés; je ne pensais pas que vous en sussiez introduire. Mais vous avez tout pouvoir, à ce que je vois<sup>118</sup>.

Pascal claims that the Gospel and the early Fathers have simply been abandoned by those who study positive theology, in favour of Jesuit moral principles formulated within the last eighty years.

#### Direction of Intention

In the sixth and succeeding letters Pascal describes the methods employed by the Jesuit casuists to reconcile contradictions which arise between their opinions and those of the Church, the Fathers and the Popes, and the way in which the casuists overturn, not only the Sermon on the Mount and the Decalogue<sup>119</sup>, but also the authority of the King, the state and the laws of the land, so that worldly values, based on self-interest, "honneur" and "gloire", have replaced all other laws both natural and divine. Moral corruption is so widespread that conversion must now be on man's terms and not God's<sup>120</sup>.

Accordingly, by the specific interpretation of a term dispensations from such requirements as almsgiving, were readily available. By appealing to special circumstances, the religious were relieved of obedience to the rules of the

Order to which they belong and, following the doctrine of contrary opinions, even the decrees of Popes in their Bulls are no longer binding, for in every Bull a positive affirmation must always imply that the contrary is probable; and a favourable interpretation can be found.

Vous voyez assez par là que, soit par l'interprétation des termes, soit par la remarque des circonstances favorables, soit enfin par la double probabilité du pour et contre, on accorde toujours ces contradictions prétendues, qui vous étonnaient auparavant, sans jamais blesser les décisions de l'Écriture, des conciles ou des papes, comme vous le voyez<sup>121</sup>.

Even more subtle is their method of insinuating new principles into the corpus of the Church's teaching by allowing these principles imperceptibly to take root and gain general acceptance, so that they become authorized by the Church's tacit approval. In this category Pascal would no doubt include the Jesuit doctrine of grace itself, introduced into popular belief through their coalition with the Thomists<sup>122</sup>.

These principles can be applied to all types of people whether priests or the dissolute, in whom the enjoyment of temporal goods takes precedence over the vision of God as the goal both of priest and penitent, and they reverse Augustine's rule discriminating between "use" and "enjoyment" of temporal and spiritual goods in the city of God<sup>123</sup>. By the doctrine of Direction of Intention, the deflection, that is, of the intention of the penitent from an evil end to one which is morally acceptable, the Jesuit "sufficient grace", allows a priest to practise simony, or to say mass on the day he has committed a mortal sin, or to exchange the sacrifice of the mass for money, so that, in debasing

the sacrament, the faithful no longer receive the grace which flows from it. As Laporte observes, "La vrai nom de la direction de l'intention est hypocrisie"<sup>124</sup>.

Pascal stresses that it was as important as probabilism in the practice of Jesuit moral direction, since it dispensed altogether with the sincerity, humility, and desire for change to a purer life, which are the true conditions for the reception of absolution and grace from the Eucharist. As Miel<sup>125</sup> points out, such a mechanistic absolution represents merely a "purgative" for the worldly who have no intention of changing their lives, a means of uniting human and divine laws for "salvation on easy terms"<sup>126</sup>. In his vilification of this practice, Pascal is discrediting "sufficient grace" itself, for the "intention", by which it makes an act voluntary and sinful, can readily be redirected and absolution obtained on false pretences, as it were.

It was a particularly valuable means of allowing the Jesuits to reconcile the acts of violence, to which the aristocracy were driven in defence of "honneur", with the Gospel teaching which insists that vengeance should be left to God, so that even murder for a slap can be justified. The conduct of such people, Pascal reminds the reader, proves that they are, in fact, no different from the irreligious. In direction of intention, as Stewart<sup>127</sup> points out, Jesuit casuistry has surrendered the moral progress achieved both by the Gospels and the law of Moses.

En vérité, mon Père, il vaudrait autant avoir affaire à des gens qui n'ont point de religion, qu'à ceux qui en sont instruits jusqu'à cette direction. Car enfin l'intention de celui qui blesse ne soulage point celui qui est blessé<sup>128</sup>.

Corrupt judges, usurers, fraudulent bankrupts, fallen

women and sorcerers are all favoured by casuists and dispensed from paying back what they earn in their respective professions.

Car vous avez bien trouvé des expédients pour rendre la confession douce, au lieu que vous n'en avez point trouvé pour rendre la restitution agréable<sup>129</sup>.

Justice: Natural and Divine

In the eighth letter Pascal hammers home the fact that the moral consciousness of people generally, accords with the natural justice abandoned by the Jesuits along with charity itself, when he cites the condemnation of corrupt practices by judges, by an order introduced into the Parlement by the First President, also a Jansenist.

...et tout le monde a loué une réformation si utile à toutes les parties<sup>130</sup>.

Pascal demonstrates in the thirteenth letter how the Jesuits have, in fact, reversed the order of natural and divine justice by elevating civil justice to a higher order than that of God Himself, when they make God abhor crimes less than men, and make men fear judges more than God, the Judge of Judges. In questions which concern only the Church, such as penance, contrition or the love of God, laws are readily subverted, but in those which concern the state and the Church, such as usury or bankruptcy, the Jesuits have simply divided them into theoretical and practical categories, so that the laws of God may be overturned while those of the state are obeyed. Pascal here underlines the relationship which must always exist as he sees it, between natural and divine justice, with natural justice as a shadow or reflection of Charity itself.

Je ne vous reproche pas de craindre les juges,



mais de craindre que les juges et non pas le juge des juges. C'est cela que je blâme: parce que c'est faire Dieu moins ennemi des crimes que les hommes. Si vous disiez qu'on peut tuer un médisant selon les hommes, mais non pas selon Dieu, cela serait moins insupportable; mais que ce qui est trop criminel pour être souffert par les hommes, soit innocent et juste aux yeux de Dieu, qui est la justice même, qu'est-ce faire autre chose, sinon montrer à tout le monde que, par cet horrible renversement si contraire à l'esprit des saints, vous êtes hardis contre Dieu, et timides envers les hommes<sup>131</sup>.

Moreover, theory and practice are so closely connected that once the first has taken root, permission to kill for the sake of honour or property, for example, then it is but a small step for such permission to be accepted by the state, so that the teaching of the Jesuits becomes the authority for civil disorder and crime.

Qu'en peut-on conclure, si ce n'est que Lessius ruine le Décalogue et l'Évangile?<sup>132</sup>

Pascal shows<sup>133</sup> just how far the Jesuits have departed from the teaching of the Church, and even from the natural law, in their tolerance of murder, and challenges them to return to the basic principles of religion and "sens commun". He stresses the respect which the true Christian always has for the law and those who administer it, presenting no threat of disobedience to King or state.

Elle a toujours enseigné à ses enfants qu'on ne doit point rendre le mal pour le mal: qu'il faut céder à la colère; ne point résister à la violence; rendre à chacun ce qu'on lui doit, honneur, tribut, soumission; obéir aux magistrats et aux supérieurs, même injustes; parce qu'on doit toujours respecter en eux la puissance de Dieu, qui les a établis sur nous<sup>134</sup>.

The Jesuits, on the other hand, do not respect the natural law or judges, as ordained by God.

Dans vos nouvelles lois, il n'y a qu'un juge, et ce juge est celui-là même qui est offensé. Il est

tout ensemble le juge, la partie et le bourreau. Il se demande à lui-même la mort de son ennemi; il l'ordonne, il l'exécute sur le champ; et sans respect ni du corps ni de l'âme de son frère, il tue et damne celui pour qui Jésus-Christ est mort<sup>135</sup>.

The Church's express prohibition of killing, Pascal insists, springs from the belief that men are made in the image of God, and worthy, therefore, of holy respect, since they have been redeemed at an infinite price and are all capable of redemption. Pascal outlines the Augustinian concept of the two worlds into which all humanity is divided, children of the Gospel and enemies of the Gospel, mutually exclusive groups between which the Jesuits must choose.

"Qui n'est point avec Jésus-Christ, est contre lui". Ces deux genres d'hommes partagent tous les hommes. Il y a deux peuples et deux mondes répandus sur toute la terre, selon saint Augustin: le monde des enfants de Dieu, qui forme un corps dont Jésus-Christ est le chef et le roi; et le monde ennemi de Dieu, dont le diable est le chef et le roi. Et c'est pourquoi Jésus-Christ est appelé le roi et le Dieu du monde; parce qu'il a partout des sujets et des adorateurs; et le diable est aussi appelé dans l'Écriture le prince du monde et le dieu de ce siècle parce qu'il a partout des suppôts et des esclaves<sup>136</sup>.

Children of the Gospel follow the laws of Christ who taught men to turn the other cheek, to suffer with him and share his disgrace, while the world of the devil considers it an honour to avoid suffering, to kill those who would injure them and curse those who are disgraced. Pascal asks the reader to decide whether the Jesuits belong to "le Hiérusalem mystique" under God, or "la spirituelle Sodom"<sup>137</sup>, serving "honneur" and "gloire" the twin idols of the worldly, the Devil himself.

#### Reason or Revelation

In Pascal's view the Jesuits respect no independent moral truth, for in their doctrine of probable opinions

truth is dependent on each individual will. Yet they claim an equal authority for each opinion as an effect of predestination in those who are absolved by such opinions.

"Dieu, de toute éternité, a voulu que la chaîne d'or de leur salut dépendît d'un tel auteur, et non pas de cent autres qui disent la même chose, parce qu'il n'arrive pas qu'ils les rencontrent. Si celui-là n'avait écrit, celui-ci ne serait pas sauvée"<sup>138</sup>.

In the Jesuit teaching, then, moral truth results from the arbitrary choice of wills ruled by concupiscence and turned irrevocably towards temporal goods, whereas it is a Christian duty to uphold not only natural justice but divine justice also. The Jesuits have taken the place of God in the question of predestination by making salvation depend only on an outward conformity in religious practice.

Thus they offer an easy piety, making devotion as painless as absolution, evidence for Pascal that they are simply in the service of the same idol, "gloire", as those whom they confess, and are subordinating their true aim, the greater glory of God, for the greater glory of their Order. Salvation, then depends upon the wearing of a bracelet, or carrying an image of the Virgin, which the Order guarantees will suffice, at least until a death-bed conversion. No conversion of hearts totally dedicated to material values and pleasures, is demanded:

Cela n'est point nécessaire, dit-il, quand on est trop attaché au monde. Ecoutez-le: "Coeur pour coeur, ce serait bien ce qu'il faut; mais le vôtre est un peu trop attaché et tient un peu trop aux créatures. Ce qui fait que je n'ose vous inviter à offrir aujourd'hui ce petit esclave que vous appelez votre coeur"<sup>139</sup>.

Pascal accuses the Jesuits of misleading their penitents, and lulling them into a false sense of security, by not

urging them to seek the grace which alone can effect a conversion to God.

### The Church and the World

In the ninth letter Pascal also underlines the mutually exclusive nature of the two life-styles envisaged by the Jansenist teaching, that of the Church, and that of the world<sup>140</sup>. Pascal is here clearly responding to the attacks of Jesuits upon the austere and ascetic life-style of the Jansenists, as unnatural and unloving, and attributable rather to disposition than to a true piety. Father le Moine's analysis of the two religious types corresponds well, in fact, with the "once-born" and "twice-born" categories of religious temperament described by William James<sup>141</sup>.

"Je ne nie pas qu'il ne se voie des dévots qui sont pâles et mélancholiques de leur complexion, qui aiment le silence et la retraite, et qui n'ont que du flegme dans les veines et de la terre sur le visage. Mais il s'en voit assez d'autres qui sont d'une complexion plus heureuses, et qui ont abondance de cette humeur douce et chaude et de ce sang bénin et rectifié qui fait la joie"<sup>142</sup>.

In the view of N.P. Williams<sup>143</sup>, the Reformation represents a rebellion of the "twice-born" religious type, to which the Jansenists clearly belonged, aimed at restoring the Church to what they regarded as the spirituality and true teaching from which it had strayed too far in the direction of Pelagianism. Pascal here endorses the characteristics of those who belong to the city of God, characteristics which the Jesuits deride: the shunning of pleasure; love of silence and retreat, simplicity and purity of life, the elimination of all worldly attachments, even those of family, and the repudiation of "honneur" and "gloire" as

ends to be worshipped, all of which might draw the will away from love of God. Although the Jesuits clearly have attacked the extreme austerity and asceticism favoured by Port-Royal and Pascal particularly, it is nevertheless true that for the Jansenists there could be no compromise for the will between the rule of charity and that of concupiscence. Augustine's city of God has been overthrown by the Jesuits who reverse its order, and Pascal rejects the Aristotelian view of man's true end as a natural good attained by the use of reason and by following the natural inclinations<sup>144</sup>. The vision of God is the true goal of man, attained only by the will empowered by supernatural grace<sup>145</sup>.

Thus almsgiving, the crushing of pride, conceit, vanity and envy, which were the particular aims of Pascal himself towards the end of his life, are dispensed with by the Jesuits, so that the worldly may pursue natural ends, ambition, avarice and honour, and enjoy pride and self-satisfaction as they follow their natural bent, for all these are merely venial sins.

C'est ainsi que Dieu, qui est juste, donne aux grenouilles de la satisfaction de leur chant<sup>146</sup>.

The Augustinian requirement for the appropriate use and enjoyment of temporal goods in the city of God is reversed, and all sins of the flesh become venial. Lies and perjury are permitted by the doctrines of equivocation and mental restriction, and direction of intention nullifies promises. Immodesty in dress and behaviour, and an ever lower standard of purity in women than that demanded by the writers of classical antiquity, are proof that the Jesuits have fallen below a natural morality, let alone that of the Scriptures.

Sacraments: Confession

It is in the Jesuits' attitude to the Sacraments, particularly the Eucharist and Confession, that Pascal exposes what he sees as their essential heresy, in making devotion "'plus facile que le vice, et plus aisée que la volupté', en sorte que 'le simple vivre est incomparablement plus malaisé que le bien vivre'"<sup>147</sup>. All that is required for attendance at mass, particularly revered by the Jansenists, is the outward observance of one's obligation in the quickest and easiest possible way.

..."qu'il suffit d'être présent à la messe de corps, quoiqu'on soit absent d'esprit, pourvu qu'on demeure dans une contenance respectueuse extérieurement"<sup>148</sup>.

But far more serious, in Pascal's view, is the mitigation of confession practised by the Jesuits, where sins, which cannot be made legal by the use of reason, and for which confession is, therefore, the only cure, are easily expiated, "'de pieuses et saintes finesses, et un saint artifice de dévotion'", so that "'les crimes s'expient aujourd'hui alacrius, avec plus d'allégresse et d'ardeur qu'ils ne se commettaient autrefois'"<sup>149</sup>. Mitigations have been devised for all difficulties associated with confession so that the shame of confessing a particular sin is overcome by having two confessions, one for venial and one for mortal, or by including the sin in a general confession. The confessor was forbidden to ask if sins were habitual or oblige confession of circumstances which would aggravate them. Penitents could renounce both absolution and penance, or defer the penance until Purgatory, receiving meanwhile only a light penance in order outwardly to preserve the

integrity of the sacrament.

Pascal calls into question the whole ministry of the priest, who stands in the place of the divine physician, diagnosing the ills of the penitent and healing sick souls by making them fit for the reception of the grace of absolution. True contrition, for Pascal, is the life and soul of confession; and sincerely and humbly exposing the state of one's conscience, as if speaking to Christ himself, and undergoing a penance as the pledge of amelioration, suffering as Christ did himself, are the prerequisites for receiving that grace. The confessor, in Pascal's view, ought to forgive only those whom he believes Christ would forgive, and Pascal spells out his sacred duty.

Avez-vous l'idée véritable de votre ministère?  
Et ne savez-vous pas que vous y exercez le  
pouvoir de lier et de délier? Croyez-vous  
qu'il soit permis de donner l'absolution indif-  
féremment à tous ceux qui la demandent sans recon-  
naître auparavant si Jésus-Christ délie dans le  
ciel que vous déliez sur la terre?<sup>150</sup>.

Since most of the penitents would be barred from the confessional on such terms, ambition has forced the Jesuits to abandon the early Fathers and follow only the most recent of their own moral theologians. Contrition has, in fact, been phased out and become unnecessary even on one's death-bed, and been replaced by attrition, a natural regret arising from fear of hell, or even from loss of health or money, so that a supernatural grace is no longer required for absolution. Contrition, in fact, constitutes an obstacle since it wipes out sins, leaving nothing for the Sacrament itself to do. With sincerity and humility abolished, salvation may be attained by expiating sins by natural means all one's life,

thus dispensing with the love of God and the blood of Christ. Works alone are sufficient since God has performed in Christ the perfect act of contrition by which man's obligation is fulfilled.

C'est ainsi que nos Pères ont déchargé les hommes de l'obligation pénible d'aimer Dieu actuellement.... vous fera juger de la valeur de cette dispense par le prix qu'il dit qu'elle a coûté, qui est le sang de Jésus-Christ. C'est le couronnement de cette doctrine<sup>151</sup>.

Thus crimes which can not be excused by the Jesuits are absolved by destroying the priests' sacred ministry and obliging them to absolve, "plutôt en esclaves qu'en juges"<sup>152</sup>, hardened sinners, without love of God, change of life, sorrow or penance, except on their own terms. Even worse, they have removed the very spirit which gives the sacrament its life, claiming that God is not necessary for salvation.

"que cette dispense d'aimer Dieu est l'avantage, que Jésus-Christ a apporté au monde"<sup>153</sup>.

This, in Pascal's view, constitutes the heresy, to which reliance upon the false light of reason has led the Jesuits: that Christ's blood actually dispenses men from loving him, and that those who have never loved him in their lives are thus made worthy to enjoy him in eternity, while his priests, the mediators of that grace, are themselves the slaves of the world, and have reduced grace to a type of magic<sup>154</sup>.

### Eucharist

For Pascal and the Jansenists it is in the Eucharist that the Christian meets Christ and only through him receives the grace of salvation<sup>155</sup>. In the seventeenth letter Pascal vehemently affirms his loyalty to the Pope and the Catholic Church, which held for him the key to the Kingdom of Heaven,



i.e. grace, available only within its communion. In the sixteenth letter, where he defends Arnauld and the nuns against accusations by the Jesuits that they were Calvinists at heart, and did not uphold the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the elements, he underlines the reverence in which they, in fact, venerated this sacrament, interpreting the view of Port-Royal in terms of his theory of the "Dieu caché"<sup>156</sup>, developed in the Pensées. Whilst the Jews possessed Christ only under figures and veils, like manna and the paschal lamb, and the blessed possess him in reality, Christians truly do so, hidden under the veil of the Eucharist, which, as Pascal points out, is the official teaching of the Council of Trent. The nuns have, in fact, taken the Eucharist as the principal object of their devotion, wearing the habit of the Saint-Sacrament and consequently are known as "Filles du Saint-Sacrament". They are present night and day before the Host to make reparation for the impiety of the heresy which tries to destroy it<sup>157</sup>.

It is the Jesuits themselves, in Pascal's view, who should more rightly be regarded as Calvinists, since the nuns' conduct confirms their belief in the real presence, while that of the Jesuits is a denial of it. If they truly believed that the bread changed into the Body of Christ, they would demand sincere change and love of God in those who approach it.

Si vous croyez que Jésus-Christ y est dans un état de mort, pour apprendre à ceux qui s'en approchent à mourir au monde, au péché et à eux-mêmes, pourquoi portez-vous à en approcher ceux en qui les vices et les passions criminelles sont encore toutes vivantes? Et comment jugez-

vous dignes de manger le pain du ciel, ceux qui ne le seraient pas de manger celui de la terre?<sup>158</sup>.

The facts prove that both communicants and priests desecrate the sacrament in their sacrilegious and mechanistic attitude which banishes Christ altogether.

Qu'il est digne de ces défenseurs d'un si pur et si adorable sacrifice, d'environner la table de JESUS-CHRIST de pécheurs envieillis, tout sortants de leurs infamies, et de placer au milieu d'eux un prêtre que son confesseur même envoie de ses impudicités à l'autel, pour y offrir, en la place de JESUS-CHRIST, cette victime toute sainte au Dieu de sainteté, et la porter de ses mains souillées en ces bouches toutes souillées<sup>159</sup>.

Sincerity and humility, love of God and submission to his truth, are the conditions both for receiving this grace of salvation and for leading the truly moral Christian life under the rule of charity. Pascal deplores the slander which he freely accuses the Jesuits of, both in their personal attacks upon Arnauld and upon himself, and in the clearly unsubstantiated accusations of heresy against the nuns of Port-Royal. The credit enjoyed by the Jesuits in the world allows them to shelter under the authority of the rich and powerful, in order to further their intrigues, while their own principles dispense them from divine justice, since they are defending the honour of their Order, in the service of "honneur" and "gloire".

L'amour-propre nous persuade toujours assez que c'est avec injustice qu'on nous attaque; et à vous principalement, mes Pères, que la vanité aveugle de telle sorte que vous voulez faire croire en tous vos écrits que c'est blesser l'honneur de l'Eglise que de blesser celui de votre Société<sup>160</sup>.

Pascal quotes, in the seventeenth letter, the Jesuits own admission that slander forms the main line of their defence, "il suffit de dire 15 fois que je suis hérétique; et

qu'étant déclaré tel, je ne mérite aucune créance'"<sup>161</sup>. But their own principles will betray them, Pascal warns, since their reputation for encouraging insincerity will inevitably guarantee the failure of their tactics, and, even worse, place their own salvation in jeopardy.

In his satire of the Jesuits, however, Pascal claims that he has not only the sanction of Scripture and the Fathers, but that his meticulous regard for the truth in denouncing their principles and the moral laxity they encourage, will guarantee a conviction against them, for "Vous sentirez la force de la vérité que je vous oppose"<sup>162</sup>, whereas, "Si la vérité était pour vous, elle combattrait pour vous, elle vaincrait pour vous; et quelques ennemis que vous eussiez, la vérité vous en délivrerait, selon sa promesse"<sup>163</sup>. According to the Jansenists the truth is God himself, and his grace defends those who revere it.

The disregard for truth required by the Jesuit tactics conclusively proves, for Pascal, the essential unsoundness of their doctrine, and that they are not under the rule of charity. He appeals to the facts for confirmation that the life of true christian virtue is that exemplified by the community of Port-Royal, founded upon reverence for the revealed truth of Scripture and the Early Fathers. Chevalier describes this life as, "obéissance, pauvreté, pénitence et joie, union étroite des coeurs dans un silence très exact et une grande attention aux observances, en vue de la perfection religieuse"<sup>164</sup>. Pascal himself found that this inward and outward surrender to the truth, striving to conform life to belief, was the only blueprint for the

authentic Christian life<sup>165</sup>.

Unlike the Jesuit principles, Christian truths revealed by the Holy Spirit, the immutable deliverances of God, are worthy of veneration,

...parce qu'il y a deux choses dans les vérités de notre religion: une beauté divine qui les rend aimables, et une sainte majesté qui les rend vénérables<sup>166</sup>.

filling the saints with the love and fear upon which their absolute dependence on God is founded. Purity of life, in an ascetic detachment from the world and rejection even of family ties, is, for such "twice-born" religious temperaments, the condition of the continuous infusion of grace which will lead to salvation<sup>167</sup>. Pascal underlines the practice of this virtue in the lives of the nuns, "ces saintes vierges"<sup>168</sup>, "dans une piété douce et solide"<sup>169</sup>, who not only love God and their neighbour, but even secretly pray for their enemies, the Jesuits, and the whole Church, while the Jesuits, far from desiring the salvation of the Jansenists, have prayed publicly at Caen<sup>170</sup> for their damnation. The manifest discrepancy between Jesuit doctrine and its effects in human lives confirms the fact that they are under no such divine rule of charity. They have replaced God with the two idols, "honneur" and "gloire", of a society whose modus operandi is "plaire"; and the practical application of their casuistry has done away with the love of God, the need for a Redeemer and both natural and divine justice, encouraging pride, ambition, murder, lying, conceit, envy, immodesty and every physical excess.

### Conclusion

N.P. Williams describes the Reformation as "a great

uprising of the 'twice-born' genius and temperament against a religious system which had, consciously or unconsciously, become adapted in the main to the spiritual needs of the 'once-born' man, and indeed of the 'once-born' man in his least aspiring and most easy-going mood"<sup>171</sup>. Jansenism may be regarded, therefore, as a reflection of this movement and the Jansenist conflict with the Jesuits as simply a part of the on-going struggle for supremacy, within the Church, between these two traditions<sup>172</sup>. Elsewhere, Williams defines these two types and their doctrines. "If the 'twice-born' genius inevitably tends to conceive grace as power, it is no less true that the 'once-born' tends to identify it with intellectual Instruction or Illumination"<sup>173</sup>. Officially, the Augustinian doctrine was that sanctioned by the Church, as Pascal himself points out, and the tenuous foothold of the Jesuit doctrine rested only upon the refutation of Lutheranism at the Council of Trent. Clearly the Jesuits' efforts to attain orthodoxy by the tacit consent of the Church to their teaching were greatly enhanced by the prestige gained in their activities as educators and confessors of the King and the aristocracy.

The Jansenists called for a return to the purity of the Gospel teaching and the Augustinian doctrine, untainted by Renaissance influences, and clearly saw themselves as disciples raised up by grace to defend an "efficacious grace" and the concept of the Church as the Body of Christ, a role in which the Thomists had failed. The Provinciales attempt publicly to discredit a Society which the Jansenists believed threatened the very Church itself, by dispensing

with man's supernatural goal and the supernatural grace accruing from Christ's death which the Christian needed to achieve it, replacing that with a purely natural ethic subject to the choice of the human will.

The theological aspect of the Provinciales is concerned with proving Jansenist orthodoxy, first with an appeal to the Fathers of the Western tradition, and secondly by establishing identification with the Thomist doctrine, which is in line with the continuous tradition of the Christian Church. In the first three letters Pascal demonstrates, therefore, that the "sufficient grace" of the Thomists is, in fact, not sufficient except in a political sense, and that, with the Jansenists, they uphold the Augustinian "efficacious grace". He later makes increasing appeals to the authority of St. Thomas, and in the eighteenth letter establishes a total equivalence between the Jansenist and Thomist doctrines, by adopting the very modifications the Thomists had introduced to avoid the stigma of Calvinism, namely, the ability of the will to resist even "efficacious grace", and God's universal will to salvation.

There seems no evidence that this indicates a move by Pascal in the direction of humanism and away from Jansenism and Port-Royal, whose doctrine and discipline he passionately defends throughout the letters. That he was temperamentally suited to their doctrine and ascetic life-style is very evident in the ninth letter. Moreover, his protestations that he was not of Port-Royal seem designed to stress the loyalty of himself and all Jansenists only to God, and to show that each is under the rule of charity, and follows this in the dictates of conscience, while the Jesuits'

allegiance is to their Order, where ambition and honour, the idols of the worldly, are worshipped in its glorification, in direct contradiction to their avowed aim<sup>174</sup>.

As in theology, so in morality, only grace, for Pascal, makes the Christian life possible, for it is necessary to understand Revelation and draw the will by the "delectatio victrix" to God, his supernatural end. The Port-Royal ethic is embodied in Augustine's conception of the two societies, the city of God and the world of the Devil, the one using temporal goods and loving God, and the other reversing this order. The citizens of the city of God are the elect, the members of the Body of Christ, and it is in their relation to him through the life and sacraments of the Church, and in the practical application of his law, that their morality consists. The role of the Church in the Jansenist view is to show people both their sins and the physician who can heal them, to teach them to desire spiritual health and to pray that God will grant it. Their belief that only Christ bridged the gap between man and God, and that there is no evidence of God in the natural sphere, meant that the grace of Christ is the only source of salvation, turning man from the love of creatures to the love of God, his true end, and thus raising him to the order of charity. Only the Church, through the sacraments, and the teaching of Scripture and in the Fathers, mediates this grace; outside it there is no salvation, no divine truth nor any saving knowledge of God. Since the Fall and the corruption of the will, the latter is inevitably under the domination either of concupiscence or of efficacious grace. The sins of ignorance or surprise, which Pascal insists must

be culpable, are evidence for him of the choices made by wills clearly deprived of grace. The law and reason are sufficient for the natural goodness and justice of the pagans, for scientific and mathematical truth, but useless for salvation.

The Jansenists believed that members of the Body of Christ continued Christ's suffering in the world providing a continuing source of grace, so that purity, austerity, true piety, and conforming their lives to that of Christ, were the conditions for its bestowal. Pride, the making of self the centre of existence instead of God, must be continually repressed, while sincerity and humility always demonstrate the absolute dependence upon God which is vital for a continuous infusion of divine grace. The attitude of fear and love which Pascal believes the Christian must always have before God, together with the rigorism of the Jansenist life-style, reflect the feeling of "awe" in the face of the transcendent God, experienced by the "twice-born" personality.

Pascal stresses the essentially lawful and loyal attitude expected of the Christian in the secular society, and the strict obedience to the law and state which he believed were ordained by God. There can be no conflict between natural truth, morality and justice and their divine counterparts, which the former merely reflect.

In their adoption of a purely natural ethic based on reason, and with their doctrine of a "sufficient grace" given to all men, the Jesuits, in Pascal's view, have gone far behind Pelagianism, or even the purely natural ethic of Aristotle and of the writers of antiquity. They have over-



thrown Christendom itself. He accuses them, in their development of probabilism, of abandoning the true law of the Gospel and even the Decalogue, by introducing principles which accommodate the current worldly values of the aristocracy whom the Jesuits wish to bring into the Church by a painless conversion, requiring neither renunciation of the world nor love of God. Natural regret, rather than true sincerity, humility and sorrow, suffices for absolution; piety has become mechanistic and a mere lip service; truth has been degraded by blatantly condoning slander, hypocrisy and lying; and justice bears no relation even to the natural law, let alone to divine justice thus undermining the civil order. The Jesuits openly encourage pride, ambition, avarice, sloth and other sins deplored by Scripture and tradition; whereas the spiritual discipline encouraged at Port-Royal has love of God to determine the rule of conduct and has purity of life to confirm faith.

In their adoption of the Molinist doctrine of grace, the Jesuits, like the whole of the "once-born" tradition of the Church, were clearly attempting to give man some scope for human effort and free choice in the work of salvation, without which there can clearly be no human merit or moral growth. While admitting that probabilism became the watchword of the Society, H.F. Stewart<sup>175</sup> nevertheless suggests that, in the Provinciales, Pascal is less than fair to the Jesuits<sup>176</sup> in his attack upon their casuistry and upon the moral laxity he believed it encouraged and condoned. Yet Pascal does establish a very convincing correlation between the Jesuits' methods of proselytising at home and abroad, accommodating the "gods" of each society, which tends to

confirm the truth of his accusations. Krailsheimer's analysis of the society of the time confirms that "honneur" and "gloire" had, indeed, replaced God as the true end of man in the lives of the aristocratic and worldly, and makes it plain that Descartes' mechanistic view of the world was reflected in an outward conformity to Church and state, with the individual "moi" as the true axis of human existence. The deliberations of reason replaced the objective moral standards of Christ as the sole authority in Christian morality, dispensing with the grace of Christ, so that the choice of the human will, following the deliberations of reason, became sovereign in the matter of predestination.

De Lubac confirms Pascal's accusations that the Jesuit order had passed from a Christian humanism towards a purely natural ethic, by banishing God and the supernatural to the sphere of the miraculous only, and by assimilating into their doctrine the presuppositions of the current social climate.

Pascal's sincerity in the Provinciales is evident, and his claim that he has been factually correct in the transcription of texts from the Jesuit casuists is endorsed by many commentators<sup>177</sup>, but his own view of what is true doctrine and true morality must be assessed in the light of his ascetic temperament and conversion experience. As Gilson observes, Augustine's own doctrine of grace was a "metaphysics of inner experience"<sup>178</sup>, and N.P. Williams points out that "man's conclusions in these matters are apt to be determined by their temperaments, and that the doctrinal schemes which they construct are, in the language of modern psychology, "rationalizations", intellectual façades,

concealing one or other of the two great types of emotional religious experience"<sup>179</sup>.

Pascal's own experience impelled him to attribute every movement of the will in the direction of the good to the gift of divine grace; yet the same ambivalent attitude to the value of human responsibility and effort in the work of salvation is evident here, as in the Ecrits and the Pensées. Underlying the whole of Pascal's attack on the Jesuit casuistry is the assumption that man can, in fact, choose to renounce pride, ambition, the pleasure of the world, and adopt an inward disposition of sincerity and humility before God; and that he can espouse a morality based upon the Christian ethic, and upon love of God and neighbour, simply by the right use of reason and the free choice of a will unaided by the irresistible force of the "delectatio victrix". In Pascal's challenge to the Jesuits in the fourteenth letter, the Jesuits are confronted by a straightforward choice of accepting or rejecting the moral rule to which Christ pointed them in the Gospels.

Car enfin, mes Pères, pour qui voulez-vous qu'on vous prenne: pour des enfants de l'Évangile, ou pour des ennemis de l'Évangile? On ne peut être que d'un parti ou de l'autre, il n'y a point de milieu. "Qui n'est point avec Jésus-Christ, est contre lui"<sup>180</sup>.

This ambivalence is particularly clear in Pascal's denunciation of the Jesuits' attitude to Confession and Penitence, where true contrition and love of God is the condition for leading a truly moral life. As John Oman states, "In His presence men realize that they are of unclean lips and dwell amid a people of unclean lips, even as the prophet did who saw God in His temple, because, in the

presence of Christ, penitence and the vision of God are one inseparable experience"<sup>181</sup>. Neither Chevalier, who interpreted this ambivalence as evidence of a move towards humanism, nor Laporte, appears adequately to explain a phenomenon characteristic not only of Pascal but arguably of all the Fathers of the Western Tradition from the time of St. Paul. It is to their authority that Pascal appeals. The evidence of the Provinciales adds weight, then, to the view that the holding of such irreconcilable beliefs by such religious temperaments is more adequately accounted for in psychological terms, and that the doctrine of Pascal is attributable to the authoritarian tendencies of the "twice-born" religious temperament<sup>182</sup>.

Pascal, therefore, ignores his own clear-cut distinction between the roles of revelation and reason by making reason the arbiter of religious truth and of true morality, a reversal of which he accuses the Jesuits in the fourth letter. Throughout the whole of the Provinciales it is to the "sens commun" or, by implication, to the moral consciousness of his readers, presumably not touched by grace and even perhaps dedicated to worldly values, that Pascal appeals to determine not only the authenticity of religious truth in the respective doctrines, but true morality and justice as these are seen to inform the lives of the community of Port-Royal and of the Jesuit flock. When Pascal states in the eighteenth letter that Revelation and reason must not conflict, and that human morality and justice must bear an analogical relationship to their divine counterparts, he is affirming the role of reason as arbiter of supernatural

truth.

Pascal, in fact, applies his own scientific method for the verification of an hypothesis to the field of religious truth, by looking to its practical application, to the facts of experience, to establish its truth. Hastings Rashdall endorses this method, and insists that reason cannot abdicate its role, for "We cannot pronounce on the authority justly to be claimed by the teaching of Jesus till we have examined what that teaching is, and asked how far it appeals to our moral consciousness"<sup>183</sup>. However vehemently Pascal affirms, in the Provinciales, that only those touched by grace can know the truth, and practise true Christian virtue based on love of God, his "involuntary" intention is clearly to restore his readers to their true axis, God himself, by acknowledging in sincerity and humility the witness of His reality in the lives of devout Christians and in the teaching of Christ. Rashdall argues that the moral influence which Christ exerts consists in "supplying an example which makes men more willing to do what their own Consciences enjoin"<sup>184</sup>. It is on just such an ability in man to recognize the good through the "sens commun", and to respond to its call by the choice of the free will, that the writing of the Provinciales was founded.

NOTES

## CHAPTER IV

1. cf. Gouhier's analysis of the Mémorial on pp.42-49.
2. cf. "Pari" fragment L418, B233 and pages 270-273.
3. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, pp.161-263; Bénichou, Morales de Grand Siècle, pp.75-96 and 112-130; Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire pp.99-128; A. Krailsheimer, Studies in Self-Interest (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1962), pp.98-102; Stewart, Introduction to Les Lettres Provinciales, pp. XIII-XXXVII.
4. see pages 97-99.
5. Stewart, Introduction to Les Lettres Provinciales, p.XIX.
6. Williams, The Grace of God, pp.106-107.
7. The "sufficient" grace of Molina is the "grace actuelle" of the IV<sup>e</sup> Provinciale.
8. See II<sup>e</sup> Provinciale, O.C.p.376.
9. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, p.93.
10. *ibid.*, p.117.
11. O.C., p.378 "des disciples intrepides".
12. Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, p.107.
13. O.C., p.355.
14. Bénichou, Morales du Grand Siècle, pp.80-81.
15. O.C., p.372..
16. see pages 144-150.
17. Sellier, Pascal et Saint Augustin, pp.291-293.
18. O.C., p.382.
19. O.C., p.374.
20. see page 137.
21. O.C., p.374.
22. O.C., p.373.
23. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, p.7.
24. O.C., p.376.

25. O.c., p.313. cf. Williams, The Grace of God, pp.30-31.
26. O.C., p.376.
27. O.C., p.375.
28. O.C., p.438. cf. pages 274-276.
29. O.c., p.454.
30. O.C., p.462.
31. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, pp.39-41.
32. O.C., p.462 "par sa propre nature".
33. see pages 18-19.
34. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française aux XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.95.
35. O.C., p.462.
36. see pages 18-19.
37. O.C., p.462.
38. O.C., p.462. Sellier in Pascal et Saint Augustin, pp.347-348 notes the close identification of Pascal's thought with that of Augustine. "Pascal rejoint l'inspiration profonde de l'augustinisme authentique...".
39. cf. Sur la Conversion du Pécheur, O.C., p.291. "Elle s'anéantit en sa présence et ne pouvant former d'elle-même une idée assez basse, ni en concevoir une assez relevée de ce bien souverain", and see pages 26-29.
40. see Otto, The Idea of the Holy, p.89.
41. *ibid*, pp.87-88.
42. O.C., p.462.
43. O.C., p.463.
44. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.95. This is precisely Laporte's view.
45. Stewart, Chevalier, Strowski, Cagnet.
46. Sellier, Pascal et Saint Augustin, p.338.
47. *ibid*, p.293.
48. Stewart, Les Lettres Provinciales, p.329, note to page 233.
49. F. Strowski in Pascal et son Temps vol.III, p.141 strongly denies the obviously political motivation

which was responsible for Pascal's gradual alignment with Thomism. "Ce ne fut donc pas pour les besoins de la cause et par une sorte d'hypocrisie intellectuelle que Pascal contredit dans la dix-septième et la dix-huitième Provinciale les railleries et les invectives de la première, de la deuxième et de la quatrième Provinciale".

50. Chevalier, Pascal, p.109.
51. *ibid.*, p.300, note 3.
52. cf. L931, B550.
53. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.159.
54. O.C., p.378.
55. O.C., p.454. cf. VI<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.268.
56. O.C., p.455.
57. O.C., p.436. cf. L418, B233.
58. L308, B793.
59. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.67-72.
60. Copleston, A History of Philosophy, Vol.II, p.82 "The ethic of Augustine is, then, primarily an ethic of love...".
61. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.69 cf. L513, B4.
62. Bénichou, Morales du Grand Siècle, p.89.
63. O.C., p.385.
64. see Lettre à Mme Périer (Nov. 1648), O.C., pp.273-275.
65. cf. Prière pour demander à Dieu le bon usage des maladies, XIV, O.C., p.365.
66. J. Laporte, La Doctrine de Port-Royal, Tome II, vol.II, La Morale (Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1951), p.138.
67. O.C., p.440.
68. cf. L704, B583.
69. O.C., p.389.
70. O.C., p.439.
71. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, pp.269-286. Campbell points out that if man's nature is essentially evil without grace, moral responsibility is a delusion. Remorse and moral scruples, however, deny this. "The



possibility of conflict between desire and duty is the precondition of his being either morally good or morally bad" (p.279). see also C.C.J. Webb, Problems in the Relation of God and Man, p.106. "But responsibility for an act does imply that it was the agent's own act.... This is necessarily so if remorse is to be anything but sheer illusion".

72. O.C., p.413.
73. O.C., p.438.
74. see I. Trethowan, Absolute Value (London, George Allen and Unwin, 1970), pp.210-12, for a discussion of the relation between conscience and authority. The writer states: "When it is a matter of acknowledging obligation, then the working of conscience is, I should say, simply the recognition of God's voice" (p.210).
75. Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, pp.117-118 and cf. Bénichou, Morales du Grand Siècle, pp.116-118.
76. cf. Traité du Vide, O.C., p.230. Also Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, p.33. The development of the Augustinian distinction here would seem to refute any suggestion of an evolution away from a strict Jansenism.
77. cf. Chevalier, Pascal, p.203. Laporte in Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.147-158, rejects this view.
78. O.C., p.467.
79. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, p.32.
80. E. Gilson, A History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages (London, Sheed and Ward, 1955), p.77.
81. Strowski, Pascal et son Temps, vol.III, p.56.
82. cf. Le Mystère de Jésus, O.C., p.620.
83. L84, B79.
84. Krailsheimer, Studies in Self-Interest, p.89.
85. de Lubac, Augustinianism and Modern Theology, pp.238-239.
86. O.C., p.382.
87. *ibid.*
88. see Strowski, Pascal et son Temps, vol.III, p.82.
89. see pages 270-271.
90. cf. Copleston, Aquinas, p.199. "But if an act is not deliberate ... (such as stroking the beard or moving a hand or foot), it is not properly speaking a human or moral act .... And so it will be indifferent, that

is, outside the class of moral acts".

91. O.C., p.385.
92. cf. Copleston, Aquinas, p.205. Both Aristotle and Aquinas maintained that the passions are neither morally good nor morally bad, and can be spoken of as good or bad in a moral sense only when they are considered in relation to the human reason and will.
93. O.C., p.386.
94. O.C., p.383.
95. O.C., p.384.
96. Laporte, La Doctrine de Port-Royal, Tome II, vol.I, La Doctrine de la Grâce, p.230.
97. Williams, The Grace of God, p.30. Reason under the rule of a concupiscent will is capable only of acts of natural virtue, which cannot merit salvation.
98. O.C., p.385.
99. see page 72 and cf. VI Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., pp.268-269.
100. O.C., p.384.
101. Strowski, Pascal et son Temps, Vol.III, p.88. As Delumeau observes in Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire p.121 Jansenism itself was "both old-fashioned and new-fangled".
102. Stewart, Les Lettres Provinciales, pp.XXVI-XXXVI.
103. O.C., p.384.
104. O.C., p.387.
105. O.C., p.389.
106. O.C., pp.389-390.
107. O.C., p.388.
108. Krailsheimer, Studies in Self-Interest, p.101 and Miel, Pascal and Theology, p.54.
109. see pages 21-23 for an account of the Augustinian doctrine of the Mystical Body and Mersch in Le Corps Mystique du Christ, tome II, pp.301-343 for an interpretation of this doctrine in seventeenth century France.
110. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, p.13.
111. O.C., p.388.
112. cf. L597, B455.

113. Krailsheimer, Studies in Self-Interest pp.43-44.
114. O.C., p.388.
115. see Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.16.
116. O.C., p.390. cf. I Provinciale, p.372 where Pascal underlines the Jansenist view that on a matter of "fait" reason does not need the enlightenment of grace as it would in deciding a moral question, reflecting the fundamental distinction which underpins their moral theology - "... ma conscience n'est pas interes-sée...".
117. O.C., p.390.
118. O.C., p.391.
119. XIII Provinciale, O.C., p.435.
120. See Bénichou, Morales du Grand Siècle, p.123. "D'ailleurs la monarchie elle-même ne pouvait regarder d'un oeil favorable le scandale des maximes jésuitiques: le relâchement de la conscience risquait à la fin de ruiner l'obéissance elle-même", also Delumeau in Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, pp.116-118 discusses the threat to the state posed by the pessimism, other-word-liness, moral relativism and criticism of the law and authority of the Jansenists, and publicly proclaimed in the Pensées.
121. O.C., p.393.
122. II<sup>e</sup> Provinciale, O.C., p.376.
123. see pages 22-23.
124. Laporte, La Doctrine de Port-Royal, Tome II, vol.II, La Morale, p.19.
125. Miel, Pascal and Theology, p.127.
126. Krailsheimer, Studies in Self-Interest, p.103.
127. Stewart, Lettres Provinciales, p.275, note to page 68.
128. O.C., p.402. Laporte in Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.113 defines casuistry as "l'art de chicaner avec Dieu". He underlines the opposition existing between Jesuit Direction of Intention and the Augustinian doctrine in which a sincere intention to act is never separated from the act itself. Charity for Augustine, "Etant avant tout bonne volonté, si elle ne réalise pas toujours le plus parfait, elle fait toujours de son mieux relativement au degré de ses forces présentes".
129. O.C., p.428.
130. O.C., p.403.

131. O.C., p.433. In affirming here that an analogical relationship must exist between the natural and divine concepts of justice, Pascal would seem to accord to such concepts an objective validity denied in the Augustinian distinction between nature and grace. As Otto observes in The Idea of the Holy, pp.140-141 though qualitatively different from their divine counterparts and serving only as ideograms, such concepts point to their completion in the divine absolutes. see also Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, pp.352-355.
132. O.C., p.435. see note 119 to this chapter.
133. XIV Provinciale.
134. O.C., p.438. see Bénichou, Morales du Grand Siècle, p.120. "Mais si le loyalisme politique des jansénistes n'est pas douteux, il n'est pas douteux non plus que leurs dispositions générales d'esprit, leur façon de concevoir la discipline et l'obéissance, détonnaient dans la France de Richelieu et de Louis XIV". see also p.126.
135. O.C., p.439.
136. *ibid.* see pages 22-23.
137. O.C., p.440 cf. III Lettre à Mme Perier O.C. pp.272-273 in which Pascal demonstrates the absolute inability in man to make such a choice without the enlightenment of "une lumière surnaturelle".
138. O.C., p.407.
139. O.C., p.408.
140. see pages 76-80.
141. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, pp.94 and 143-152..
142. O.C., p.409 Mersch in Le Corps Mystique du Christ, tome II, p.321 describes the rather grim rigorism which characterized the seventeenth century Jansenists.
143. Williams, The Grace of God, p.84 cf. Oman, Grace and Personality, p.36.
144. see Copleston, Aquinas, pp.181, 196, 212.
145. In view of the absolute necessity of grace Laporte's claim in Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.112 seems somewhat paradoxical. "La vraie charité n'est ni une extase, ni une attitude. Elle est une disposition intérieure de la volonté: elle consiste dans la ferme et constante résolution de nous conformer en tout aux commandements de Dieu parce qu'ils viennent de Lui...". This is precisely the commitment Pascal is demanding of the Jesuits in the Provinciales.

146. O.C., p.410.
147. O.C., p.413.
148. O.C., p.412.
149. O.C., p.413. Krailsheimer in Studies in Self-Interest, p.113 states: "It is hardly going too far to say that this habit of treating absolution as a defence brief eventually became a game like the rest of the social round ... and Port Royal, as well as many who stopped well short of Jansenism, were both indignant and alarmed at this influential debasement of the spiritual currency".
150. O.C., p.414.
151. O.C., p.418. The mechanistic and superstitious observance of the Sacraments by the Jesuit followers constituted a denial of the humility which Augustine proved in his own experience to be the only way to God. Gilson in The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, p.234 writes: "The galling restraint imposed on reason by its surrender to faith and on the will by its surrender to grace is the very means God uses to call us back to a sense of our dependence on Him". cf. p.31.
152. O.C., p.418.
153. *ibid.*
154. H. Rashdall in Christus in Ecclesia (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clarke, 1904), p.87 writes, "when the material symbol is isolated from the words and ideas, the prayers and the instructions, the whole religious service of which it forms a part and from which it derives all its meaning - then begins the corruption which ends (in its extreme forms) in degrading the social sacrament into the magic of the medicine man.
155. see page 17 for a description of the centrality of Christ's death as sole source of Atonement in Augustinian theology.
156. cf. IV<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.267 and L228, B751.
157. Mersch in Le Corps Mystique du Christ, tome II, p.325 observes that Père Charles de Condren exemplified this veneration of the Eucharist in the highest degree. "La croix et la messe, plutôt que la personne même de l'Homme-Dieu, sont donc l'essence du christianisme, car c'est en eux que se trouve, en la totalité de son acte, la personne de l'Homme-Dieu".
158. O.C., p.451.
159. *ibid.*
160. O.C., p.441.

161. O.C., p.454.
162. O.C., p.455.
163. O.C., p.453.
164. Chevalier, Pascal, p.38. cf. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine pp.31 and 123-124. For Augustine illumination of the intellect with understanding and truth is subject to purification of body and soul. and Mme Périer, Vie de Blaise Pascal in Pensées et Opuscules, ed. Brunschvicg, pp.15-40.
165. cf. Mémorial, L913 and Sur la Conversion du Pécheur, O.C., pp.290-291.
166. O.C., p.419.
167. cf. Mme Périer, Vie de Blaise Pascal in Pensées et Opuscules, ed. Brunschvicg, pp.30-31.
168. O.C., p.452.
169. O.C., p.468.
170. O.C., p.423.
171. Williams, The Grace of God, p.84.
172. For a discussion of the two traditions, see page see also Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought which presents an analysis sympathetic to the Greek tradition. R. Niebuhr in The Nature and Destiny of Man 2 vols (New York, Charles Scribner's Son, 1964) gives a modern interpretation of Augustinianism in terms of political theory. Oman in The Natural and the Supernatural presents a concept of the working of grace in which the natural and supernatural, i.e. the rational and non-rational elements of religious consciousness are admirably reconciled and interdependent.
173. Williams, The Grace of God, p.11.
174. see Krailsheimer, Studies in Self-Interest, p.102. The writer claims "that within the society discipline remained almost ferociously strict, but in dealing with their noble and wealthy clientèle the Jesuits displayed an attitude so sweetly reasonable and socially accommodating that no one would be frightened away".
175. Stewart B. Pascal, Les Lettres Provinciales, pp.XXXII-XXXIV.
176. see also Strowski, Pascal et son Temps vol.III, p.123.
177. Strowski, Cagnet, Stewart.
178. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine p.240.

179. Williams, The Grace of God, p.91. Pascal's (and Augustine's) appeal throughout the work to the facts of experience as evidence of Jesuit errancy and Jansenist orthodoxy reflects this temperamental and experiential bias. Campbell in On Selfhood and Godhood, pp.279-280 finds, in fact, that the "facts" deny the validity of a natural depravity doctrine just as they did for the Eastern Fathers. see also on this topic Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, pp.12-15.
180. O.C., p.439.
181. Oman, Grace and Personality, p.200.
182. see pages 26-29.
183. Rashdall, Conscience and Christ (London, Duckworth, 1933), pp.30-31. Tennant in Philosophical Theology, pp.225-226 argues that unless the truth of Scripture is found by personal insight and response, "rather than by authoritative declarations as to biblical inspiration: and unless theological and religious truth is thus found, personally discerned, and appropriated, it scarcely is truth for us, i.e. of spiritual value to us".
184. Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, p.22.

## CHAPTER V

## PENSEES

In view of the insistence with which Pascal reiterates in the Ecrits sur la Grâce and Provinciales the absolute necessity of the gift of efficacious grace for man even to take the first tentative step in the search for God or to live the truly moral life, the undertaking of an apology for the Christian religion seems somewhat incomprehensible. If one adds the small and fixed number of the elect arbitrarily chosen by God from the "massa damnata" after the Fall, the complete sovereignty of the divine will in initiating, completing and persevering in the acts which merit salvation, and the uncertainty in which the final discernment of the elect is shrouded, Pascal's intention in writing the Pensées becomes even more inexplicable. The harsh and uncompromising doctrine of the Ecrits, which, if published in Pascal's lifetime, would, in the opinion of Jean Steinmann<sup>1</sup>, have invoked a condemnation similar to that given the works of Jansen and Arnauld, and would seem to preclude any possibility of persuading men to turn to God of their own volition, though given more muted expression in the Pensées and subordinated to the apologetic purpose, is in no way mitigated.

Yet, as Laporte so convincingly demonstrates<sup>2</sup>, both theology and methodology show a faithful conformity with those of Augustine, founded upon the important distinction between the truths of the supernatural and natural orders, and the vehicles by which each is appropriated, namely the authority of Christian tradition and reason. Nevertheless, inconsistencies similar to those of the Ecrits and Provinciales point to underlying assumptions of reason as



arbiter of religious truth and of the human will as capable of a free commitment to God, which conflict with the fundamental Augustinian presupposition.

Several themes and conclusions developed in the shorter works play an important role in the Pensées, reinforcing doctrinal presuppositions and contributing to the method.

#### The Doctrine of the Three Orders

The mathematical perspective which Pascal applied to the domain of theology clearly led to the codification and hardening of the Augustinian theology in the doctrine of the three orders,<sup>3</sup> which, by making absolute the distinction between nature and grace, intensified the inaccessibility of God at the natural level of the senses and intellect since it is only the heart touched by grace which can have a saving knowledge of God<sup>4</sup>. Pascal defines "corps", "esprit" and "charité" as three heterogenous and ascending orders of being, each defined by the end the members of a group pursue, the difference in kind precluding access from one to another.

De tous les corps ensemble on ne saurait en faire réussir une petite pensée. Cela est impossible et d'un autre ordre. De tous les corps et esprits on n'en saurait tirer un mouvement de vraie charité, <sup>5</sup> cela est impossible, et d'un autre ordre surnaturel.

Laporte defines the heart: "fond de la volonté, tréfonds de l'âme, où nous atteignons à la fois ce qu'il y a de plus essentiel en la nature, et ce par quoi la nature se rejoint et s'ouvre au surnaturel"<sup>6</sup>. The heart in Pascal, as in Scripture, denotes the most intimate part of our being<sup>7</sup>, the seat of the will and intellect, where grace operates the transition to the supernatural order by inclining the will to love God and the intellect to believe with a felt certainty and immediacy which reason cannot give<sup>8</sup>. It is

the "gouffre infini", the capacity in man for the infinite, satisfied only by absolute truth and goodness, God Himself, its natural goal<sup>9</sup>. The role of the heart is described in fragment L110, B282 where it can be seen to belong either to the "ordre des esprits", or the "ordre de charité". In the former it is "une sorte d'instinct intellectuel" which intuits the immediate principles (time, number, space, motion) "par sentiment", "d'une vue", whose extreme clarity is more convincing than rational demonstration<sup>10</sup>, and from which all our reasoning proceeds.

Car les connaissances des premiers principes: espace, temps, mouvement, nombres, sont aussi fermes qu'aucune de celles que nos raisonnements nous donnent et c'est sur ces connaissances du coeur et de l'instinct qu'il faut que la raison s'appuie et qu'elle y fonde tout son discours.... Les principes se sentent, les propositions se concluent et le tout avec certitude quoique par différentes voies<sup>11</sup>.

Chevalier distinguishes between "raison" or pure thought which, in the Traité du Vide<sup>12</sup> tends to the infinite, and "raisonnement", which Pascal opposes to "coeur", "cette faculté aux vues lentes et dures, qui veut tout prouver, jusqu'aux principes, qui ne comprend rien aux choses de finesse ou de sentiment, parce qu'elle veut toujours procéder par démonstration"<sup>13</sup>. It places man above the level of the sensory world and constitutes his greatness<sup>14</sup>, but knowledge of God from reason leads only to deism<sup>15</sup>, and such knowledge is sterile and useless for salvation. A true Christian believes by intuition of the heart<sup>16</sup>, the gift of God which has united him with Christ and raised him to the order of charity.

Et c'est pourquoi ceux à qui Dieu a donné la religion par sentiment de coeur sont bienheureux et bien légitimement persuadés, mais ceux qui ne l'ont pas nous ne pouvons la [leur] donner que par

raisonnement, en attendant que Dieu la leur donne par sentiment de coeur, sans quoi la foi n'est qu'humaine et inutile pour le salut<sup>17</sup>.

The absolute discontinuity in Pascal between the natural and the supernatural spheres implies the rejection of all natural theology, including the function of reason as arbiter of religious belief. The intellect must first be enlightened by divine grace in order to understand Revelation, the only authority in religion and source of divine knowledge<sup>18</sup>.

Moreover, unlike Augustine<sup>19</sup> who believed that evidence of God could be perceived in his creation, Pascal rejected any suggestion of access to God through the natural world. "Si on vous unit à Dieu c'est par grâce, non par nature"<sup>20</sup>. The theme of the "Dieu caché" underlines the function of the natural sphere as the instrument of predestination, the action of grace illuminating the intellect of the elect so that they can perceive the qualitative difference between the unreal, transitory, material world and the truly real, eternal kingdom of God<sup>21</sup>, and recognize the divine self-revelation in Revelation and the world by means of which they are enabled to attain their supernatural goal<sup>22</sup>.

It is the grace of Christ, the "Homme-Dieu"<sup>23</sup>, which makes access to the supernatural order of charity possible for only he bridged the gulf between man and God, uniting them in his two natures, human and divine.

...la religion chrétienne, qui consiste proprement au mystère du Rédempteur, qui unissant en lui les deux natures, humaine et divine, a retiré les hommes de la corruption du péché pour les réconcilier à Dieu en sa personne divine<sup>24</sup>.

Nous ne connaissons Dieu que par Jésus-Christ. Sans ce médiateur est ôtée toute communication avec Dieu<sup>25</sup>.

In the perspective of the infinite all finites are equal,

so that, while man considered according to his end may be judged "grand et incomparable", in the light of the supernatural order he is "abject et vil"<sup>26</sup>.

...le fini s'anéantit en présence de l'infini et devient un pur néant. Ainsi notre esprit devant Dieu, ainsi notre justice devant la justice divine. Il n'y a pas si grande disproportion entre notre justice et celle de Dieu qu'entre l'unité et l'infini<sup>27</sup>.

Conversely, to those who have been raised to the order of charity evidence of God's existence now shows that everything is his handwork.

...car il est certain que ceux qui ont la foi vive dedans le cœur voient incontinent que tout ce qui est n'est autre chose que l'ouvrage du Dieu qu'ils adorent<sup>28</sup>.

K.E. Kirk<sup>29</sup> points out that the Platonic categories of Augustine's thought enhanced the relative worthlessness, the vain and illusory character of the things of this world and the powerlessness of man in the face of an omnipotent God. Pascal adopts the Platonic imagery of Augustine to make men aware of the limits of their powers and the need for dependence, and to establish the disproportion between supernatural truth, justice and goodness and those of the natural sphere. Moreover, the ascetic practices and self-annihilation to which Platonism gave rise as a means of releasing the soul from the prison-house of the body were similarly followed by Pascal to ensure personal salvation<sup>30</sup>.

Yet, in the Pensées, there appears at times to be a definite change of emphasis from the unequivocally determinist stance of the Ecrits sur la Grâce, which would surely have made the apology self-defeating, to one in which man does indeed have a role to play in preparing himself for the reception of grace. In describing the three states

of man in the Ecrits sur la Grâce, Pascal stresses the absolute sovereignty of God's will in determining the membership of each group.

Et partant qu'il y a trois sortes d'hommes: les uns qui ne viennent jamais à la foi; les autres qui y viennent et qui, ne persévérant pas, meurent dans le péché mortel; et les derniers qui viennent à la foi et y persévèrent dans la charité jusqu'à la mort. Jésus-Christ n'a point eu de volonté absolue que les premiers reçussent aucune grâce par sa mort, puisqu'ils n'en ont point en effect reçu.

Il a voulu racheter les seconds; il leur a donné des grâces qui les eussent conduits au salut, s'ils en eussent bien usé, mais il ne leur a pas voulu donner cette grâce singulière de la persévérance, sans laquelle on n'en use jamais bien.

Mais pour les derniers, Jésus-Christ a voulu absolument leur salut, et il les y conduit par des moyens certains et infaillibles<sup>31</sup>.

In the Pensées however human reason seems to be responsible, at least in some degree, for the classification to which a man belongs.

Il n'y a que trois sortes de personnes: les uns qui servent Dieu l'ayant trouvé, les autres qui s'emploient à le chercher ne l'ayant pas trouvé, les autres qui vivent sans le chercher ni l'avoir trouvé. Les premiers sont raisonnables et heureux, les derniers sont fous et malheureux. Ceux du milieu sont malheureux et raisonnables<sup>32</sup>.

The right use of reason appears to be the criterion by which the latter are judged, yet Pascal explains that the indifference displayed by this last group is so unnatural and incomprehensible that it must have an omnipotent power as cause, namely, the concupiscence resulting from God's abandonment of man after the Fall. They are "fous et malheureux" because of "un enchantement incompréhensible, et un assoupissement surnaturel qui marque une force toute-puissante qui la cause"<sup>33</sup>. Later in the same fragment, however, he shows a scarcely concealed contempt for those same men who apparently wilfully disregard their fate instead of seeking

God.

Mais pour ceux qui vivent sans le connaître et sans le chercher, ils se jugent eux-mêmes si peu dignes de leur soin, qu'ils ne sont pas dignes du soin des autres et qu'il faut avoir toute la charité de la religion qu'ils méprisent pour ne les pas mépriser jusqu'à les abandonner dans leur folie.

The irrationality of Pascal's thinking clearly reflects that of Augustine who, as N.P. Williams observes, "whether consciously or not, is really trying to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds"<sup>34</sup>, in his insistence upon man's responsibility for sin and need for an irresistible grace to avoid it.

#### Pascal's Conversion Experience

The key to Pascal's ambivalent attitude to man's role in the redemptive process, which gives rise to such inconsistencies throughout the Pensées, can perhaps be found in his own conversion experience recorded in the Mémorial<sup>35</sup>, where insights gained at the experiential level, conflict with the interpretation of these in dogmatic form. As Gouhier<sup>36</sup> points out, Pascal's conversion was a gradual one preceded by a period of spiritual barrenness and despair, during which he turned to the Bible and devoted himself to intense study and reflection, in an effort to explain the paradox of human nature and find the way to personal salvation.

...je ne connais ni ma condition, ni mon devoir. Mon coeur tend tout entier à connaître où est le vrai bien, pour le suivre<sup>37</sup>.

This fragment indicates that he was concerned to determine the future direction of his life which clearly presented him with a choice between staying in the world or turning to the Church, through which the grace of redemption was mediated, and which in Pascal's understanding would imply the spiritual discipline of Port-Royal and Augustinianism<sup>38</sup>. The resolution

of this conflict was effected in the act of ascetic renunciation and surrender, during which Pascal experienced God as the source of personal redemption, forgiveness and grace, and exchanged despair for the joy and peace resulting from the assurance of divine adoption.

The conclusions drawn by Gouhier<sup>39</sup> from the Scriptural quotations in the Mémorial suggest that Pascal found confirmation, in the experience, of the basic presuppositions of the Augustinian teaching. It furnished conclusive proof that a saving knowledge of God results, not from the use of reason but from the divine self-disclosure ("Dieu d'Abraham, Dieu d'Isaac, Dieu de Jacob, non des philosophes et des savants"), and that the capacity in man for the apprehension of God is the heart, a matter of feeling ("sentiment"), and not a function of the intellect. The difference between a sterile deism and a response of love is clear in fragment L377, B280.

Qu'il y a loin de la connaissance de Dieu à l'aimer. Pascal believed that it was God in the person of Jesus Christ ("Dieu de Jésus-Christ") whom he had encountered, the mediator and only source of grace, that God is indeed hidden from the world, but is present to those who have received the gift of faith.

Père juste, le monde ne l'a point connu, mais je l'ai connu.

Pascal also concluded that the conditions for the reception of this grace and the attainment of eternal life were to be found in the Scriptures: a humble acknowledgement of the need for grace; an act of total surrender to the Church; renunciation of the world and absolute dependence on Christ.

Il ne se conserve que par les voies enseignées  
dans l'Évangile.

Renonciation totale et douce.  
Soumission totale à Jésus-Christ et à mon directeur.

Eternellement en joie pour un jour d'exercice sur  
la terre<sup>40</sup>.

The fulfilling of these conditions is clearly of vital importance since the obverse of the joy of election is a very real fear that it may be lost if God withdraws his grace.

The profoundly numinous quality of Pascal's conversion experience<sup>41</sup>, the feeling of spontaneous self-depreciation before the transcendent God, of deliverance resulting solely from an act of divine intervention, ("par sentiment de coeur")<sup>42</sup>, clearly reinforced his Augustinian view that salvation must be attributed wholly to God's merciful giving, thus limiting the possibility of human effort and response, and diminishing grace to a power arbitrarily bestowed. This "creature-consciousness" is described by Rudolph Otto<sup>43</sup> as "a felt submergence and annihilation over against the numen ... here impotence and there omnipotence; here the futility of one's own choice, there the will that ordains all and determines all". It is given very clear expression in fragment L199, B72 where the disproportion between man and God is vividly underlined, and fragment L378, B470 reflects the response such a feeling elicits.

La conversion véritable consiste à s'anéantir  
devant cet être universel ... à reconnaître qu'on  
ne peut rien sans lui et qu'on n'a rien mérité  
de lui que sa disgrâce.

Yet the valid insights into the nature of man's relation to God, gained from this experience and used by Pascal as a guide to lead others to God, seem to imply a very clearly defined human contribution which denies such complete passivity. He perceived that: there is a capacity in man for the experience of God and for responding to God's manifestation of Himself, and that such knowledge is grasped at



the intuitive level and cannot be proved by reason<sup>44</sup>; reason plays an important role as arbiter of religious truth;<sup>45</sup> an attitude of humility and sincerity is the prerequisite for the reception of the divine disclosure and pride precludes such an attitude<sup>46</sup>; such humility and a desire for the truth must be awakened in man, so that he is receptive to God's self-revelation<sup>47</sup>; the truth cannot be imposed upon him by force<sup>48</sup> but takes the form of an appeal, so that he will love it and freely choose it<sup>49</sup>. Conversion, therefore, involves the recognition and choice of God<sup>50</sup> as the meaning and end of existence and implies renunciation and reorientation of the will<sup>51</sup>, while the attainment of the vision of God depends upon the maintenance of the focus of the will in a close relationship with God<sup>52</sup>.

H. Bremond states in Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux en France,

Qui ne voit en effet que ce qu'il y a de plus original, de plus vivant, de plus fort dans l'apologétique des Pensées, de plus profond dans la vie intérieure de Pascal, respire, comme on disait alors, contre les dogmes de Jansénius<sup>53</sup>.

However, the narrow confines of the doctrine within which Augustine himself had given expression to the interpretation of such insights, after a similar conversion experience, limited the scope of the divine self-revelation only to such a feeling of election, and the human response solely to those marked down for salvation and always to the effect of grace. Just as the Ecrits sur la Grâce constituted a defence of Augustinianism as the true doctrine of the Church, so the Pensées are an apology for it as the way to salvation. Conversion, on this narrow view, therefore implies an experience of the twice-born type similar to that

of Pascal himself<sup>54</sup> and occurring in response to the same stimuli: the feeling of lostness and despair; conviction of sin and the need for divine grace; the joy of forgiveness and deliverance; and renunciation of the world and submission to the direction of Port-Royal<sup>55</sup>.

The gift of grace is thus dependent upon fulfilling certain conditions<sup>56</sup>, and the world and the body of elect become mutually exclusive groups, the latter characterized by a spiritual anxiety<sup>57</sup> which focused such attention upon attaining personal salvation (in Pascal leading to a type of rigorism)<sup>58</sup>, that self-interest appears to conflict with the sincere desire that others should share in their deliverance. This seems apparent in fragment L427, B194 where Pascal states that the Church obliges its members to regard all men until they die as capable of receiving grace and becoming more faithful than the justified who could at any time fall and be in need of a similar instrument of grace.

Pascal underlines the Augustinian view of election as mysterious and uncertain, dependent solely upon the will of God, when he states that all men must be shown their wretchedness but that redemption cannot be for all.

...il est juste que tous ceux qui sont en cet état le connaissent, et ceux qui s'y plaisent, et ceux qui s'y déplaisent, mais il n'est pas juste que tous voient la rédemption<sup>59</sup>.

Here salvation would appear to depend upon the acceptance of the Jansenist view of the human condition, but elsewhere he seems to betray a recognition of the true humility necessary for the ability to know God.

Mais pour ceux qui y apporteront une sincérité parfaite et un véritable désir de rencontrer la vérité, j'espère qu'ils auront satisfaction ...<sup>60</sup>.

The conflict between the insights of religious experience and

doctrinal affirmations gives rise to such inconsistencies throughout the Pensées; and a genuine desire, that those who seek God should experience Pascal's joy, is constantly negated by the arbitrary nature of election and the suspicion that the apology itself may even be founded on self-interest.

#### The Aim of the Apology

Pascal believed that the Church, Scripture, the sacraments (especially baptism)<sup>61</sup>, inspiration and prayer were the only means of mediating divine grace in the world.

Je te suis présent par ma parole dans l'Écriture,  
par mon esprit dans l'Église et par les  
inspirations, par ma puissance dans les prêtres,  
par ma prière dans les fidèles<sup>62</sup>.

Outside the Church, therefore, true goodness or justice cannot be found<sup>63</sup>, and truth apart from God is nothing but an image and an idol of charity<sup>64</sup>. Clearly Pascal sees his role in the Pensées as similar to that of a prophet calling Israel back from corruption and idolatry to worship the true God whom they have abandoned, offering, like Isaiah, God's mercy and forgiveness.

Si on se convertissait Dieu guérirait et pardonnerait<sup>65</sup>.

Pascal's challenge would appear to be directed not only at the agnostics whose social ideal was "honnêteté"<sup>66</sup>, but also at lax Catholics<sup>67</sup> whose worldly morality the Jesuits had accommodated in a Church which Pascal believed had become degenerate<sup>68</sup>, and he sought to persuade them to return to the authentic teaching and spirituality of the true Church. Just as nature is an image of grace, so the Jesuits were only an image of the Body of Christ on earth<sup>69</sup>. It seems clear in fragment L903, B851<sup>70</sup>, where he states that miracles are the supreme effects of grace, that Pascal interpreted the miracle

of the Holy Thorn as bestowing the seal of divine approval on Port-Royal as a source of grace and model of renewal and regeneration for the whole Church, just as Christ claimed his works to be proof of his divinity. The Jesuits are criticised for degrading the Church by granting absolution without demanding true penitence and purity of life, when God's forgiveness depends solely upon the state of the inward man<sup>71</sup>. Pascal accuses the Jesuits of reducing their "grâce suffisante" to a sort of magic adaptable to every kind of man and to every occasion, but in reality leading to hell.

...s'il y a des degrés pour descendre dans le néant  
[cette grâce suffisante] est maintenant au plus  
proche<sup>72</sup>.

According to Mme Périer<sup>73</sup> the apology was conceived as a direct result of the miraculous healing of his goddaughter<sup>74</sup>, and intended as his contribution to the work of the Church whose duty it was to mediate the grace of conversion in Revelation and in the life of charity<sup>75</sup>. As the instrument of grace therefore he seeks to arouse in men an awareness of their true condition, replacing the pride arising from self-love and self-sufficiency by a state of humility and penitence, the prerequisites for the recognition and choice of God as the true good.

Je voudrais donc porter l'homme à désirer d'en trouver, [la vérité], à être prêt et dégagé des passions, pour la suivre où il la trouvera, sachant combien sa connaissance s'est obscurcie par les passions; je voudrais bien qu'il hâit en soi la concupiscence qui le détermine d'elle-même, afin qu'elle ne l'aveuglât point pour faire son choix, et qu'elle ne l'arrêtât point quand il aura choisi<sup>76</sup>.

In fragment L12, B187 Pascal indicates that he intends to break down these barriers by showing men that religion is

not contrary to reason but worthy of reverence and respect, and also of love since it promises the true good.

Les hommes ont mépris pour la religion. Ils en ont haine et peur qu'elle soit vraie. Pour guérir cela il faut commencer par montrer que la religion n'est point contraire à la raison.

Vénéérable, en donner respect.

La rendre ensuite aimable, faire souhaiter aux bons qu'elle fût vraie et puis montrer qu'elle est vraie. Vénéérable parce qu'elle a bien connu l'homme.

Aimable parce qu'elle promet le vrai bien.

Pascal would seem to imply in this fragment that even without grace man is capable through the use of reason to recognize, love and choose the true good<sup>77</sup>, evaluate his true condition and the validity of the remedy offered; that reason, in fact, is the judge of supernatural truth. Moreover, the impatient tone of fragment L427, B194 indicates that Pascal, consciously or unconsciously, expects reasoned argument to convince others, however blinded by passions, to turn to the Scriptures and the Church to find God, and believes that their refusal to do so is the mark of a weak intellect.

Rien n'accuse davantage une extrême faiblesse d'esprit que de ne pas connaître quel est le malheur d'un homme sans Dieu; rien ne marque davantage une mauvaise disposition du coeur que de ne pas souhaiter la vérité des promesses éternelles; rien n'est plus lâche que de faire le brave contre Dieu<sup>78</sup>.

Again, those who, clearly deprived of grace, abandon the truth because of the greater attraction of self-interest are held responsible for their lapse and labelled "malins".

Les [malins] sont gens qui connaissent la vérité mais qui ne la soutiennent qu'autant que leur intérêt s'y reconte mais hors de là ils l'abandonnent<sup>79</sup>.

Ceux qui n'aiment pas la vérité prennent le prétexte de la contestation et de la multitude de ceux qui la nient, et ainsi leur erreur ne vient que de ce qu'ils n'aiment pas la vérité

ou la charité. Et ainsi ils ne s'en sont pas excusés<sup>80</sup>.

In Existentialism and Religious Belief, Roberts concludes that in Pascal's view a man can exclude himself from salvation and that it is the human will which determines man's fate, a view shared by other writers<sup>81</sup>.

Since the offer of fellowship can be actualized only through a human response of trust and love, it is a fact that man can exclude himself from salvation.... If some men separate themselves from Him eternally, this reflects the fact that it is only a living soul and not an automaton which can enter into salvation<sup>82</sup>.

This does not appear to be consistent with the sympathy Pascal shows to those who sincerely seek God but do not find Him. Pascal's Augustinianism requires that, because of the mystery of election the Church can, in fact, go only so far in the work of converting men, and is restricted to preparing them either for the reception of grace which is God's gift, reserved only for the elect, or for condemnation.

L'Eglise enseigne et Dieu inspire l'un et l'autre infailliblement. L'opération de l'Eglise ne sert qu'à préparer à la grâce, ou à la condamnation. Ce qu'elle fait suffit, pour condamner, non pour inspirer<sup>83</sup>.

Men cannot find the truth by their natural lights, for it is only grace which can deliver them from the concupiscence which blinds them and makes them follow self-interest.

"Prière pour demander à Dieu le bon usage des maladies"<sup>84</sup>

states unequivocally that surrender to the authority, rites and ascetic or charitable practices of the Church is useless unless the will receives the divine assistance of grace.

As Gouhier suggests<sup>85</sup>, the apology will act as a vehicle of self-revelation for the "Dieu caché", bringing to the elect an experience of individual certitude similar to Pascal's own, and establishing the rapport with God which

Port-Royal believed was the precondition for the life of charity<sup>86</sup>. Pascal's intention is clearly set out in fragment L460, B544.

The paradoxical quality of Pascal's appeal in the Pensées is very evident, for whilst in fragment L427, B194 he employs all the persuasive force of rational argument to convert men to God, blaming their refusal upon weakness of intellect, deliberate hardness of heart, cowardice or sheer bad form, implying a very real ability in man at least to dispose himself for grace<sup>87</sup>, he nevertheless states unequivocally in fragments L874, B881 and L149, B430 that their failure to respond and their indifference can be attributed solely to the will of God, in accordance with whose divine justice<sup>88</sup> this refusal serves as the source of their own damnation. Pascal would appear to be telling men on the one hand that they should make the right use of reason to lead them to God, and on the other hand that they cannot do so without the gift of grace.

#### Method

As Gouhier<sup>89</sup> indicates, Pascal's conversion provided the framework for the apology which understandably coincided with the Augustinian method and endorsed the Augustinian distinction, both the fruit of a similar experience recorded in the Confessions; Gilson<sup>90</sup> outlines the Augustinian journey of the soul to God, beginning with self-knowledge followed by faith, the prerequisite for understanding, and finally by rational evidence to satisfy reason. Central to the method is the view of the will as enslaved since the Fall by concupiscence and no longer under the control of reason, but ruled by the passions, its choice

determined by some perceived good with reason simply rationalizing that choice<sup>91</sup>. In its analysis of the mechanics of belief, De l'Art de Persuader<sup>92</sup> reveals the relationship between the will and reason in Augustine which both explains and determines the method. A change of belief at the natural level implies more than rational demonstration, for the will must also be persuaded by "agrément", an appeal to self-interest<sup>93</sup>. For a conversion to the supernatural order however, will and reason must be restored to pre-Fall equilibrium, in which the will loves the divine truths and reason accepts them as true. It is in the heart, "la racine commune du sentir et du connaître"<sup>94</sup>, where the two faculties are no longer differentiated that grace operates this transposition and gives an assurance of faith in a "certitude vue"<sup>95</sup>.

The fragments collected under the heading "Misère de l'Homme", then, appeal to the facts of human experience to make the worldly aware of the concupiscence which blinds them, to humble their pride by shocking them out of a vain reliance upon reason to bring lasting happiness, and to predispose the will to seek God. Explanation and solution are presented in Revelation (or more particularly in the Augustinian doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin), and in Christ in His Body the Church as the only source of grace, again seeking to induce humility in the submission of reason. Proofs of the divinity of Christ and of the validity of the Christian religion are offered to convince the mind, while the "Pari" fragment offers a final avenue of grace in the submission of the will or "automate"<sup>96</sup>.

#### Misère de l'Homme sans Dieu

In the first section of the apology Pascal often assumes



the role of God<sup>97</sup> to teach men their condition, so that by the action of grace illuminating the minds of the elect, he will arouse the desire for God and lead them along the path to conversion similar to his own and that of Augustine<sup>98</sup>. Since the apology is aimed specifically at the worldly and indifferent in whom a state of despair would not readily arise, a strong appeal to self-interest is necessary in order to awaken such a response. Pascal bases his appeal on that of traditional ethics, found in Aquinas<sup>99</sup> and Augustine<sup>100</sup>, namely, the Aristotelian<sup>101</sup> concept of the desire for happiness, as both universal and the most powerful motivating force in men's natures.

Tous les hommes recherchent d'être heureux. Cela est sans exception quelques différents moyens qu'ils y emploient. Ils tendent tous à ce but. Ce qui fait que les uns vont à la guerre et que les autres n'y vont pas est ce même désir qui est dans tous les deux accompagné de différentes vues. La volonté [ ne ] fait jamais la moindre démarche que vers cet objet. C'est le motif de toutes les actions de tous les hommes, jusqu'à ceux qui vont se perdre<sup>102</sup>.

William James endorses the psychological soundness of Pascal in so grounding his appeal, for he writes:

How to gain, how to keep, how to recover happiness, is in fact for most men at all times the secret motive of all they do, and of all they are willing to endure.... With such relations between religion and happiness, it is perhaps not surprising that men come to regard the happiness which a religious belief affords as a proof of its truth. If a creed makes a man feel happy, he inevitably adopts it<sup>103</sup>.

Pascal is concerned to arouse men from the false security, the illusion of happiness, resulting from reliance on reason alone, which the Humanist philosophers promise, and compel them to face up to the reality of their condition and look beyond themselves, turn to God, the source of lasting happiness, and listen to Him in Revelation. The Entretien avec M. de Saci<sup>104</sup> clearly constituted a rehearsal and

appraisal of the first section of the projected apology. Pascal adopts the dialectical style favoured by Port-Royal to juxtapose the insights and errors of Stoic and Sceptic philosophies. The extremely pessimistic view of the human condition revealed in the Pensées clearly reflects Pascal's own feelings of lostness and despair before his conversion experience, characteristic of the twice-born religious type. The constraints of the apology have plainly required that he should depict the misery of the human lot in the most lurid and frightening terms, for acceptance of the Augustinian doctrine depends upon inducing a state of despair which would predispose wills and minds to hate their concupiscence and humbly submit to the Church.

Pascal draws heavily on Montaigne<sup>105</sup> to underline the inconstancy and unrelieved misery of human existence, attributable in his view entirely to "amour-propre", "gloire" and "ambition" which are the goals of the concupiscent will to which reason is subordinated.

Les trois concupiscences ont fait trois sectes,  
et les philosophes n'ont fait autre chose que  
suivre une des trois concupiscences<sup>106</sup>.

He adopts the Platonic imagery of Augustine<sup>107</sup> further to enhance the relative worthlessness and transience of human existence and of natural pleasures.

He lays the groundwork for his appeal by stripping away the illusions with which men prop up their existence, concentrating on the gulf which separates men's aspirations to happiness and their ability to realize them. Reason and the senses in which men place such faith are, in fact, unreliable, often at odds and create a state of civil war in man.

L'homme n'est qu'un sujet plein d'erreur naturelle,  
et ineffaçable sans la grâce. Rien ne lui montre

la vérité. Tout l'abuse. Ces deux principes de vérité, la raison et les sens, outre qu'ils manquent chacun de sincérité, s'abusent réciproquement l'un et l'autre; les sens abusent la raison par de fausses apparences. Et cette même piperie qu'ils apportent à l'âme, ils la reçoivent d'elle à leur tour; elle s'en revanche. Les passions de l'âme les troublent et leur font des impressions fausses. Ils mentent et se trament à l'envi<sup>108</sup>.

Imagination, illness, or self-interest cloud their judgement, for imagination, "cette superbe puissance ennemie de la raison", has established a second nature in man which induces false self-confidence and bestows undeserved reputation on others. Reason has had to yield and

L'homme est donc si heureusement fabriqué qu'il n'a aucun principe juste du vrai, et plusieurs excellents du faux<sup>109</sup>.

Pascal states that justice is founded on authority, custom or ownership and changes from country to country. It is a matter of fashion<sup>110</sup>. Laws must be obeyed for their own sake only<sup>111</sup>, are based on ownership<sup>112</sup>, and men follow the laws of their country only because they have no true principle of justice.

La coutume [est] toute l'équité, par cette seule raison qu'elle est reçue. C'est le fondement mystique de son autorité. Qui la ramenera à son principe l'anéantit<sup>113</sup>.

Pascal goes even further by claiming that men, in fact, have no true natural principles which are absolutes, but only those inherited from the habits of their forbears, a second nature which they assume and which can be replaced.

Thus he systematically exposes the moral disharmony underlying the semblance of order and the apparently great achievements of human intelligence, as well as the unreasonable expectations which bolster men up and make their wretchedness bearable. In reality, men can find only a make-

shift order, the shortcomings of which imagination cleverly cloaks by deluding reason, thereby encouraging men to believe that by their own efforts they can achieve perfection. The situation is compounded by the fact that men never live in the present but recall the past or anticipate the future, in order to avoid the distress which the present often brings.

Ainsi nous ne vivons jamais, mais nous espérons de vivre, et, nous disposant toujours à être heureux, il est inévitable que nous ne le soyons jamais<sup>114</sup>.

In fragment L128, B396 Pascal states that "l'instinct et l'expérience" should teach men the truth of their condition: that they are incapable of attaining the good to which they aspire by their own efforts<sup>115</sup>. Moreover, if they were truly happy they would not have to divert themselves from thinking about it<sup>116</sup>. The instinct for happiness convinces men that it must be sought outside themselves<sup>117</sup>, and they are driven by a continual agitation to avoid the state of rest which will force them to contemplate their misery.

Ce n'est pas cet usage mol et paisible et qui nous laisse penser à notre malheureuse condition qu'on recherche, ni les dangers de la guerre, ni la peine des emplois, mais c'est le tracas qui nous détourne d'y penser et nous divertit. Raison pour quoi on aime mieux la chasse que la prise<sup>118</sup>.

This concentration upon the hunt rather than the capture, the debate rather than the verdict and the fight rather than the victory, provides a succession of transitory pleasures which give the illusion of happiness<sup>119</sup>.

Pascal aims his criticism not only at the worldly whose chief distractions are hunting, gambling and feminine society, but also at those who concentrate on intellectual or physical achievements which not only distract them in a similar way but will bring them renown and a transitory happiness. These also prevent men from reaching the point of despair, but

allow them to turn their backs on it and organize their lives in such a way that some absorbing occupation, however senseless or trivial, constantly distracts them and provides a temporary, illusory and makeshift happiness.

L'homme quelque plein de tristesse qu'il soit, si on peut gagner sur lui de le faire entrer en quelque divertissement le voilà heureux pendant ce temps-là..... Sans divertissement il n'y a point de joie; avec le divertissement il n'y a point de tristesse<sup>120</sup>.

Even kings must have continual diversion to avoid this rest which will bring boredom and despair. This boredom is like a constantly reappearing vacuum which must be filled and which in Pascal's view can be filled only by God<sup>121</sup>. It must be avoided at all costs, since it faces man with his true condition.

Il sent alors son néant, son abandon, son insuffisance, sa dépendance, son impuissance, son vide.

Incontinent il sortira du fond de son âme, l'ennui, la noirceur, la tristesse, le chagrin, le dépit, le désespoir<sup>122</sup>.

It is natural, in Pascal's view, for the man without God to love only himself and disguise the imperfections which crucify all attempts to attain goodness and happiness in this life, and drive him to hate the truth, since deliberate self-delusion is the only way in which he can love himself in his obviously unlovable state.

...il veut être grand, il se voit petit; il veut être heureux, et il se voit misérable; il veut être parfait, et il se voit plein d'imperfections; il veut être l'objet de l'amour et de l'estime des hommes, et il voit que ses défauts ne méritent que leur aversion et leur mépris<sup>123</sup>.

He must suppress the instinct which points out his faults, and, by extension, must himself avoid pointing out their faults to others, in order to be loved by them. Human relationships then become based on hypocrisy and deception.

L'homme n'est donc que déguisement, que mensonge et hypocrisie, et en soi-même et à l'égard des autres. Il ne veut donc pas qu'on lui dire la vérité. Il évite de la dire aux autres; et toutes ces dispositions, si éloignées de la justice et de la raison, ont une racine naturelle dans son coeur<sup>124</sup>.

Man allows imagination to magnify the present into eternity and reduce eternity to nothing<sup>125</sup>, drifting towards death without considering whether his own philosophy or that of the Christian religion has any merit. In an effort to penetrate the hard shell of indifference and insensitivity with which some men envelop themselves, denying the existence of God, careless of what will become of them after death and yet fearful about trivial things, Pascal attempts to shock men into an attitude of intense anxiety about their salvation, similar to his own before his conversion. The view, reflected in the doctrine of the three orders, that the pleasures of this life are as nothing if viewed in the light of eternity made death, for Pascal, the focal point of existence and he tries to arouse in the reader a similar perspective, underlining its finality with stark clarity.

L'immortalité de l'âme est une chose qui nous importe si fort, qui nous touche si profondément, qu'il faut avoir perdu tout sentiment pour être dans l'indifférence de savoir ce qui en est<sup>126</sup>.

It is in the light of men's expectation in the next life, "éternellement ou anéantis ou malheureux", that their lives ought to be directed, and it should form the basis of the moral life<sup>127</sup>. Pascal sums up his analysis of the human condition in fragment L434, B199.

Qu'on s'imagine un nombre d'hommes dans les chaînes, et tous condamnés à la mort, dont les uns étant chaque jour égorgés à la vue des autres, ceux qui restent voient leur propre condition dans celle de leurs semblables, et se regardant les uns et les autres avec douleur et sans espérance, attendent à leur tour. C'est l'image de la condition des hommes.

Man is, in fact, a paradox and his nature dual<sup>128</sup>.

Juge de toutes choses, imbécile ver de terre,  
dépositaire du vrai, cloaque d'incertitude et  
d'erreur, gloire et rebut de l'univers<sup>129</sup>.

In fragment L199, B72 Pascal develops the theological dimension of the idea of the infinite set out in De l'Esprit Géométrique<sup>130</sup> to show that the disproportion between reason and natural truth points to an even greater one between reason and supernatural truth.

Car enfin qu'est-ce que l'homme dans la nature?  
Un néant à l'égard de l'infini, un tout à l'égard  
du néant, un milieu entre rien et tout, infiniment  
éloigné de comprendre les extrêmes; la fin des  
choses et leurs principes sont pour lui invinciblement  
cachés dans un secret impénétrable. Egalement -  
incapable de voir le néant d'où il est tiré, et  
l'infini où il est englouti.

Pascal underlines the qualitative difference which exists between man and God upon which the whole of the Augustinian doctrine is founded. This fragment, clearly intended to evoke the felt awe in the face of the omnipotence and transcendence of God and the consequent disvaluation of self of the conversion experience, highlights the inability of man ever to find God through reason. Man is, in fact, lost.

Que l'homme étant revenu à soi, considère ce qu'il est au prix de ce qui est, qu'il se regarde comme égaré [dans ce canton détourné de la nature]; et que de ce petit cachot où il se trouvé logé, j'entends l'univers, il apprenne à estimer la terre, les royaumes, les villes et soi-même, son juste prix.

Clearly, the infinite capacity ("gouffre infini"<sup>131</sup>) in which, as Laporte writes, "l'homme passe l'homme", can be filled only by God himself<sup>132</sup>. Pascal drives concupiscent wills to seek this sovereign good, underlining the urgency of the task by reminding them of the briefness of the lifespan in relation to eternity<sup>133</sup>. In fragment L414, B171 Pascal underlines the folly inherent in this perpetual

escapism which merely postpones the moment when man must face death.

#### Reason and Revelation

It is reason<sup>134</sup>, in Pascal's view, which constitutes man's greatness and distinguishes him from the rest of creation, for it enables him to reflect upon his condition and make rational judgements<sup>135</sup>. A tree cannot know that it is wretched, but the human individual's ability to do so should lead him to acknowledge his unhappiness and recognize it as evidence of a fall from a happier state<sup>136</sup>. It is therefore on thought that man must depend for his recovery and to find the object which will satisfy his aspirations<sup>137</sup>. Yet Pascal goes beyond Augustine in his rejection of nature or philosophy as revealing God<sup>138</sup>. The theme of the "Dieu caché" stresses the total absence of communication between God and a corrupt nature<sup>139</sup>, while the doctrine of the three orders strictly limits the role of reason to the domain of natural truth. Similarly Pascal contemptuously dismisses the view that God manifests Himself through reason as "conscience"<sup>140</sup>. Natural reason, though unaffected by the Fall in the sphere of science and mathematics, is "ployable à tout sens"<sup>141</sup> in morality, a matter of "sentiment", where it is ruled by a concupiscent will.

Nor can reason in philosophical systems, founded as they are upon concupiscence<sup>142</sup>, agree where the true good is to be found<sup>143</sup>, telling men to look both within and outside themselves<sup>144</sup>. Similarly, metaphysical proofs for the existence of God are sterile since they do not inspire love of God, leading only to deism or atheism<sup>145</sup>. Whilst



philosophers and all other religions have been forced to take natural reason as their guide, Christians have been obliged to take their rules from Revelation as sole authority<sup>146</sup>. Without Scripture whose only object is Christ we can know nothing and see nothing but obscurity and confusion in the nature of God and in nature itself<sup>147</sup>. Having taught man his true state under concupiscence ("imbécile ver de terre", reminiscent of the "chétif vermisseau" of Sur la conversion du Pécheur)<sup>148</sup>, Pascal nevertheless affirms that reason ought to acknowledge its inadequacy and listen to God, submitting to the higher truth of Revelation<sup>149</sup>.

Clearly, for Pascal himself, the extremely pessimistic assessment of the human condition found in the Pensées, and the need to concentrate upon one's destiny in the next life, were endorsed and explained by the Augustinian doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin, as the source of man's unhappiness and frustration, and the answer to the paradoxical character of human nature. The hiatus between the desire for happiness ("instinct"), and man's actual performance ("experience")<sup>150</sup>, furnishes evidence for him that man did once possess a true happiness of which there now remains but an empty print and trace. Man was created with an infinite capacity for God and tries in vain to fill it with everything else. Since losing his true good he is capable of seeing it in anything, even in his own destruction.

Qu'est-ce donc que nous crie cette avidité et cette impuissance sinon qu'il y a eu autrefois dans l'homme un véritable bonheur, dont il ne lui reste maintenant que la marque et la trace toute vide et qu'il essaye inutilement de remplir de tout ce qui l'entourne, recherchant des choses absentes le secours qu'il n'obtient pas des présentes, mais qui en sont toutes incapables parce que ce gouffre infini ne peut être rempli que par un objet infini et immuable, c'est-à-dire que par Dieu même<sup>151</sup>.

The wretchedness of man's condition, the anxiety with which he seeks unsuccessfully for truth and happiness, are for Pascal evidence that man has fallen from his original place<sup>152</sup>, for, like a dispossessed king, men can only be unhappy about what they have lost<sup>153</sup>. He quotes Ecclesiastes as showing that man without God is totally ignorant and inescapably unhappy, for he is equally incapable of knowing the good and of not desiring to know<sup>154</sup>.

Yet, Pascal affirms, those who have come close to this universal good, recognize that since it is desired by all men, it cannot lie in any particular object each pursues, but must be such that it can be possessed by all without diminution and that no one should be able to lose it against his will<sup>155</sup>. Pascal clearly believes that the wisdom of God on this question is contained in the Augustinian doctrine.

Voyons ce que fera la sagesse de Dieu. N'attendez point, dit-elle, ô hommes, ni vérité, ni consolation des hommes. Je suis celle qui vous ai formés et qui puis seule vous apprendre qui vous êtes<sup>156</sup>.

He undertakes to teach men what all other religions have failed to do: where their true good lies; their duties; the weakness which led them astray; the cause of the weakness; the treatment by which they can be cured; and the means of obtaining such treatment. Men are no longer in the state in which they were created, i.e. holy, innocent and perfect and capable of beholding God, but are shut out in darkness and subject to suffering and death. Man chose to rebel against God, making self rather than God his centre, seeking happiness in himself rather than God, who, as a punishment, abandoned him so that he has become like the beasts and is ruled by his passions<sup>157</sup>.

Concupiscence became man's second nature<sup>158</sup>, the source

of all his voluntary actions<sup>159</sup>, and from which through his intellectual endowments he has achieved an admirable image of charity<sup>160</sup>. Without grace, however, which alone makes true goodness possible, natural achievements are of no value and man can only be regarded as "un sujet plein d'erreur, naturelle, et ineffaçable sans la grâce"<sup>161</sup>.

### The Grace of Christ

In Pascal et Saint Augustin Sellier<sup>162</sup> writes:

Adam et Jésus-Christ! Voilà selon saint Augustin et son disciple le coeur de la foi chrétienne. Ils l'ont maintes fois répété. "Toute la foi consiste en Jésus-Christ et en Adam et toute la morale en la concupiscence et en la grâce"<sup>163</sup>.

The Christian religion offers the only remedy for the wretchedness of man in the person of Christ. As Laporte states, "le remède consiste tout entier dans la charité, c'est-à-dire dans la prédominance de l'amour de Dieu sur l'amour des créatures et de soi-même, prédominance qui ne s'obtient que par l'union à Jésus-Christ". In him, as "Homme-Dieu", the weakness of human nature and the power of God, nature and grace, were uniquely joined as the Entretien avec M. de Saci demonstrated<sup>164</sup>. The grace of Christ in the heart unites the partial truths of philosophy, "Le bonheur n'est ni hors de nous, ni dans nous; il est en Dieu, et hors et dans nous" (L407, B465), and completes them by transforming sterile knowledge into belief.

Therefore, Jesus is the true God of men<sup>165</sup> who came to tell them that they have no enemies but themselves, that it is their passions which cut them off from God, and that he came to destroy those passions and give man his grace<sup>166</sup>. Pascal presents the Augustinian view of the Atonement as effected solely by Christ's death<sup>167</sup>, and is concerned to

emphasise him in his Body, the Church, as the unique source of grace, who came to save men from God's anger and redeem them from the bondage of sin by offering his body and blood as a spotless sacrifice<sup>168</sup>, "Je pensais à toi dans mon agonie; j'ai versé telles gouttes de sang pour toi"<sup>169</sup>.

Without Scripture, without Original Sin, without the necessary mediator whose divinity is proved by the prophecies, it is impossible to prove the existence of God conclusively or teach sound doctrine or morality<sup>170</sup>. Christ came to make the law effective<sup>171</sup>, for his grace, unlike the sufficient grace of Adam before the Fall, which permitted Adam to choose and perform the good, gives men both the power and the will<sup>172</sup>. Under grace man shares in the divinity of Christ<sup>173</sup>, and without it can be only corrupt and wretched.

Sans Jésus-Christ il faut que l'homme soit dans le vice et dans la misère. Avec Jésus-Christ l'homme est exempt de vice et de misère.

En lui est toute notre vertu et toute notre félicité<sup>174</sup>.

Pascal saw Christ by his death as bridging the gap between man and God, the finite and the supernatural orders, between which there is an irreconcilable opposition without the atoning grace of Christ. In Early Christian Doctrines Kelly observes that although Augustine does stress the exemplary aspect of Christ's work, he perceived his specific activity to consist in his role of mediator and head of the Church. "What this doctrine seeks to establish is that in Christ's humanity fallen man and his Creator have a common meeting-ground where the work of reconciliation and restoration can take effect"<sup>175</sup>. Gilson echoes the words of Otto when he describes Christ as the person through whom the just cling to the Father, continually cleansed by his blood and made

fit for the divine presence<sup>176</sup>. True conversion therefore,

...consiste à connaître qu'il y a une opposition invincible entre Dieu et nous et que sans un médiateur il ne peut y avoir de commerce<sup>177</sup>.

The God to whom Pascal is seeking to unite the reader is not the God of mathematical truths or of the philosophers, but the God of the Mémorial, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob<sup>178</sup> who fills the soul and heart of those whom he possesses with "certitude, certitude, sentiment, joie, paix", making them inwardly aware of their wretchedness and his mercy and making them incapable of having any other end but Him. Pascal's own experience clearly convinced him that this God of love and consolation is known only in Christ. Unless God places the grace of Christ directly into the heart, it is to be found only within his Body the Church, outside of which there is no salvation. Only within its communion are both love of self and love of God possible by incorporation with Christ, in whose redemptive suffering all Christians are united<sup>179</sup>.

...on s'aime parce qu'on est membre de Jésus-Christ; on aime Jésus-Christ parce qu'il est le corps dont on est membre. Tout est un, l'un est en l'autre, comme les trois Personnes<sup>180</sup>.

### Humility

Humility and purity of heart are the prerequisites for the reception of grace in Pascal, and the same ambivalence between man's responsibility and God's mercy seems evident in his attitude to these also. Pascal's impatience with hypocrisy, nominal faith and superstitious observance of the sacraments implies that an inward disposition of humility, or impiety before God, is the result of free choice rather than of slavery either to grace or to concupiscence.

Dieu ne regarde que l'intérieur, l'Eglise ne juge que par l'extérieur. Dieu absout aussitôt qu'il voit la pénitence dans le cœur; l'Eglise, quand elle la voit dans les oeuvres<sup>181</sup>.

However, elsewhere (L449, B559) it is God "qui la [âme] remplit d'humilité, de joie, de confiance, d'amour".

Because of the Fall man is incapable of recognizing the true good without efficacious grace which gives both knowledge and action. The sin of hypocrisy or pretended virtue, which consists in a deliberate insincerity in the face of the perceived will of God, is therefore an impossibility.

The humility which Pascal demands is that of Augustine: submission of the mind to the authority of Revelation and surrender of the whole being to Christ in His Church, both implying an acknowledgement of dependence upon God<sup>182</sup>.

In the view of Gilson<sup>183</sup>, Augustine's conversion experience amounted to a discovery of humility and once Augustine had been converted, "his formula was humility first, humility last and always"<sup>184</sup>. For Augustine, faith or the submission of heart and of mind by the right use of reason must be the first step, so that grace can heal the will and thereby enable reason to receive understanding.

Deux sortes de personnes connaissent, ceux qui ont le cœur humilié et qui aiment leur bassesse, quelque degré d'esprit qu'ils aient haut ou bas, ou ceux qui ont assez d'esprit pour voir la vérité quelques oppositions qu'ils y aient<sup>185</sup>.

Pascal himself clearly belonged to the former category, "creature-consciousness" arousing a sense of sinfulness and wretchedness which led to a ready acceptance of revealed truth as interpreted in the Augustinian doctrine as the way of salvation.

Je vois mon abîme d'orgueil, de curiosité, de concupiscence<sup>186</sup>.

...un homme plein de faiblesse, de misère, de concupiscence, d'orgueil, d'ambition<sup>187</sup>.

Men can only understand their true nature, then, by the submission of reason and blind acceptance of this doctrine, on the grounds that it is a mystery and belongs to the sphere of supernatural truth, in spite of the fact that, as Pascal states, it is shocking to reason and his own concept of ordinary justice<sup>188</sup>. The limitation of the scope of reason to a discursive function which works only upon finite principles precluded any competence in the sphere of supernatural truth. Reason's greatness resides in the recognition that there is an infinite number of things which are beyond it in the natural world, let alone the supernatural<sup>189</sup>. However incomprehensible then, reason ought to accept the doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin as it does the infinities in mathematics as a "given" principle which cannot be defined or proved<sup>190</sup>. As the truth of the infinities is proved by examining the negation of the proposition, so Original Sin is acceptable on the grounds that without it man is incomprehensible to himself<sup>191</sup>. Pascal, as Laporte observes, is urging the reader to make Revelation not reason the working principle of his life as a source of illumination for the mind and purification of the heart<sup>192</sup>, just as he himself did and thereby found certitude<sup>193</sup>.

Yet Pascal would also appear to affirm that our religious belief, though belonging to a higher order of truth must have the sanction of reason if it is not to become ridiculous and absurd.

Si on soumet tout à la raison notre religion n'aura rien de mystérieux et de surnaturel.

Si on choque les principes de la raison notre religion sera absurde et ridicule<sup>194</sup>.

C'est le consentement de vous à vous-même et la voix constante de votre raison et non des autres qui vous doit faire croire<sup>195</sup>.

It is difficult not to conclude from fragment L131, B434, that in his enthusiasm to lead the reader along the same path as his own, to a similar experience of God, he is asking men to waive the voice of conscience and make a calculated commitment on the grounds of self-interest. He himself is here clearly judging the doctrine of inherited guilt and the damnation of unbaptised children in the light of concepts of justice and truth which he recognizes have an objective validity for all men, even if he does speak of "notre misérable justice". On the grounds that our justice is the fruit of concupiscent wills it is changeable and unreliable (L520, B375), and since it is, in any case annihilated in the presence of divine justice (L418, B233), it ought to be disregarded in the interests of submission and salvation.

In fragment L617, B492 Pascal again appeals to such an independent concept of justice and truth as having a universal validity to judge the doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin as explaining the human situation. In recognizing that such concepts exist, he is also acknowledging the presence in man of a moral consciousness and the necessity for its sanction of revealed truth which clearly received just such an inner assent from himself. When Pascal stated that men recognized that the truth which they sought must be the same for all, this would seem to be an admission that it must be such as to appeal to the moral consciousness as true, and can be accepted as a divine revelation only on those grounds. In Conscience and Christ, Hastings Rashdall underlines the truth of this presupposition.



We can accept the revelation only because, and in so far as, it appeals to the moral consciousness as true: it is because it does make such an appeal to us that we believe it to be a revelation<sup>196</sup>.

It is enough to insist that no one really makes his submission even to the teaching of our Lord Himself absolute and unlimited except in so far as the actual injunctions of that authority commend themselves to his conscience<sup>197</sup>.

### Dieu Caché

The theme of the "Dieu caché"<sup>198</sup> underlines the omnipotence and inaccessibility of God and the arbitrariness and uncertainty which surround the discernment of the elect. Pascal states that God deliberately made the difficulties of man's existence unintelligible to him so that he could know himself only through submission and not reason<sup>199</sup>. Everything in the world points to the fact that God is hidden<sup>200</sup>, and that the world exists solely to teach men about their corruption and redemption, so that they will recognize their wretchedness and their need for the grace of Christ<sup>201</sup>. The only indicators to the cure for man's wretchedness are to be found in the "marques sensibles" appointed by God in His Church and perceptible only to those who seek Him with all their heart<sup>202</sup>. Pascal adopts a fractious tone towards those who do not make this choice. Sheer self-interest and reason should convince them that not to consider these proofs which lie at hand is the mark of an unreasonable man.

Qu'ils donnent à cette lecture quelques-unes de ces heures qu'ils emploient si inutilement ailleurs: quelque aversion qu'ils y apportent, peut-être rencontreront-ils quelque chose, et pour le moins ils n'y perdront pas beaucoup<sup>203</sup>.

Pascal states quite categorically however that it is neither sincerity of heart nor the submission of reason which brings salvation, for the choice is made by a will determined by God to be the slave either of concupiscence or grace, and

all willing, seeking or submitting must be attributed in the final analysis to the divine will.

Il y a assez de clarté pour éclairer les élus et assez d'obscurité pour les humilier. Il y a assez d'obscurité pour aveugler les réprouvés et assez de clarté pour les condamner et les rendre inexcusables<sup>204</sup>.

Et par ce moyen il y a assez d'évidence pour condamner, et non assez pour convaincre, afin qu'il paraisse qu'en ceux qui la suivent c'est la grâce et non la raison qui fait suivre, et qu'en ceux qui la fuient c'est la concupiscence et non la raison qui fait fuir<sup>205</sup>.

Revelation, then, is the divine instrument of predestination, for only those to whom grace gives understanding will turn to God, the remainder inexplicably deprived and left in the "massa damnata" in virtue of original guilt, yet judged by Pascal "inexcusables". The conclusion of Filleau de Chaise<sup>206</sup>, rejected by Laporte, that the efforts of the apologist serve the justice of God rather than his mercy, appears to have some merit.

Pascal's ambivalent attitude to the reason why some men receive grace while others do not, would seem to result from the recognition that, on the one hand, purity of heart is the prerequisite of seeing God, and on the other, that all salvation must be attributed to His will alone. The fact that some men do seek Him without finding Him<sup>207</sup>, contrasts with the strong affirmation that God wishes to make Himself recognizable to those who sincerely seek Him<sup>208</sup>, that seeking implies finding.

Console-toi. Tu ne me chercherais pas si tu ne m'avais trouvé<sup>209</sup>.

The arbitrary nature of election in the Augustinian doctrine gives rise to rationalizations which are somewhat incomprehensible and in no way save the image of God as

loving and merciful.

Dieu a voulu racheter les hommes et ouvrir le salut à ceux qui le chercheraient, mais les hommes s'en rendent si indignes qu'il est juste que Dieu refuse à quelques-uns, à cause de leur endurcissement, ce qu'il accorde aux autres par une miséricorde qui ne leur est pas due<sup>210</sup>.

On n'entend rien aux ouvrages de Dieu si on ne prend pour principe qu'il a voulu aveugler les uns et éclaircir les autres<sup>211</sup>.

Pascal's God is a God of love and consolation but only for those whom He enlightens with His grace. The joy and relief which the assurance of election gave Pascal himself is evident<sup>212</sup>, but he can offer no such assurance to those who seek God but have not been blessed with a similar experience. Nor, in view of its supernatural status, can the divine dispensation be judged by the same yardstick which Pascal applies to the actions of his fellows.

#### The Role of the Heart

The capacity in man for the perception of first principles in mathematics, which cannot be proved by reason, is the heart acting as an intellectual instinct<sup>213</sup>. As Pascal states in De l'Art de Persuader, it is into this intuitive capacity that God instils knowledge of Himself<sup>214</sup>. Just as reason cannot prove or disprove rational principles, so this "felt" knowledge of God cannot be proved by dogma or disproved by scepticism<sup>215</sup>. For a belief which makes men say not "I know" but "I believe"<sup>216</sup>, God not only reveals Himself but inclines the will to love His self-disclosure.

Ne vous étonnez pas de voir des personnes simples croire sans raisonnement. Dieu leur donne l'amour de soi et la haine d'eux-mêmes. Il incline leur coeur à croire. On ne croira jamais, d'une créance utile et de foi si Dieu n'incline le coeur et on croira dès qu'il l'inclinera<sup>217</sup>.

Central to the method of the Pensées is the Augustinian

view of the will or heart as one of the chief organs of belief, not because it forms belief, but because it accepts or rejects truth presented to it, and reason follows its choice<sup>218</sup>. For Pascal, as for Augustine moreover, belief implies action so that whatever the heart loves as its end or ideal, God or self, is the mainspring of all men do.

Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point; on le sait en mille choses.

Je dis que le coeur aime l'être universel naturellement et soi-même naturellement, selon qu'il s'y adonne, et il se durcit contre l'un ou l'autre à son choix. Vous avez rejeté l'un et conservé l'autre; est-ce par raison que vous vous aimez<sup>219</sup>.

This was directly opposed to the Aristotelian relationship between will and reason adopted by Aquinas and the Jesuits<sup>220</sup>, in which the act of choice is elicited by the will but under the command or judgement of reason and therefore "formally" an act of reason.

Pascal indicates that the method of exposition cannot be that of intellectual activity, the use of principles or logical demonstration, since God wishes to touch the heart and humble it so that it will love the truth<sup>221</sup>, inducing humility rather than pride. In order to arouse love, it is feeling<sup>222</sup>, an immediate, intuitive assurance, in which we should put our faith<sup>223</sup>. Gouhier<sup>224</sup> points out that the "sentiment" felt by Pascal during his experience of God was of the kind described in fragment L751, B3 in which reason plays no part, but the act of judgement is made by penetration of the heart "d'une vue". Pascal therefore adopts the order or, as Gilson observes<sup>225</sup>, the lack of order to be found in Augustine, Scripture, Christ and St. Paul, namely, digression upon each point which relates to the end, so that this will always be kept in sight<sup>226</sup>. In the view of

Chevalier<sup>227</sup> the heart arrives at certitude by making a synthesis of probabilities. Laporte<sup>228</sup>, however, insists that the heart operates a transition to the order of charity only insofar as it is illuminated by divine grace. The heart, he believes, has only two direct involvements in the apology: when, under the inspiration of grace it opens the mind at the beginning to proofs which Pascal will present; and at the end when it gives the absolute assurance born of inspiration.

#### The "Pari" Fragment

In the "Pari" fragment (L418, B233) Pascal makes a final assault on the concupiscent wills of the most indifferent for whom Revelation or proofs have failed to bring individual certainty. In a powerful and somewhat blatant appeal to self-interest, which shocked the inhabitants of Port-Royal, Pascal seeks to persuade the sceptical by "agrément" to subject their wills to a third avenue by which the grace of conversion is mediated, namely, the observances and charitable practices of the Church. The method is that of the whole work: an appeal to reason to acknowledge its inadequacy to find the sovereign good, thereby inducing humility and submission of the will to the grace of Christ in His Church. The whole of the appeal is couched in mathematical terms, with a full statement of the three orders serving to underline the range of reason in the field of natural and supernatural truth, the "otherness" and inaccessibility of God, and the unknowableness of both His existence and His attributes.

S'il y a un Dieu il est infiniment incompréhensible, puisque n'ayant ni parties ni bornes, il n'a nul rapport à nous. Nous sommes donc incapables de connaître ni ce qu'il est ni s'il est<sup>229</sup>.

He points to the conclusion of De l'Esprit Géométrique<sup>230</sup> to underscore this gulf: just as reason can know the exist-

ence of the infinite without being able to understand its nature, so grace can give us knowledge of God's existence although we cannot know His nature until the next life. In fragment L975, B275 Pascal states that conversion consists in more than mere thought.

Les hommes prennent souvent leur imagination pour leur coeur; et ils croient être convertis dès qu'ils pensent à se convertir.

An act of renunciation is indispensable, in Pascal's view, because reason follows the concupiscent will and rationalizes whatever it chooses to accept as the end or ideal of existence.

Tout notre raisonnement se réduit à céder au sentiment.  
... La raison s'offre mais elle est ployable à tous sens<sup>231</sup>.

Thus in fragment L821, B252 Pascal states that habit provides the strongest proofs which will convince the indifferent and make them Christians. Man is as much automaton as mind, and the "automate" must be trained to accept belief in God as the working principle for the moral life, just as night and day and the inevitability of death are accepted unquestioningly by reason.

Enfin il faut avoir recours à elle quand une fois l'esprit a vu où est la vérité afin de nous abreuver et nous teindre de cette créance qui nous échappe à toute heure, car d'en avoir toujours les preuves présentes c'est trop d'affaire. Il faut acquérir une créance plus facile qui est celle de l'habitude.... Il faut donc faire croire nos deux pièces, l'esprit par les raisons qu'il suffit d'avoir vues une fois en sa vie et l'automate par la coutume, et en ne lui permettant pas de s'incliner au contraire<sup>232</sup>.

The will or "automate" trains the mind into an instinctive belief by keeping its attention fixed upon divine Revelation<sup>233</sup>. In a footnote to the "Pari" fragment Brunschvicg quotes<sup>234</sup> from the "Avis" of the Port-Royal publication which states that Pascal intended it as an encouragement to the

worldly and uncommitted, that it is to their advantage to believe and to make some effort to prepare themselves for the reception of grace by giving up obstacles to faith, "les passions et les vains amusements"<sup>235</sup>. It seems evident that Pascal envisaged such a faith arising through identification with the spiritual life and charitable practices of Port-Royal, an option in which belief was dramatically authenticated for him, rather than through the superstitious observances of the Jesuits.

Les pénitences extérieures disposent à l'intérieure comme les humiliations à l'humilité<sup>236</sup>.

Various writers endorse as psychologically sound the advice given by Pascal in the "Pari" fragment, both as a means of arousing an awareness of God as present, and of amelioration of the moral life and validation of a system of belief.

H.D. Lewis observes that instruments of worship predispose a person to be exceptionally aware of God<sup>237</sup>. Of the rites and sacraments of the Church H.D. Rashdall writes:

They are all means by which the good influences that ultimately spring from God and from Christ, and that are transmitted by the Society which Christ founded, may be brought to bear upon the individual soul and the individual life<sup>238</sup>.

Pascal emphasises the importance of habit for effecting a reorientation of belief and moral principles.

Qu'est-ce que nos principes naturels sinon nos principes accoutumés.... Une différente coutume en donnera d'autres principes naturels. Cela se voit par expérience....<sup>239</sup>.

John Oman confirms the primacy of the choice of moral environment or ideal:

Victory over ourselves ... is not possible by resolution, however courageous, but only by finding a better environment waiting to be possessed<sup>240</sup>.

In his essay The Will to Believe, William James concedes that

Pascal's appeal to reason to persuade men to opt for God out of sheer self-interest seems dishonest and inexplicable in view of the uncertainty of election<sup>241</sup>. Yet, he also observes that, where objective certitude is impossible, the empirical approach to religious belief advocated by Pascal, where faith in the truth must, as in the scientific approach, precede evidence of authenticity, is in fact a valid one<sup>242</sup>. Krailsheimer and Chevalier believe that Pascal in fact applied to the domain of religious truth the scientific method of the Traité du Vide, namely "soumission aux faits" which "facts" in this order of knowledge consist in the "given" truths of Revelation. Grace will provide certainty, for "quand l'homme fait ce qui est en lui, Dieu fait le reste"<sup>243</sup>. Pascal, however, denies both the possibility of making such a commitment and the inevitability of the reward. In fragment L814, B6 he states that whilst the consequences of our individual choices are momentous for our lives, since environment shapes belief, our choices are, paradoxically, already predetermined.

Ainsi cela fait un cercle dont sont bienheureux ceux qui sortent.

A man can open his mind to proofs of Christianity, confirm himself in it through habit, but faith issues only from inspiration, the unmerited gift of the grace of Christ, which alone can produce the real and salutary effect, "ne evacuetur crux Christi"<sup>244</sup>. Pascal can only pray that God will not only enlighten his own intellect to give his arguments persuasive force but also those of his readers who are predestined to receive illumination<sup>245</sup>. Laporte defines the role of the Jansenist apologist: "il faut planter et arroser comme s'il le devait donner partout et toujours"<sup>246</sup>.



Tous

The need to encourage at least the hope of finding the sovereign good by affirming some measure of human responsibility in the redemptive process, demanded by the apology and recognized by Pascal himself, is clearly responsible for the apparent tempering of the uncompromising predestinarianism which, Pascal admits in fragment L912 B78, would be self-defeating. If grace is not available to all, concupiscent wills may not warm to a life of renunciation on the slender chance of becoming one of the small number of elect. As in the Provinciales<sup>247</sup> Pascal moves for the sake of expediency to the stance of an antecedent and consequent salvific will in God

Aussi c'est à Jésus-Christ d'être universel; l'Eglise même n'offre le sacrifice que pour les fidèles. Jésus-Christ a offert celui de la croix pour tous<sup>248</sup>.

Jésus-Christ rédempteur de tous. Oui, car il a offert comme un homme qui a racheté tous ceux qui voudront venir à lui. Ceux qui mourront en chemin c'est leur malheur, mais quant à lui il leur offrait rédemption.... Jésus-Christ en qualité de rédempteur n'est pas peut-être maître de tous, et ainsi en tant qu'il est en lui il est rédempteur de tous<sup>249</sup>.

The introductory sentence of fragment L931, B550, which was struck out by Pascal, also suggests that he was prepared to go as far as possible to mollify the harsh predestinarianism of the Augustinian doctrine to encourage a reorientation of life and the hope of redemption, though not quite to the admission of a universalism implied by the deleted statement.

J'aime tous les hommes comme mes frères, parce qu'ils sont tous rachetés<sup>250</sup>.

Clearly, as Brunschvicg<sup>251</sup> points out, the extreme predestinarian stance of the Jansenists in its practical application would be an attitude of fatalism towards salvation,

and that had not been missed by the society of the time, and must have challenged the ingenuity of Pascal in the writing of this work. Elsewhere, however, Pascal does not appear to be conscious of the need for any such modifications. Fragment L467, B449 states that though all must be shown their wretchedness, redemption is not for all, and fragment L469, B597 alleges that God has used the blindness of people for the benefit of the elect. The reader is reminded that just as Christ saved one of the two robbers who flanked him on the Cross, when both were apparently equally guilty, so he saves the elect and damns the reprobate for the same crime<sup>252</sup>. Pascal conveniently ignores the crucial factor of the redeemed thief's sincerity and humility in the face of the truth, quite clearly the only divine criterion for forgiveness and salvation. He follows Augustine in his claim that "omnes" must not always be interpreted as "all" in the general sense, that to do so is in fact heresy, for it must accord with the interpretations of the Church, presumably laid down by Augustine<sup>253</sup>. Experience clearly inclines Pascal to the latter view of election.

Chevalier interprets these fragments, especially L931, B550, as further evidence of a move to humanism by Pascal<sup>254</sup>. Like Krailsheimer<sup>255</sup> he states that Pascal would not have written the apology if any were disqualified from sharing in Christ's redemption or incapable of accepting or rejecting the offer of grace.

Conçoit-on un Pascal favorisant l'espérance chez des hommes voués, quoi qu'ils fassent, à la réprobation éternelle, et leur conseillant la pratique d'habitudes parfaitement vaines et inefficaces, qui ne serviraient qu'à créer en eux une illusion, avantageuse peut-être mais fausse, et non pas comme il l'entend, à les disposer à la grâce?<sup>256</sup>

Such fragments, which do not in fact go beyond the Thomist position which is effectively that of Augustine, do afford clear evidence, however, of an unconscious assumption of reason as arbiter of supernatural truth. It is by the light of his own conscience that he has judged the doctrine fundamentally unacceptable and expects his readers to do the same. Gilson states that the doctrine of Augustine was a metaphysics of conversion, and that what he gives us is a method,

...i.e. the proper order to follow in a long series of efforts which we must make ourselves. As long as this method is treated as a system, it will appear lacunose and deficient on many counts.... All he can do is set them on the path of inquiry, show them the attitude they should adopt to discover in the divine light the truths which no one can see for them in their stead<sup>257</sup>.

This would appear to be precisely the method adopted by Pascal in the Pensées.

### Prayer

The Christian religion obliges men to love God, but recognizing men's weakness it alone has provided a remedy in prayer<sup>258</sup>, for temptation comes to those who do not pray<sup>259</sup>. Elsewhere Pascal insists that prayer is a gift given only to the children of the promise, to remind them of the need for dependence upon God, the only source of grace, and to enable their growth in holiness<sup>260</sup>. Even those who have received the gift of faith have no certainty of election and must view their salvation with a mixture of fear and hope.

Toute condition et même les martyrs ont à craindre par l'Écriture.

La peine du purgatoire la plus grande est l'incertitude du jugement<sup>261</sup>.

The fear of hell appeared to play a valuable part in

the Jansenist system of belief in keeping men to the path which leads to salvation. Grace was regarded as a continuous infusion and purification as a means of ensuring this. Grace may be withheld at any time to make men humble<sup>262</sup>, and the fear of losing the infinite good is therefore mingled with joy in the holiness and righteousness of which they already enjoy some part<sup>263</sup>. It is the continuous consciousness of sinfulness and the need for dependence that distinguishes the righteous from the true sinners who mistakenly believe they are righteous<sup>264</sup>. The elect must therefore work zealously towards salvation<sup>265</sup>, and, conscious always of the mystery of election, treat all men as having the potential to become saved<sup>266</sup>. The most that Pascal can effectively offer the reader therefore on the question of the gift of the grace of conversion and perseverance would seem to be "crainte" and "espoir", based upon "humilité" and "l'anéantissement", for faith, prayer, perseverance, merit and final election are the arbitrary gift of a divine will which thus demonstrates its sovereignty.

Pourquoi Dieu a établie la prière?

1. Pour communiquer à ses créatures la dignité de la causalité.
2. Pour nous apprendre de qui nous tenons la vertu.
3. Pour nous faire mériter les autres vertus par travail.

Mais pour se conserver la primauté il donne la prière à qui il lui plaît<sup>267</sup>.

Man must therefore stand before God as a beggar, since it is only by "un pouvoir efficace" that perseverance and salvation will be effected, and his final word can only be, "Opérez votre salut avec crainte"<sup>268</sup>.

### Conclusion

The theology of grace to be found in the Pensées is clearly that of Augustine, determined by Pascal's early teach-

ing and association with Jansenism, endorsed by his naturally pessimistic temperament, and confirmed in his conversion experience. The mathematical perspective of his thought led to its codification and hardening in the doctrine of the three orders, intensifying the gulf between nature and grace, between man and an omnipotent God, which forms its basic premise, and limiting the sphere of reason exclusively to that of finite knowledge. For Pascal as for Augustine, God is "wholly other", having broken into the finite world only once, in the Incarnation, so that all communication with Him must be effected by the grace of Christ, the Mediator and Redeemer. The Augustinian view of the Atonement as consisting solely in the suffering and death of Christ, makes his person and his Body, the Church in which it is continued, central to the whole work. There is no room for natural theology or human philosophy in Pascal's theology, for that cannot give man a saving knowledge of God which is to be found only in Scripture, and in the Tradition and sacraments of the Church.

The role of the Church in the work of redemption is determined by this: to teach men about their wretched and sinful state, its cause and the remedy the Church offers, namely, the grace of Christ. The appropriate response would appear to consist in a willingness to waive any subjective rational judgement of the doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin, in an uncritical and submissive acceptance both of explanation and remedy and in the adoption of a life of ascetic renunciation. Man can then only wait in an attitude of passive surrender for the gift of faith in an experience of the presence of God and of assurance of salvation, which

Pascal clearly believes must duplicate his own. By this act of divine intervention the will is released from concupiscence and the love of self, and becomes free to love God and come to a knowledge of the truth. That the Church in which this power is vested is that of traditional Augustinianism is made clear in fragment L954, B925, where Molinism is rejected as a quick way to hell.

Just as the Church which mediates grace must be that of Augustinianism, so the experience of conversion must parallel that of Augustine and of Pascal; for the intense experience of the numinous, the "creature-consciousness" in the presence of the transcendent God, the need for absolute surrender of the will, and the feeling of deliverance as an unmerited gift, are given dogmatic expression in such a doctrine. As Gilson observes the Augustinian doctrine is a methodology of conversion, and it provides the framework of the apology. Such an interpretation, according to Rudolph Otto, should serve only as the analogical expression of religious experience and not as theological theory, since it must necessarily attribute to God an absolutely fortuitous will and leads to the development of such concepts as an occult justice and goodness, and an arbitrary election<sup>269</sup>. It also implies an essential sinfulness in man, and C.A. Campbell sees this sense of radical imperfection, expressed by Augustine as the tyranny of concupiscence and inevitability of sin without grace, as arising from a particular type of individual religious experience.

The intrinsic, inevitable imperfection that belongs to man in virtue of his finite, creaturely status is falsely identified with the different mode of human imperfection which is sin; and sin accordingly comes to be regarded as something intrinsic and inevitable in human nature<sup>270</sup>.

The Augustinian view of human nature, the conviction that goodness is therefore beyond the power of the human will except under grace, and that in conversion both knowledge and love of God are infused into the heart, result then from a particular type of religious experience which does not have validity for all men. The appeal of the Pensées is accordingly restricted to individuals belonging to the twice-born category.

Pascal's attitude to the function and competence of reason in the Pensées is ambivalent, to say the least, since in the "ordre des esprits", it constitutes man's greatness, by allowing him to transcend his finiteness in the very act of recognizing it. He believes that men should make the right use of reason to lead them to God. Yet, under the tyranny of concupiscence reason is swayed by the passions, imagination, illness and self-interest and can be healed only by grace, though he does concede that man has nevertheless made admirable systems of government and justice through its use.

Yet Pascal himself relies heavily upon natural argument to persuade men to accept the doctrines he proposes<sup>271</sup>. He readily concedes that these will offend natural justice and reason, thereby tacitly admitting the presence in man of a moral consciousness, yet seeks nothing from reason but the decision to anaesthetize this moral consciousness and blindly accept the Augustinian explanation and remedy for man's wretchedness. He even admits the necessity for such an inner assent, acknowledging that reason does, in fact, have the ability to make value judgements upon the content of Revelation, and that if it is not satisfied religion becomes

ridiculous and absurd. Men would seem, therefore, already to possess, at least in some degree, objective standards of truth and justice which are "given", and for all minds.

H. Rashdall indicates that such judgements must come from the intellectual part of our nature, for whilst they are intuitive and immediate, they cannot result from feeling since this would not confer upon them the necessary objectivity<sup>272</sup>.

Pascal states that man has an inbuilt capacity for the experience of God which can be filled only by Him and he specifies this as the heart, the seat of the will, the intuitive capacity which in the "ordre des esprits" grasps basic principles of mathematics. Ruled since the Fall, however, by the power of concupiscence and unable to attain the good which is its true end, it is the source of man's wretchedness, which can be healed only by an infusion of divine grace to incline the heart to God. Rudolph Otto argues that neither the "moral ought" nor the "numinous" are evolvable out of the nature of man but "sui generis"<sup>273</sup>, and must be aroused. It would appear that Pascal has perceived the experience of the numinous at his conversion, a matter of feeling in which God is loved, as the only access to knowledge of God capable of satisfying the "gouffre infini".

John Oman<sup>274</sup> affirms that faith is a gift of God, not a crude compelling sense of assurance, but conviction of the truth by the truth, in the whole of revelation. Pascal failed to recognize that the constant unrest in man results from his inevitable inability to measure up to the divine demand in the moral consciousness which is the source of salvation, what Paul Claudel<sup>274</sup> called "L'inexorable appel



de la voix merveilleuse", and de Lubac, "le lieu de la nativité de notre être sumaturel"<sup>276</sup> and what induced Gregory of Nyssa to define God as "le cherché"<sup>277</sup>. Von Hügel<sup>278</sup> states that the source of these unfulfilled aspirations which torment men is "The Infinite, very Being as opposed to continual becoming and perishing", which dwells within him. Clearly the capacity for God works through the moral order and the moral consciousness and is a function of the intellect, but as Pascal saw, a response of love is necessary if the will is to accept and follow the divine revelation. In Christus in Ecclesia, H. Rashdall states<sup>279</sup>,

It is in, not outside, the working of Reason and Conscience and Will, in and through the ordinary social affections and the moral aspirations which are the necessary basis of true religious emotion, that we must see the workings of the Spirit of God.... If we are really faithful to the doctrine of Grace, there is no merely natural knowledge or merely natural goodness, and we may equally say on the other hand, no merely supernatural knowledge or goodness.

Humility and a sincere desire for the truth are rightly named by Pascal as the prerequisites for knowledge of God, but these seem to imply for him surrender of the will and total submission to the direction of the Church, namely, the spiritual life of Port-Royal, an abdication of personal responsibility to a higher authority, rather than the recognition of a claim made upon him by the voice of the moral consciousness. It implied for him an ascetic renunciation of the world, science and his family, for as Brunschvicg points out<sup>280</sup>, for the company of Port-Royal, Christianity was incompatible with the world, "se convertir, ce n'est point passer de l'incrédulité à la foi, c'est renoncer à la vie du monde pour vivre en Dieu". Such rigorism and the need for continual purification seem to be rooted in a morbid

self-interest, constantly fed by the fear of losing the grace of salvation.

Pascal decries the pride which glories in man's self-sufficiency and the achievements of reason, since from the perspective of the supernatural order they are valueless and cut men off from God. Yet his injunction "Ecoutez Dieu" surely implies a true need in man for sincerity in the face of truth, and the pride he deplores and attributes to concupiscence, really amounts to the refusal of men to acknowledge the witness of reality. True humility in the view of John Oman<sup>281</sup> consists, not in a carefully manufactured self-depreciation, but in just such a sincerity, and Pascal himself reflects this condition of penitence in fragment L923 B713.

Pascal recognizes that such humility and the desire for God must be aroused in men and can never be imposed, and in spite of his constantly reiterated affirmations that only grace can turn men to God, his impatience towards those whom he believes wilfully reject God often seems to belie this. Yet the insights that a purely intellectual belief is useless for salvation, and that the truth must be loved, are well founded for the moral activity which flows from such a belief must have as its mainspring a will dedicated to the attainment of this truth as its loved goal. The "Pari" fragment, in fact, constitutes a challenge to men to open themselves to the divine self-revelation in a living experiment and put their trust in it as a way to happiness and salvation, for experience can be the only final determinant of such knowledge and involves a commitment of our passional nature<sup>282</sup>. His belief that participation in the

liturgy and sacraments, and devotion to charitable works ("s'abêtir"), would bring their own rewards of faith and happiness, seem well grounded in experience<sup>283</sup>, and appear to offer a more universally verifiable proof of conversion than his own assurance of election.

Pascal's conviction that grace is a continuous infusion related to our dependence on God, which can, at any moment, be withheld to induce humility, and that election is always uncertain, meant that the relationship between man and God must always be based upon fear and hope. The elect then consist, as John Oman<sup>284</sup> states, of those to whom God has a favourable mind, and not simply of those who have a favourable mind to God. The rigorism which was Pascal's response to the "awe" before the numinous, nevertheless reflects a very real need for the maintenance of a close relationship between the Christian and God. Pascal saw prayer as the key to this attitude of dependence, a remedy for man's weakness and defence against temptation, yet given only to the children of the promise. Trethowan<sup>284</sup> endorses the importance of prayer in the Christian life, the need for an attitude of receptivity to God which will issue in action, "The business of prayer... is to place the mind and will in readiness for God's action upon it". It is what H.D. Lewis<sup>286</sup> calls "the live centre of our relation to God".

Beneath the constrictions of the Augustinian doctrine, in which the religious experience of conversion of both Augustine and Pascal was intellectualized, lies the belief that true happiness results only from a willed openness and response to God's loving disclosure of Himself in a gracious relationship by which He draws and redeems men through the

moral life, and constantly restores a right relationship to Himself through his reconciling grace. K.E. Kirk expresses the primacy of God in this relationship,

Worship depends not upon our own activities, but upon the activities which God brings to bear upon us; to them we are forced to react as worshippers.... And even if he refuse to worship, and turn his back upon all that he knows to be good, the irresistible pressure of goodness will still be upon him. For what we mean by "goodness" is the invincible grace of God's love ...<sup>287</sup>

...il faut aimer un être qui soit en nous, et qui ne soit pas nous. Et cela est vrai d'un chacun de tous les hommes. Or il n'y a que l'être universel qui soit tel. Le Royaume de Dieu est en nous. Le bien universel est en nous, est nous-même et n'est pas nous<sup>288</sup>.

NOTES

## CHAPTER V

1. J. Steinmann, Pascal (Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1962), p.189.
2. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, pp.120-152.
3. see A.W.S. Baird, Pascal's Three Orders (Reprinted from the Downside Review NO.287, April 1969, pp.157-171).
4. L172, B185; L189, B547.
5. L308, B793.
6. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.118.
7. see Chevalier, Pascal, p.306.
8. L382, B287; L424, B278. cf. De l'Art de Persuader in which Pascal explains more fully the role of the will and grace in belief. see pages 48-49.
9. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.116-117.
10. This function of reason is fully developed in De l'Esprit Géométrique. see pages 43-44.
11. L110, B282.
12. see pages 39-40.
13. Chevalier, Pascal, pp.306-307. cf. L751, B3 ; L821, B252.
14. L113, B348; L114, B397.
15. L449, B556.
16. L179, B256.
17. L110, B282.
18. cf. Traité du Vide. see page 36.
19. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine, p.12.
20. L419, B430, O.C., p.521. see also L429, B229; L781, B242; L449, B556.
21. The illuminative action of grace is described in Sur la Conversion du Pécheur. see pages 66-70.

22. cf. Lettre à Mme Périer, O.C., pp.272-273.
23. Cf. Entretien avec M. de Saci, O.C. p.296. "l'union ineffable de deux natures dans la seule personne d'un Homme-Dieu".
24. L449, B556.
25. L189, B547.
26. L127, B415.
27. L418, B233.
28. L781, B242.
29. K.E. Kirk, The Vision of God (Cambridge, James Clarke, 1977), p.133. see also Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine, p.243 and Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.100.
30. see Mme Périer Vie de Blaise Pascal: In Blaise Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules, pp.15-18.
31. O.C. p.313.
32. L160, B257.
33. L427, B194. O.C. p.554.
34. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, pp.369-370.
35. L913.
36. Gouhier, Blaise Pascal Commentaires, p.34.
37. L429, B229.
38. L517, B867.
39. Gouhier, Blaise Pascal Commentaires, pp.34-42.
40. L913.
41. cf. Sur la Conversion du Pécheur, O.C. pp.290 and 291 for a detailed analysis of the conversion experience. see also pages 66-70.
42. L110, B282.
43. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, p.89.
44. L110, B282.
45. L505, B260.
46. L923, B905.
47. L119, B423.

48. L172, B185.
49. L661, B81.
50. L119, B43.
51. L548, B779.
52. L913.
53. H. Bremond, Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux en France. Vol IV, p.410. Chevalier expresses a similar view in Pascal, p.109.
54. The "twice-born" type of conversion is outlined in Sur la Conversion du Pécheur, O.C., pp.290-291.
55. cf. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, p.310.
56. The exclusiveness of the Augustinian ecclesiastical structure is underlined by J. Oman in Grace and Personality, pp.170-174 and by Allen in The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.163.
57. L748, B239.
58. see page 205 and cf. Chevalier, Pascal, p.41.
59. L467, B449.
60. L427, B194, O.C., p.554. Chevalier claims that fragments L444, B557 and L394, B288 furnish evidence of Pascal's belief in God's readiness to reward those who seek Him. see Pascal, p.274.
61. L925, B520.
62. L919, B553.
63. L148, B425.
64. L926, B582.
65. L548, B779. cf. P. Sellier, Pascal et Saint Augustin, p.218.
66. see A. Krailsheimer, Pascal, p.43.
67. see Chevalier, Pascal, p.163.
68. L989, B935.
69. L662, B521; L706, B870. cf. IV<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.267.
70. cf. L854, B839. also IV<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.267.
71. L713, B923; L923, B905.

72. L954, B925.
73. Blaise Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules ed. L. Brunschvicg, p.18.
74. see J. Russier, La Foi selon Pascal. Vol.1, p.25.
75. L216, B493. see J. Miel, Pascal and Theology, pp.177-178.
76. L119, B423.
77. Fragments L505, B260 and L174, B270 appear to make reason sole judge of the content of belief upon which the choice of the good depends.
78. L427, B194, O.C. p.554.
79. L740, B583.
80. L176, B261.
81. Strowski, Chevalier, see page 180.
82. D.E. Roberts, Existentialism and Religious Belief (London, Oxford University Press, 1968), p.34.
83. L874, B881.
84. O.C. p.363.
85. see pages 64-65.
86. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.139.  
"C'est un trait de la religion de Port-Royal... d'établir entre Dieu et chaque fidèle un rapport particulier et en quelque manière unique".
87. Chevalier subscribes to this view. see Pascal, p.178.
88. L467, B449.
89. see pages 64-65.
90. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St Augustine, pp.3-43.
91. L539, B99.
92. see pages 47-52.
93. O.C., p.355.
94. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Riason selon Pascal, p.111. see L110, B282; L821, B252.
95. Gouhier in Blaise Pascal Commentaires, p.19, notes that in copying the text of the Mémorial on to parchment, Pascal inserted "veue" after "sentiment", "dont ce nouveau mot précise un des multiples sens; la certitude est celle d'un sentiment qui est vue, ce qui la distingue de l'assurance donnée par le raisonnement."



96. Laporte in Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.89. equates "automate" with "volonté".
97. L149, B430.
98. Outlined in Sur la Conversion du Pécheur, O.C., pp.290-291.
99. see F.C. Copleston, Aquinas, p.181.
100. see Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St Augustine, pp.3-10.
101. Copleston, Aquinas, p.180. "According to Aquinas all human beings necessarily desire and seek what he calls beatitudo. And this term, which corresponds to some extent to Aristotle's eudaimonia is traditionally translated by the word 'happiness'".
102. L148, B425.
103. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, p.92.
104. see page 53. H.M. Davidson in The Origins of Certainty, p.19, observes that the primary mode of thinking in the Pensées is dialectical.
105. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.123. cf. C.C.J. Webb, Pascal's Philosophy of Religion, p.24.
106. L145, B461. see also L933, B460.
107. Kirk, The Vision of God, pp.133-137. The Platonism of Augustine's de Civitate clearly provides the inspiration for Pascal's depreciation of the world and the flesh in this section of the Pensées.
108. L45, B83.
109. L44, B82, O.C., p.505.
110. L61, B309.
111. L66, B326.
112. L64, B295.
113. L60, B294.
114. L47, B172.
115. Laporte, in Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.107-110, discusses Pascal's use of the word "instinct", synonymous in his work for an "inclination naturelle", an intuitive function of reason by which it apprehends the notions which "raisonnement" takes as the basis of pure human thought. cf. Pascal's usage of "instinct" in Traité du Vide (see page 39) where it denotes "cette activité irraisonnable" of animals.

116. L133, B168.
117. L143, B464.
118. L136, B139, O.C. p.517.
119. L135, B773.
120. L136, B139, O.c. p.518.
121. L137, B142.
122. L622, B131.
123. L978, B100.
124. *ibid.*
125. L432, B194 b & c.
126. L427, B194, O.C. p.552.
127. L612, B219.
128. L401, B437.
129. L131, B434.
130. see pages 44-46.
131. L148, B425.
132. L149, B430.
133. L68, B205.
134. Here Pascal follows Augustine closely. As Gilson states in The Christian Philosophy of St Augustine, p.29, for Augustine, "the very possibility of faith depends on reason".
135. L200, B347; L111, B339; L437, B399.
136. L117, B409.
137. L620, B146.
138. L429, B229.
139. L781, B242.
140. L813, B895.
141. L530, B274. see Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.67-72.
142. L145, B461.
143. L149, B43.
144. L407, B465.
145. L449, B556.

146. L769, B903.
147. L781, B242.
148. see page 68.
149. L174, B270; L182, B272; L183, B253; L188, B267.
150. L128, B396.
151. L148, B425.
152. L400, B427; L401, B437; L429, B229.
153. L117, B409.
154. L75, B389.
155. L148, B425.
156. L149, B430, O.C. p.520.
157. *ibid.*
158. L617, B492.
159. L97, B334.
160. L118, B402.
161. L45, B83.
162. P. Sellier, Pascal et Saint Augustin, p.285.
163. L226, B523.
164. see pages 57-58.
165. Bremond in Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux en France, p.401, asserts that Pascal replaced God with Christ the Redeemer. Brunschvicg in Blaise Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules, pp.300-301 also underlines the centrality of Christ in the thought of Pascal. "Jésus est le centre et le sommet de la théologie de Pascal". cf. C.C.J. Webb, Pascal's Philosophy of Religion, p.15. The author states that Pascal "denied practically all value to any knowledge of God but that which came through his revelation of himself in Jesus Christ".
166. L433, B783.
167. L190, B543; L191, B549; L417, B548; L416, B546.
168. L608, B766.
169. L919, B553.
170. L189, B547.
171. L925, B520.

172. L149, B430.
173. L131, B434; L239, B510.
174. L416, B546.
175. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp.390-391.
176. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, p.32. cf. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, p.57.
177. L378, B470.
178. L449, B559.
179. see page 74, cf. VI<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., pp.268-269 and Miel, Pascal and Theology, pp.178-179.
180. L372, B483.
181. L923, B905.
182. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, p.31.
183. *ibid.* p.227.
184. *ibid.* p.359, note 2.
185. L394, B288.
186. L919, B553.
187. L931, B550.
188. L131, B434.
189. L188, B267. cf. De l'Esprit Géométrique, see pages 44-46.
190. cf. De l'Esprit Géométrique, O.C., p.352.
191. L131, B434. see Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, p.33.
192. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.140. cf. also Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.54-55 and 99-100.
193. L913. Mémorial.
194. L173, B273.
195. L505, B260.
196. H. Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, p.29 cf. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, p.16. Campbell argues that reason must be the ultimate arbiter of "religious truth or any other truth".
197. Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, p.33.

198. cf. IV<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C. p.267.
199. L131, B434.
200. L461, B584.
201. L446, B586.
202. L427, B194.
203. *ibid.*
204. L236, B578.
205. L835, B564.
206. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.137.
207. L427, B194.
208. L149, B430.
209. L919, B553.
210. L149, B430.
211. L232, B566.
212. L793, B737.
213. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.101-102. "la raison comprendrait outre la faculté du raisonnement ou raison proprement dite, une faculté intellectuelle encore, mais intuitive".
214. O.C. p.355.
215. L406, B395.
216. L588, B279.
217. L380, B284.
218. L539, B99. see Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, p.134.
219. L423, B277.
220. Copleston, Aquinas, pp.188-189.
221. L298, B283.
222. L751, B3.
223. L821, B252.
224. Gouhier, Blaise Pascal Commentaires, p.45. see also Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.137-138.
225. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine,

- p.245. Gilson observes that the incompleteness of the Augustinian doctrine "is no less a part of it than the digressive method for which it is criticized".
226. L298, B283.
227. Chevalier, Pascal, pp.314 and 318. see also F. Strowski, Pascal et son Temps tome III (Paris, Librairie Plon, 1939), pp.292-294.
228. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, pp.154-158.
229. L418, B233.
230. see pages 44-46.
231. L530, B274.
232. L821, B252.
233. Laporte, Le Coeur et la Raison selon Pascal, p.97. see also E. Gilson, Les Idées et les Lettres (Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1955), p.273, "S'abêtir signifie donc exactement: assujettir l'esprit, dont la conviction est nécessairement instable, à l'automatisme de la bête qui, chez l'être double que nous sommes, est le seul principe d'assurance et de stabilité". and H.M. Davidson, The Origins of Certainty, pp.75-76. "What interests Pascal here is the whole person as a creature of habit".
234. Blaise Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules, p.434, note 3.
235. cf. L816, B240.
236. L936, B698. cf. J. Burnaby, Amor Dei, p.74. For Augustine, acceptance of authority implied the Church's values and rule of life as well as dogma.
237. H.D. Lewis, Our Experience of God (London, Allen and Unwin, 1959) p.11. cf. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, pp.64-65.
238. H. Rashdall, Christus in Ecclesia, p.90.
239. L125, B92. cf. L419, B89; and Davidson, The Origins of Certainty, p.90.
240. Oman, The Natural and The Supernatural, p.304. cf. Copleston, Aquinas, p.208.
241. W. James, The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1979), p.17.
242. *ibid.* p.25.
243. Chevalier, Pascal, p.299. cf. Krailsheimer, Pascal,

- p.185.
244. L808, B245.
245. L418, B233, O.C., p.551.
246. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.121.
247. see pages 176-177.
248. L221, B774.
249. L911, B781.
250. L931, B550.
251. In Blaise Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules, p.301.
252. L570, B768.
253. L571, B775.
254. Chevalier, Pascal, pp.302, 371-372.
255. Krailsheimer, Pascal, pp.67-68.
256. Chevalier, Pascal, p.300, note 3.
257. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine, p.245.
258. L214, B491.
259. L550, B744.
260. L930, B513.
261. L921, B518.
262. L930, B513.
263. L917, B540.
264. L562, B534.
265. L774, B497.
266. L785, B776.
267. L930, B513.
268. L969, B514.
269. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, p.91. see also pages 27-29.
270. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, p.285. cf. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, pp.52-53.
271. see H.M. Davidson, Blaise Pascal, p.85. Davidson notes

that reason like every other important term in the Pensées "is involved in some kind of semantic paradox".

272. Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, p.9.
273. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, pp.43-44.
274. Oman, Grace and Personality, p.139.
275. cited by H. de Lubac in Le Mystère du Surnaturel (Paris, Aubier, 1965), p.53.
276. *ibid.*, p.116.
277. *ibid.*, p.249.
278. F. von Hügel, The Mystical Element of Religion vol.I (London, J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd, 1961), p.339.
279. Rashdall, Christus in Ecclesia, p.85.
280. Blaise Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules, p.52. see also pages 205-206.
281. Oman, Grace and Personality, p.95.
282. James, The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy, p.19.
283. Rashdall, Christus in Ecclesia, p.90.
284. Oman, Grace and Personality, p.171.
285. I. Trethowan, An Essay in Christian Philosophy, p.165.
286. Lewis, Our Experience of God, p.253.
287. Kirk, The Vision of God, pp.194-195.
288. L564, B485.



## CHAPTER VI

## CONCLUSION

The writings of Pascal most directly concerned with his theology of grace provide a comprehensive outline not only of the doctrine itself, but also of the morality and spirituality it implies, its psychological ground and the source of its peculiarly Pascalian expression. Although in the Ecrits sur la Grâce it is defined by Pascal quite unequivocally as that of Augustine, the pure doctrine of the Catholic Church and a synthesis of the partial truths embodied in Molinism and Calvinism, much debate has focused upon the question of his adherence to Jansenism and the heretical import of this label for his theology.

Pascal and Jansenism

The origins of the Jansenist<sup>1</sup> movement in the discord between the Eastern and Western traditions of the Church on the question of grace after the Council of Trent, and its identification with the doctrine and spirituality of Port-Royal which, under the direction of St.-Cyran became the focus of the revival of Augustinianism and piety in seventeenth century France, have already been discussed in some detail<sup>2</sup>. As Laporte writes:

Nul doute quant aux origines du mouvement, ni quant aux intentions de ses auteurs: Saint-Cyran, Jansénius et Arnauld. Quelques précurseurs qu'on puisse leur assigner - ... un Bradwardin ou, au IX<sup>e</sup> siècle, un Gotteschalk - il est certain que cette doctrine est, chez eux, directement issue de la méditation personnelle des oeuvres de saint Augustin<sup>3</sup>.

It was at Port-royal, then, that Jansenism took its dual form: as a small group of theologians working under Arnauld; and also as a community under the rule of charity, practising

retreat from the world and embodying the morality and spirituality of Augustine's city of God, which it was St.-Cyran's aim to realize in the Church<sup>4</sup>. The central thesis of the Port-Royal theology was that elaborated by Jansen in the Augustinus: the rejection of the rational theology of the Scholastics and Jesuits and a return to Revelation as sole authority in theology<sup>5</sup>; and the reassertion of key Augustinian doctrines which had been allowed to lapse, particularly those of Original Sin and Predestination. It therefore emphatically reaffirmed the omnipotence of God in the discontinuity between the natural and the supernatural; the depravation of the human will, perversely fixed since the Fall on love of self; the insufficiency of a "sufficient" grace, and the need for a truly efficacious, medicinal grace to heal the will; the centrality of Christ's sacrifice as its sole source; its sufficiency for all but its efficacy only for the elect; the small and fixed number of those predestined to salvation; and the gratuitous and hidden nature of election, so that no one can be certain of final perseverance.

The theologians of Port-Royal particularly opposed both Stoic and Jesuit teaching, for in the first nature required no supernatural assistance in the performance of the good, while in the second grace merely complemented nature<sup>6</sup>. Jansen rejected the Scholastic conception of "pure nature"<sup>7</sup>, and the Aristotelian view of blessedness as the completion of man's natural state by the development of his potentialities<sup>8</sup>. Central to the Port-Royal doctrine is the Augustinian belief in man's natural end as a supernatural beatitude, and in grace as an infallible operation in the soul effecting a participation in the life of God, a transfusion ending in the union of

two natures in imitation of the Incarnation of Christ, the "Homme-Dieu"<sup>9</sup> The doctrine in effect constituted not only the repudiation of natural theology, especially of the moral function of reason as guiding the will in the choice of the good, found in Aquinas, but also the denial of any freedom of will in man<sup>10</sup>.

The implications for the moral life of this doctrine are therefore clear. Supernatural good can result only from a conversion of the will, effected by the power of an efficacious grace, from love of self to love of God, in which all true morality consists.

L'amour de Dieu, s'il est sincère, contient en soi tous les commandements, non seulement le désir de les observer, mais la règle par où, sans nul besoin de casuistique, nous saurons discerner dans les occasions embarrassantes, le sens et la mesure de notre devoir: ama et fac quod vis.... Ainsi tout, dans la conception Port-Royaliste, dogme et morale, se ramène bien à cette idée de l'amour qui, observe Arnauld dans une autre lettre bien remarquable, "fait l'essence et la beauté de notre Religion"<sup>11</sup>.

Moreover, since in every good act grace both instructs man in the good and performs it the mode of its acquisition is of vital concern for attaining salvation. For the Christian the only source of grace is Christ's Body, the Church, of which he has been made a member, and to which he must adhere exclusively in renunciation of the world and in the acceptance of his suffering. Divine Revelation and the Sacraments are the special channels by which grace is conferred in response to penitence and contrition, which are not merely mechanical but issue in renewal of life and works of charity. Laporte observes that the main preoccupations at Port-Royal were continuous meditation upon the truths of Revelation "pour les faire passer 'de la tête dans le coeur'", making them living truths, and constant purification in order

to be at all times fit for the reception of grace<sup>12</sup>. The attitude of the Christian to the Church must always, in their view, be one of humble submission since rebellion amounts to the abandonment of Christ, voluntary deprivation of efficacious grace and inevitable damnation<sup>13</sup>.

#### Pascal and Port-Royal

Chevalier describes the conversion of Pascal and his family to the doctrine of Port-Royal and life of charity at Rouen in 1646, their introduction to the works of St.-Cyran and submission to the spiritual direction of Guillebert, curé of Rouville and, in the writer's view "sorte de janséniste avant la lettre"<sup>14</sup>. Pascal's second conversion in 1654 marked the beginning of a new era of full commitment to the Jansenist cause and an intimate working relationship with the theologians of Port-Royal, with whom he closely collaborated in the writing of the Provinciales<sup>15</sup>. Brunschvicg<sup>16</sup> and others note the continuity of his theology from his first assimilation of Jansenist teaching until his death, extending from his earliest letters to Gilberte (1648) and the Périers (1651), and the Préface pour le Traité du Vide (1647) until the writing of the Ecrits sur la Grâce (1656) and the Pensées (1657-1658). Laporte demonstrates very convincingly the precise identification of Pascal's theology with the Jansenism of Port-Royal, especially in the Provinciales for, he observes, "En vérité, tout le 'Jansénisme' est là ramassé<sup>17</sup>, with the morality it implies. Although part of "la petite Eglise Janséniste", Pascal inevitably left the mark of his own individual genius upon the presentation of and defence of that doctrine, especially in the mathematical perspective of his thought, his psychological perception and the brilliance

and versatility of his style. Nevertheless, Laporte affirms, "c'est cette théologie Janséniste qui fait son être"<sup>18</sup>.

Car assurément, nul ne prétend que Port-Royal ait produit le génie de Pascal.... Mais c'est à Port-Royal que ce génie a trouvé son orientation, sa nourriture spirituelle, qu'il s'est en quelque manière trouvé lui-même<sup>19</sup>.

#### Authority or Heresy

A comparison of the doctrine set down in the Ecrits sur la Grâce with that of Augustine<sup>20</sup> confirms their essential equivalence, a view which is unconditionally supported by Sellier and others.

La théologie augustinienne de la grâce est le soleil de son oeuvre. Persuadé que le plus grand des Pères était infallible en ce domaine, Pascal a reproduit sa pensée et jusqu'à ses termes<sup>21</sup>.

It was clearly also that of Thomas Aquinas and the Catholic Church<sup>22</sup>, despite an apparent evolution in the latter away from Augustinianism. The introduction of a "sufficient grace", insistence upon God's universal salvific will, and the Aristotelian view of the will as freely following the choice of reason, did not represent in real terms true modifications of Augustine in the direction of Jesuit humanism. As N.P. Williams states of Aquinas:

His conception of grace is metaphysically based upon the Aristotelian idea of God as the Unmoved Prime Mover, an idea which inevitably generates belief, not merely in the universal necessity of grace but in its strict irresistibility<sup>23</sup>.

Williams observes that the modus operandi of grace in Augustine, by way of an infallible attraction, corresponds with the Aristotelian view of God (with which he was probably acquainted) as the ultimate Being moving the universe as the object of his love<sup>24</sup>. With God as first principle of all human willing, providentially arranging both motivations and circumstances congruous to the elect to ensure their final

perseverance, and the "reprouvés" rejecting a grace which, though sufficient is always incongruous, clearly no fundamental difference exists between the Augustinian and Thomist theology of grace<sup>25</sup>.

Moreover, the freedom of will in the acceptance or rejection of grace, which both doctrines affirm, plainly consists only in its spontaneity and freedom from constraint. As N.P. Williams points out, the final of those circumstances by which election is determined - that prevailing at the time of death - is entirely divorced from human volition<sup>26</sup>. There is no question therefore of resistance to efficacious grace in the doctrines of Augustine or Thomas, nor indeed of a grace common to all men. Whilst all are regarded as capable of redemption and Christ's sacrifice was offered for all, grace is actually given only to baptised Christians either temporarily or, in the case of the elect, until their final perseverance<sup>27</sup>. Abercrombie insists that Jansen interprets Augustine to mean that God's universal salvific will is not universal, but he also underlines the difficulty experienced by Augustine in attempting to reconcile the divine will with Biblical texts<sup>28</sup>.

The "Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique" defines Jansenism as "une hérésie singulière qui a toujours voulu rester dans l'Eglise"<sup>29</sup>. Yet the defence of efficacious grace, sanctioned by the Council of Trent<sup>30</sup>, and the moral theology which it implied, has always been, in Laporte's view "tout le programme de la Théologie de Port-Royal"<sup>31</sup>, the sole doctrinal point at issue in the Jansenist controversies which began with the condemnation of the Five Propositions of Cornet and made Jansenism a party within the Church.

Clearly the Five Propositions reputedly from the Augustinus, and upon which the orthodoxy of Port-Royal hinged, were simply the pretext for the condemnation of a theology not only regarded as innovative and a threat to the legality of the Jesuit position, but which set the authority of conscience above that of the Crown<sup>32</sup>.

Tant d'acharnement, contre un ennemi si peu redoutable en effet, ne peut s'expliquer que par l'incompatibilité profonde que l'absolutisme sentait entre ses propres principes et les aspirations du jansénisme. Le jansénisme fut éliminé dans la mesure où il contredisait l'évolution de la société française, et les puissances qui en étaient issues<sup>33</sup>.

Pascal, in fact, in the Provinciales upholds obedience to the sovereign and the state as divine agents in the ordering of human society<sup>34</sup>. It is clearly Augustinianism, and with it the Western Tradition of the Catholic Church, which the Jesuits sought to brand as heretical.

The two fundamental notions contained in these propositions, and reputedly opposed to the Catholic doctrine of grace, were the denial of the real and actual efficacy of Christ's sacrifice, and the assertion of the impossibility of resisting efficacious grace. Since only the first proposition was a textually accurate reproduction of Jansen and, in the view of many writers<sup>35</sup> open to a Catholic interpretation, and since the content of all five plainly affirmed the Augustinian and Thomist doctrines of efficacious grace, which could scarcely be condemned by the Holy See, they were finally damned "au sens de Jansénius", presumably also that of Calvin and Luther<sup>36</sup>. The Port-Royal denial of Papal or Conciliar infallibility in the interpretation of Tradition in the matter of "fait" was also perceived by the Jesuits as further grounds for charges of heresy. Laporte considers that only

the negations of Papal infallibility and free will, as ordinarily understood, appear to oppose orthodoxy<sup>37</sup>. Since the first has never found general acceptance and the second is to be found in both Augustine and Thomas, "on ne voit plus bien où peut se trouver la matière d'une 'hérésie'"<sup>38</sup>. The "Bulle Unigenitus" which condemned many of the essential theses of Port-Royal, nevertheless left untouched:

...ces vérités de la Grâce et de la Prédestination gratuite que plusieurs fois, au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle et au XVIII<sup>e</sup>, Rome a qualifiées d'inébranlables - inconcussa tutissimaque dogmata. Mais Port-Royal (Pascal l'avait fait ressortir dans les Provinciales) n'avait jamais voulu défendre autre chose. Ainsi, les querelles de personnes apaisées, il apparaît que les conflits d'idées étaient illusoires. Il n'y a plus de jansénisme, parce qu'au fond il n'y en a jamais eu<sup>39</sup>.

Critics most anxious to label Jansenism a heresy, would appear to be those unwilling to acknowledge the inherently deterministic character of Augustine's doctrine of grace, and his complete failure to reconcile free will with an efficacious grace. Their case appears to rest solely upon allegations of deliberate misinterpretation by Jansen, especially of the Augustinian teaching on predestination and the irresistibility of the grace of final perseverance.

Abercrombie<sup>40</sup> accuses Jansen of following Baius in twisting these doctrines into a harsh Predestinarianism. In defence of Augustine he writes, "The rhetorical brilliance of Augustine's language only facilitates this distortion to a man of very limited spiritual experience", refusing to acknowledge that such an inference may logically and legitimately be drawn from such teaching.

In similar vein de Lubac states that Jansen, using extracts from Augustine, perhaps out of context, built his whole edifice on a misinterpretation, justifying in the name



of Augustine the doctrine of St.-Cyril and achieving only a "conscientious misunderstanding"<sup>41</sup> of his master. He claims, with some justification, that the Augustinian teaching on Predestination and Grace, like that of St. Paul and St. John, constitutes a retrospective rationalization of experience<sup>42</sup>, implying that in some way this excuses the moral difficulties implicit in them. Augustine's use of "insuperabiliter" and similar words in no way signifies a tyranny of grace in the view of this writer, for it merely indicates its invincibility in those perceived to persevere until their death<sup>43</sup>. De Lubac claims, moreover, that Jansen misinterpreted Augustine when he failed to equate grace with charity, the action of which is interior to the will, and when he identified grace rather with the "delectatio victrix", "an inverse concupiscence" no different in substance from the tyrannical attraction of the passions, a force apart from the will and taking its place. That this is mere casuistry to evade the label of determinism is evident when de Lubac continues. "Whatever Arnauld might say ... it is clear that it is not grace which is termed invincible in relation to the will: it is the will itself by the working of grace"<sup>44</sup>, surely a distinction without a difference.

Jansen's interpretation of the "delectatio victrix" is, in fact, the main focus of adverse criticism. Burnaby accuses Jansen, in his separation of the "delectatio" from the will, of perverting the Augustinian psychology of grace into a "psychological hedonism", using God for the end of human happiness instead of loving Him for Himself<sup>45</sup>. Abercrombie goes even further, stating that in Jansen the will "is persuaded to act well by an attraction proceeding

from God, which affects the will in precisely the same manner as the physical attraction of some immediately and carnally desirable created good"<sup>46</sup>, again a sophistry to avoid the blatant determinism of Augustine. In thus divorcing the "delectatio" from intellectual illumination, Abercrombie claims that Jansen has made it the whole of grace, creating "a strife of desires" between grace and concupiscence<sup>47</sup>. In Augustine, the "delectatio victrix", "charity" or "love of God" is the whole of grace<sup>48</sup>. Jansen has simply returned to the pre-Scholastic, Augustinian notion of the will as a spontaneous, rather than a deliberated, expression of love or attraction, in what Broome describes as the strictest possible interpretation of Augustine's thought<sup>49</sup>.

There are clearly no serious grounds for supposing that Pascal's theology and that of Port-Royal were not essentially that of Augustine, Thomas and the Catholic Church, or that the "Jansenists" deserved their sectarian label in preference to their preferred title "Disciples de St. Augustin".

#### Theology and Methodology

A close interrelatedness of method and material is to be found in Pascal's writing on grace, the whole underpinned throughout by the basic distinction between the relative claims of nature and grace, reason and Revelation, but with each work stressing the particular aspect of the Augustinian theology relevant to its aim. Pascal faithfully follows the Augustinian method to prove each thesis, appealing to the facts of experience, citing the authority of Revelation and resorting to rational demonstration, all vehicles by which grace may humble will and reason, eliciting submission to the truth of Revelation as interpreted in the doctrine of

Augustine. Style is also adapted both to purpose and audience, bearing the stamp of Pascal's individual genius. Even the inconsistencies in the Augustinian doctrine, arising from the need to find, in the interests of orthodoxy, some place for the free cooperation of man in the work of redemption, are faithfully reproduced by Pascal together with the irrational arguments designed to explain them. Underlying this meticulous adherence to the presuppositions and method of Augustine, however, can be detected unconsciously held assumptions, identical with those of the humanists themselves, of reason as arbiter of religious truth, and of the will as free, in the Aristotelian understanding, to follow the dictates of reason.

#### Ecrits sur la Grâce

The aim of the Ecrits sur la Grâce is the vindication of the Augustinian doctrine, regarded in some quarters in seventeenth century France as innovative and heretical, as the only criterion of Catholic orthodoxy, and more particularly of efficacious grace as the sole instrument of salvation. The accusations of Calvinism which threatened the Port-Royal position, and the popularity of Jesuit rational theology, emphasising the autonomy of the human will and making salvation subject to the choice of reason, a position apparently sanctioned by the Council of Trent, when it affirmed both the efficacious grace of the Thomists and the freedom of the will against the Reformers<sup>50</sup>, required for orthodoxy the inclusion and reconciliation of both stances. Pascal is not concerned here either with the morality implied by the Augustinian doctrine or with obtaining an individual commitment to it. Free of polemical or apologetic overtures, the work is essen-

tially expository, an attempt to demonstrate logically that in the Augustinian doctrine divine omnipotence and human freedom are perfectly harmonized by the agency of divine grace, making it wholly acceptable to the "sens commun" of the reader on theological, moral and rational grounds.

Pascal first of all deals with what was clearly the crucial issue in the debate concerning the Five Propositions, the relative contributions of the human and divine wills in determining salvation, establishing the key presupposition of the Augustinian doctrine, namely, the omnipotence of God. There is a brief appeal to the facts of experience in the Ecrits sur la Grâce to establish that in those who are demonstrably saved the human will freely cooperates with the divine will, while the bulk of mankind are clearly responsible for their own choice of damnation, an interpretation designed to save God's love and mercy. To determine which of the two concurring wills should be considered "dominante et maîtresse de l'autre" in the elect, and to explain the apparently unloving and unjust abandonment of the "réprouvés" by a merciful and loving God, Pascal presents the Augustinian doctrine of grace as the distilled essence of Christian Revelation.

He adopts the dialectical style favoured by Arnauld to distance the Augustinian doctrine equally from Molinism and Calvinism, demonstrating that each is true in its affirmations of freewill and omnipotence respectively and heretical only in excluding that of the opposed doctrine. As in the Entretien avec M. de Saci the key to the synthesis is to be found in the Augustinian belief in the two states of Adam and in Augustine's psychology of the will. The partial truths

affirmed in Molinism and Calvinism are simultaneously affirmed and God's nature is preserved by ascribing to Him two wills for man, applicable to his two states. The universal salvific will of God at creation can then witness to His love, the wholly gratuitous (though arbitrary) gift of salvation to His omnipotence and mercy, and the damnation of the "réprouvés", in view of Adam's sin, to His justice and man's freedom.

Pascal, like Augustine was clearly aware of the need to clarify the difficulties and inconsistencies which made the doctrine unacceptable to the moral consciousness of many, and a large proportion of the work is occupied with rational arguments, often those of Augustine, which attempt to resolve these problems. The major difficulty facing Pascal in the Ecrits sur la Grâce is the need to reconcile the basic assumption of man's radical dependence upon God, for each and every impulse and act of goodness, with a complete autonomy of will and a moral accountability for damning himself and meriting salvation. Pascal proposes the reconciliation, with which Augustine rebutted accusations of Manicheism by the Pelagians, with his concept of the will as determined by the attraction of some perceived good rather than by reason and as the slave either of concupiscence or grace. Even under the overpowering domination of concupiscence the will is said to retain a potential freedom to follow the good. Since this potentiality can be actualized only by the gift of the more powerful attraction of divine grace, free will and divine omnipotence cannot logically be claimed to have been harmonized. With Augustine, he can only, in the final analysis, attribute the apparent injustice of God to reasons which are unsearchable

and hidden in the mystery of the Godhead.

In a further attempt to salvage the divine love, Pascal offers several of Augustin's rationalizations of the word "tous", and makes the distinction without a difference between "faire" and "permettre" in God's damnation of the "réprouvés", to avoid identification with the overt determinism of Calvinism, betraying thereby an awareness of its close equivalence with Augustinianism. The passages on the "Double Délaissement des Justes", the interpretations of the canons of the Council of Trent and of the meanings inherent in the words "possibilité", "pouvoir" and "puissance", in the proposition on the possibility of the commandments, are all attempts to resolve the same problem but with respect to perseverance. The difficulty implicit in the rejection of the complete freedom of will implied by the free availability of the Jesuit "sufficient" grace, and a simultaneous affirmation of the reality of man's free cooperation in salvation and damnation, leads to illogicalities and equivocations which simply reinforce the image of God as an unjust and arbitrary despot.

The divinization of man by incorporation in Christ, the "Homme-Dieu", must inevitably imply that the human will is always "préparée par le Seigneur" and "cause secondaire" in all salutary acts. Grace is the reward of prayer, but prayer is itself a divine gift. The Augustinian view that the justified are abandoned by God to instil fear and humility in the elect, reinforcing the dependence which is the inevitable counterpart of omnipotence, and Pascal's insistence upon the hiddenness of election, which makes conversion (or abandonment) possible at any time, and grace a continuous, if uncertain infusion, simply support this judgement. Laporte

lists the many oppositions, the union of which, by the agency of grace, makes up "la Vérité", and concludes:

Bref, la nature et la grâce; les oeuvres et l'amour; l'autorité et la liberté; la lettre et l'esprit.

Mais, dans cette suite d'oppositions, les termes antithétiques ne sont pas synthétisés en un troisième terme qui les concilie. La conciliation existe sans doute au regard de Dieu: au regard d'un esprit tel que le nôtre, elle est un "mystère"<sup>51</sup>.

While consciously adhering to the Augustinian distinction between the authority of Revelation and reason in the field of theological truth, the whole of the Ecrits sur la Grâce witnesses to an unconscious acknowledgement by Pascal of the opposite thesis, for they in fact constitute an arduous attempt to persuade the reason of the reader, acting presumably as judge of religious truth, to recognize and accept as authoritative the Augustinian theology of grace in spite of its shortcomings. He condemns the Calvinist suppression of the human will and its replacement by grace, together with God's responsibility for the introduction of evil into the world and for the damnation of the majority of mankind, as offensive to his natural concepts of love and justice and, by implication, those of God, acknowledging an analogical relation to exist between the two. Pascal in fact damns his own doctrine with that of Calvin, for neither his appeal to an "occult" justice in God, nor the transfer of responsibility for the introduction of evil to Adam, in any way absolves God.

The Ecrits sur la Grâce are clearly the passionate defence of a particular view of God and of grace based wholly upon non-rational grounds, namely, the numinous quality of Pascal's conversion experience and his pessimistic assessment

of human nature, and therefore rationally indefensible. Pascal follows Augustine in citing extensively the authority of Scripture, the Councils and the Fathers to validate his arguments, but here the interpretative role of reason is plainly that of selecting texts, canons or passages from the Fathers (particularly Augustine himself and his disciples) whose theology is determined by a similar view of man and God. Similarly linguistic and textual analysis, which favours his particular religious bias, verbal equivocation masking the true meanings of statements, and the circumlocutions of the "Double Délaissement des Justes", are deliberate attempts to allay the moral scruples of the reader, recognized as valid<sup>52</sup>. In adopting the method for the logical proof of propositions set down in De l'Esprit Géométrique in the fourth Ecrit, the resultant demonstration cannot be held to constitute an unbiased interpretation of the Council's intentions, for its deliverances clearly catered to the needs of a strong "once-born" Scotist faction in its affirmation of free will.

It is abundantly clear that not only Pascal but Augustine before him completely disregarded his own explicit distinction, both in the use of rational argument to establish the truth of doctrine, and in his appeal to the "sens commun" as judge of its truth and moral acceptability.

#### Lettres Provinciales

Pascal's ambivalent attitude to the relative claims of Revelation and reason in the Ecrits sur la Grâce, is even more evident in the Provinciales, where the whole work constitutes an appeal to the moral consciousness of French society to judge the authority of the relative doctrines in



the light of the morality they prescribe. The emphasis in this work is therefore upon affirming grace as sole authority in moral theology both to understand the law of Christ in Revelation and to practise it, and upon exposing the manifest inadequacy of Jesuit rational moral theology which, in Pascal's view, openly threatened the integrity of the Church and the stability of the State.

Augustinian presuppositions particularly relevant to the aim of the work are his concepts of: the will as the slave of grace or of concupiscence; Christ and His Body the Church as the only source of redemption and true morality; and humanity as divided into two opposed groups under the rule of Charity or of the Devil, all reflecting the fundamental opposition between nature and grace. The first condition of the moral life is the healing of concupiscent wills which, in view of the Fall, must always perform acts (even apparently virtuous ones) dictated by self-interest, with reason rationalizing the choice. Grace must restore pre-Fall equilibrium by drawing the will from love of worldly attractions to its true goal, God, in the love of Whom, true morality consists.

Moreover, the life of charity can be lived only within the communion of the Church which mediates the grace of conversion and perseverance in its sacraments and teaching. Pascal makes it very clear in the Provinciales that the spiritual and moral discipline practised by the nuns and solitaires of Port-Royal exemplified that life. The true Christian follows the guidance of conscience enlightened by grace through prayer, meditation upon Scripture, spiritual direction and the purification of body and life which makes

its reception possible. Since, as Pascal underlines in his correspondence<sup>53</sup>, the Christian life consists in a gradual separation from worldly attachments and incorporation into the life of God completed only at death, an attitude of detachment from the world is obligatory, of "use" rather than "enjoyment" of worldly goods and ties, as mere images of their truly "real" supernatural counterparts and as the means by which the Christian can rise to God and enjoy eternal beatitude.

The voluntary acceptance of all events, suffering, mortification, poverty and charity is regarded as indispensable evidence of a will united with that of Christ. Grace and the moral life are therefore conditional upon hatred of the world and a willed adherence to Christ, especially in the Eucharist where absolution is devoid of grace without the desire for union with God or the sincere penitence which issues in renewal of life. For Pascal, as for Augustine, the limits of human reason in the moral sphere are the fulfilment of the law and natural virtue. To attain to supernatural beatitude, however, reason must submit to the higher authority of Revelation.

The polemical nature of the Provinciales, and the public for whom it was destined, determined both form and literary style but the method remains that of Augustine, namely an appeal to the reader to accept the Augustinian doctrine as valid in the light of experiential evidence, of proofs from Christian Revelation and of rational demonstration. Satire, from gentle irony to ridicule, is the instrument by which Pascal both entertains the reader and acquaints him with the facts of the moral laxity condoned by Jesuit rational moral

theology. Citations from Scripture and the Fathers necessarily occupy an important place in the work, countering those from Jesuit probabilists. It is brilliant and witty argumentation however, much in dialogue form, upon which Pascal most heavily relies to draw from a public, whose acquaintance with Catholic theology is minimal, a favourable judgement on theological and moral problems simply in the light of the "sens commun".

For Pascal a rational moral theology such as that of the Jesuits constituted a denial of the doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin, and of the need for a Redeemer, based as it was upon a freely available "sufficient" grace subject to the choice of human reason and making the "moi" the axis of existence. The good no longer consisted in a participation in the life of God but in a natural beatitude, and the goal of existence is not God but the realization of self. Aristotle had replaced Plato, and the natural had banished the supernatural to the realm of the miraculous.

The bulk of the work, then, from Pascal's attack on "actual grace" in the fourth letter, is occupied with the presentation of his case: the systematic exposure of the hypocrisy, pride, ambition, slander and physical excess which the adoption of such a moral theology condones and even encourages. Such a naturalism, Pascal insists, is the reversal of Christian morality with love of God replaced by a natural ethic, the Church by the world, and involves overturning the Augustinian concept of "use" and "enjoyment" since a will separated from God must necessarily be ruled by concupiscence. Reason justifies this worldly morality through Probabilism, which Pascal is at pains to expose as

simply rationalizations of the choices of corrupt wills, tailored to the needs of the individual "amour-propre" enslaved to "gloire", "honneur" and "ambition". The sacraments, and especially the Eucharist, particularly venerated by Port-Royal, have been degraded by mechanistic observance and easy piety, dispensing, in Pascal's view, with the grace of Christ, love of God and the law of the Gospel, and so effecting a moral regression beyond the natural law.

Theological discussion is minimal in the Provinciales, and although Pascal cites the authority of Revelation for verification of his doctrinal stance in the early letters, to discredit the Jesuit "sufficient" grace, it is on the grounds of their dishonesty in forming an unholy alliance with the Thomists that he damns the Jesuits in the eyes of the reader. As in the Ecrits sur la Grâce Pascal is driven by accusations of Calvinism from counter-attacking Jesuits to exonerate the Augustinian doctrine from the stain of heresy. The eighteenth letter is devoted to proving orthodoxy by presenting the Augustinian doctrine as a synthesis of Thomist and Molinist teaching, in line with the continuing Tradition of the Church up to the time of Alvarez, upholding both efficacious grace and the freedom of will affirmed by the Council of Trent, and perhaps serving as inspiration for the later writing of the Ecrits sur la Grâce.

Between the fourteenth and eighteenth letters, a progression can be detected towards identification with the teaching and orthodoxy of Thomism in numerous references to the authority of Thomas, and in declarations of the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice for all. This modification, perhaps inspired by the Jesuit-Thomist coalition, represented

no more than a token concession, as in Thomism itself, to the humanist temper of the times and similar charges of heresy. There would seem to be no grounds for believing that Pascal in any way modified the teaching of Augustine in the Provinciales, with whom, in any case, both Arnauld and Nicole held Thomas to be in full accord<sup>54</sup>. This is borne out by Pascal's reiteration, in the same letter, of the basic distinction between Revelation and reason stated much earlier in the Traité du Vide, in defence of the Port-Royal challenge to Papal infallibility in the interpretation of fact in Tradition. The differentiation of truth into three distinct and heterogenous orders in this letter represents the full development of the Augustinian distinction which will play an important role in the Pensées.

Yet the whole of the Provinciales constitutes a denial of the claim that only faith is the judge "des choses surnaturelles et révélées"<sup>55</sup>. It is the "sens commun" of a worldly seventeenth century society, in Pascal's view outside the rule of charity, from whom a judgement is sought upon the authenticity of the Jansenist and Jesuit doctrines, by appraisal of their moral theology and the moral lives of their adherents. The criteria in the light of which this judgement is made are, moreover, themselves the products of human reason, namely, the natural concepts of truth and justice which Pascal clearly believes have an objective validity which he has declared impossible without grace. Moreover, in following Augustine and appealing to the evidence of experience for verification of his doctrine, Pascal would seem to contravene his own methodology, applying instead the scientific method for the proof of an

hypothesis to the field of religious truth.

Whilst true morality is possible only to grace according to Pascal, he nevertheless assumes in the Jesuits and their nominal adherents a natural ability, not only to evaluate and judge their own moral theology as the product of concupiscence because of the laxity it encourages, but also to renounce such an attachment to worldly values and return to a morality founded upon the law of the Gospel and love of God, simply by the right use of reason and the free choice of the will. This ambivalence is perhaps most evident in his criticism of the mechanical observance of the sacraments. An attitude of humility and sincerity is demanded of the worldly as the absolute prerequisite for the reception of the grace of absolution, but love of God, true contrition and the desire for a change of life are themselves said to be the work of prevenient grace.

The ambiguity surrounding Pascal's use of the word "conscience" - at times the seat of divine inspiration, at others clearly the "sens commun" or human reason - would seem to reflect the equivocal attitude of Pascal himself to the claims of nature and grace. The sense of outrage which pervades the Provinciales is, in fact, clearly directed at the Jesuits' deliberate refusal to follow the deliverances of reason, humbly to acknowledge the law of the Gospel as a higher morality and to prescribe and practise it themselves. The only inference to be drawn from Pascal's attack upon the Jesuits is that it is indeed possible to sin against the light and refuse the gift of grace. A truly moral life is clearly possible, in Pascal's view, by making God the axis of existence by the adoption of

an attitude of sincere and humble attention to the voice of God in reason and Revelation through which He witnesses to reality, and by a willed acceptance of its direction.

The clearly rational basis of Pascal's moral theology, added to his alignment of Jansenism with Thomism, and to his affirmations that he is not of Port-Royal, would seem to endorse the opinion of those who perceive an evolution away from Jansenism in the Provinciales in the direction of humanism. As in the Ecrits sur la Grâce, Pascal's assumption of the authority of the human moral consciousness as rightful judge of Revelation must be regarded as entirely unconsciously held. Augustine's fundamental distinction between nature and grace underpins both method and matter throughout the work. For Pascal, as for Augustine, human behaviour witnesses to wills ruled by concupiscence, to the inadequacy and unreliability of reason and to the need for men to submit to the authority of Revelation in order to live a truly moral life. The eighteenth Provinciale, written in the closest possible cooperation with the theologians of Port-Royal, of whom Pascal was designated "secrétaire", is a denial of any such separation<sup>56</sup>, while his adherence to the Augustinian theory of the two delectations in this letter, interpreted in the most strictly determinist sense, refutes any suggestion of a move away from Jansenism<sup>57</sup>.

### Pensées

The theology of Port-Royal similarly furnished the inspiration, method and basic presuppositions of the Pensées. The aim of the Apology, as the Entretien avec M. de Saci indicates, was clearly to present Christian Revelation, i.e. the Augustinian theology of grace, as the only path to last-

ing truth and happiness. The individuals at whom the apology is directed are both Christians accommodated by the rational theology of the Jesuits and libertines following Stoic, Epicurean or Sceptic philosophies. Pascal's undertaking of the work was plainly founded upon the Augustinian view of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ whose function it was to merit and mediate his grace in conversion, in its sacraments, in its teaching of Revelation and in the life of charity. As God's agent Pascal will make the worldly aware of their state, the result of concupiscence and self-love which blind them, persuading them to hate these obstacles to the Sovereign Good. In Revelation he will offer both explanation and a Redeemer, followed by proofs to convince the mind. The surrender of reason to the authority of Revelation and of the will to the discipline of the Church are the goal of the apologetic work, and, in those for whom they serve as a channel of grace, the means of election.

Central to method and theology are the fundamental Augustinian presuppositions of the omnipotence and transcendence of God and relative weakness and sinfulness of man, the primacy of faith over reason, grace over nature, and the qualitative difference and consequent discontinuity between the supernatural and natural spheres. Pascal's own conversion clearly validated this disproportion for him and, like Augustine's, it provided a blueprint for the apology. Underpinning the method is the Augustinian concept of the will, as the chief determinant of belief, ruled by concupiscence or grace with reason rationalizing its choice. De l'Art de Persuader demonstrates that for a change of belief the will must be persuaded to abandon its present love, the self, and



with it human reason, and turn to God as revealed in Scripture. Pascal therefore seeks to touch the heart, the seat of the will and reason, the capacity in man for the reception of "given" natural principles and supernatural knowledge and love of God, the "gouffre infini" which can be filled only by an infinite object.

Sur la conversion du Pécheur and the Mémorial show that neither reason nor human effort can of themselves provide religious certainty, or the assurance of election. What is needed is the total surrender of both reason and will to the grace of Christ. The action of grace is perceived, as in Augustine, as first bringing self-awareness and humility, precipitating the search for God, revealed as the immutable good in Scripture. Submission of will and reason to the divine revelation is rewarded by a further illumination, an intuitive apprehension of God recognized as transcendent and eliciting a renunciation of the world and surrender to the spiritual direction of the Church in the life of charity.

Exposition of doctrine is again minimal in the Pensées, for Pascal's intention, as in the Provinciales, was to make it "aimable" to a worldly and indifferent society by whom its harsher aspects would not be favourably received. As in the Provinciales, there is discernible in the Pensées also, when Pascal affirms the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice for all, a marked softening of the stance he had taken in the Ecrits sur la Grâce.

The fragments in the section "Misère de l'Homme" appeal to the facts of the human condition to point up the inconsistency and misery of man's lot in an attempt to shock the reader out of the illusion of happiness and force him to face

up to the reality of his state. Since the apology is aimed at concupiscent wills, the appeal is to self-interest and is based on that of the traditional ethics of Augustine and Aquinas, namely, the desire for happiness, universal to all men. In this first part of the work, Pascal follows the dialectical method of the Entretien avec M. de Saci, and employs the Platonic imagery of Augustine to emphasize the transience and worthlessness of this life in relation to the next, the unreliability of the senses and reason, deceived by imagination, illness and self-interest, and the inability of men to find either absolutes or happiness, all of which drives them to seek diversion. Pascal develops the conclusions reached in De l'Esprit Géométrique on the question of the infinities in order to underline the gulf between reason and the infinite object to which man aspires, in an effort to evoke the awe in the face of omnipotence which will humble his pride. The capacity for the infinite in man, the "gouffre infini", can be filled only by God.

Pascal presents the Christian religion, or, more precisely, the Augustinian doctrine of Original Sin, as explaining the dichotomy of man's nature and offering a remedy for his unhappiness. He goes beyond Augustine in his rejection of natural theology, refusing to see any evidence of God in nature, in the workings of conscience or in philosophies, which fail to take account of the duality of man, of the supernatural end for which he was created and of his corruption since the Fall which has left his will focused on self. The sovereign good which will satisfy man is attainable only by incorporation with Christ who united in himself the weakness of man and the power of God. The

absolute necessity for grace to effect a conversion to the supernatural order of charity places the person of Christ and the Augustinian view of the Atonement at the centre of the Pensées. Christ, by his death and suffering, and through the sufferings of his Body the Church, represents the sole source of the grace of redemption. However incomprehensible it may appear to the human mind therefore, reason ought humbly to submit to the doctrine of Original Sin, as it does to the infinities in mathematics, as a "given" principle. The theme of the "Dieu caché" underscores the "otherness" and omnipotence of God, the arbitrariness and uncertainty of election, and the role of Revelation as the instrument of election, for only those illumined by grace will understand its meaning.

The Augustinian method provides the framework of the "Pari" fragment in which Pascal offers an avenue of salvation through the will or "automate". The doctrine of the three orders, in its definitive form, sets out the limits of reason, its absolute inability to prove God or know His nature or man's destiny after death, and demonstrates the relative worthlessness of finite pleasures in the perspective of a possible eternity of happiness. The anxiety and self-interest Pascal seeks to arouse are again designed to withdraw the will, and with it reason, from love of self. Then through adherence to Christ in "l'abêtissement", acknowledged as a "given" principle on the analogy of first principles in mathematics, a habit of belief is established. Unless God simultaneously bestows the gift of grace however, neither submission of will or abdication of reason will bring the intuitive certainty which is the goal of the apology.

Laporte very convincingly rebuts the opinion of Chevalier and others that Pascal moved away from the determinism of Jansen towards a humanism which implies a universal salvific will in God and a freedom of will in man to dispose himself for, and cooperate with, divine grace. Yet, in the Pensées, as elsewhere, Pascal's inconsistent attitude to the scope of reason and human freedom supports the claim that he did assume in man a free will and moral consciousness with all that these imply for conversion. The Pensées, in fact, confirm the conclusion of the Provinciales: that both Laporte and Chevalier correctly interpret the theology of Pascal as both determinist and humanist, for the apology very clearly reflects opposed convictions held at different levels of consciousness. At the conscious level of thinking, method and presuppositions are not only meticulously in accord with those of Augustine, but are hardened by the mathematical mode of their expression. The appeal throughout is tailored to concupiscent wills, while the unreliability of reason dominated by the passions, the worthlessness of human values in the light of the divine, the unbridgeable gulf between nature and a Hidden god, all make grace absolutely indispensable for conversion. Unconscious assumptions, however, of reason or the moral consciousness recognizing objectively valid concepts of truth and justice, and of a human will which can not only recognize but choose to pursue the sovereign good, conflict with such Augustinian presuppositions, giving rise to numerous inconsistencies.

Pascal's ambivalence is evident in his presentation since, as in the Provinciales, with the aim and audience in mind, he keeps exposition of doctrine to a minimum and balances its determinism by fostering an optimistic attitude

to salvation, stressing the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice, and universality of God's antecedent will, defeated only by the wickedness of men. Pascal assumes that reason, though blinded by the passions, can transcend its finitude as it evaluates the human condition and judges that it ought to accept Revelation and seek God. He unconsciously underlines the unique role of reason as arbiter of religious truth when he states: that the inner assent of reason must validate religious truth; that no contradiction must exist between faith and reason; and that the truth men seek must be valid for all men and that Revelation can be accepted only on these terms.

Pascal acknowledges the doctrine of Original Sin as offensive to his ordinary sense of justice, thereby recognizing it as a valid criterion for the evaluation of divine justice to which it is plainly analogically related. His dubious advice to ignore the voice of conscience on the grounds of self-interest merely points up the need for its sanction of revealed truth. Yet, in the section "Misère de l'Homme", he labours the Augustinian view that ordinary justice amounts only to custom, and is so unreliable that it cannot be used to measure divine justice, while in the "Pari" fragment mere human justice is annihilated in the presence of the divine, so great is the disproportion between them. The Augustinian view of the Atonement made redemption available only through the Church; and the humility and purity of heart which Pascal lists as the prerequisites of conversion, require a surrender of reason and will in total submission to the authority and direction of the Church. Pascal's preoccupation with mortality, with the need for continuous submission

and dependence, with the hiddenness of predestination, with the need to induce an attitude of fear and hope in the Christian, together with his obvious dread of separation from the Body of Christ, all suggest that the fear of hell and need for certainty may well have been responsible for the surrender of his own reason to the authority of Revelation as interpreted by Augustine. He states quite categorically that God deliberately made the doctrine unintelligible to obtain just such a blind submission. Yet, as in the Provinciales, where he defends the autonomy of conscience, he insists that humility is not merely superstitious observance but also an inward recognition and acceptance of the Gospel as making the highest possible claim upon the individual, above that made by a religious Order, or by the State, as the foundation of the moral life.

Pascal's impatience with those who refuse to make this renunciation testifies here, as in the Provinciales, to his belief in a freedom in man to resist the action of grace in the divine self-revelation as noted by Chevalier. Only grace can turn the will to God, but fragment L740, B583 implies an ability in man to reject the truth, while fragment L427, B194 constitutes a tirade against those who fail to follow the "sens commun" and who dare to "faire le brave contre Dieu". Similarly, the method employed by Pascal in the "Pari" fragment is not only that prescribed for physics in the Traité du Vide<sup>58</sup>, as Chevalier suggests, but seems valid psychologically since only when the vital commitment of the will has been made can the truth of religion be tested in experience. The doctrine of Original Sin is clearly unacceptable on rational grounds, and reason cannot demonstrate that

the truth should be loved and accepted for itself. Love of God can only be awakened through the acceptance and practical application of His moral law in a firm disposition of the will. As Don Cupitt writes:

Once we are in a moral world and have values, then we have a standpoint and criteria and can talk about giving reasons. But we cannot have reasons for our basic values, for it is the job of our values to give us reasons, and not the other way round<sup>59</sup>.

The inconsistencies and irrationalities in Pascal's works on grace witness, then, to unconsciously held assumptions which directly contradict those of the Augustinian doctrine. The simultaneous assumption of such irreconcilable premises in the interpretation of philosophical doctrines is noted in the writings of Maurice Blondel who argues for its general application.

C'est qu'il y a, en tout système véritablement organisé, deux éléments vitalement unis qui se déterminent mutuellement et dont l'un informe l'autre comme un principe original de synthèse et d'animation: d'une part un ensemble de conceptions susceptibles d'expressions analytiques et qui semblent communicables d'un esprit à un autre esprit par des procédés discursifs comme une matière qu'on se passerait de main en main; d'un autre côté une attitude de tout l'être spirituel, une disposition à la fois congénitale et acquise qui constitue la personne profonde du philosophe, sa nature d'esprit, sa vision et sa volonté de la vie, son inspiration principale et son aspiration finale, ce qui n'a pas besoin d'être l'objet d'une réflexion pour être le ressort même de sa méthode, l'aliment transsubstantiateur de sa doctrine, l'enjeu suprême de sa recherche... Mais le décisif élément d'une doctrine c'est celui qui traduit le secret ignoré du coeur... c'est cette tendance spirituelle qui détermine le sens des éléments intellectuels plus qu'elle n'est modifiée par eux, ...<sup>60</sup>.

### The Rational and the Non-Rational

The inconsistencies in Pascal's theology of grace can be seen to arise then from two sources: conflicts within the

Augustinian doctrine which gives inadequate conceptual expression to the non-rational insights of the conversion experience; and contradictions between assumptions held by Pascal at the rational and unconscious levels.

The experimental method recommended by Pascal in "l'abêtissement" can furnish perceptions which are true only for the individual, for, as Cupitt notes, "religious meanings will not have the same kind of neutral and public precision as scientific meanings"<sup>61</sup>. It is clearly Augustine's failure to recognize the individual and mutually exclusive nature of the intuitions of his own conversion experience, weaving them instead into a highly complex theological system, which is responsible for the contradictions and irrationalities inherent in that system. The most striking of these arise from the affirmation of the dual character of the numen in the doctrine of Predestination, i.e. in God's omnipotence and justice on the one hand and in His love and mercy on the other hand. Both are non-rational intuitions of the election experience; the "felt" apprehension of God as sole and absolute cause, of all human willing and merit as worthless, and of grace as the wholly gratuitous expression of divine love and mercy.

Similarly the elaborate reconciliation of free will and efficacious grace explained by the Augustinian psychology of the will, whose freedom clearly consists solely in its spontaneity, springs, as Otto explains<sup>62</sup>, from a felt submergence and annihilation over against the numen, "here the futility of one's own choice, there the will that ordains all and determines all". Predestination in this sense is the perception of the qualitative difference between the



human and divine which found conceptual expression in the Platonism of Augustine. The attribution of God's abandonment of the "réprouvés" to an "occult" justice enhances this gulf between natural and supernatural values so that God is "ex-lex"<sup>63</sup>, making his will arbitrary and fortuitous and destroying his moral goodness.

As N.P. Williams<sup>64</sup> writes, the fully developed Augustinian doctrine of the Fall "proclaims itself to be the product of Augustine's own personality and of the unique circumstances of his life", "an ex post facto 'rationalization' of a peculiarly vehement type of emotional experience"<sup>65</sup>, characteristic of the pessimistic, twice-born temperament. Whilst, as C.A. Campbell<sup>66</sup> points out, for many people who accept responsibility for moral failure, the facts of experience do not support the view that grace is vital for the performance of the good, the same "facts" clearly validated the Augustinian doctrine for Pascal. "Creature-consciousness", the feeling of worthlessness and dependence before the felt omnipotence, transcendence and mercy of God, indubitably furnishes the non-rational ground for the fundamental distinction which underpins the whole doctrine: between nature and grace, between reason and Revelation, between the world and the Church, between natural concepts and divine concepts. That distinction is given full expression in the doctrine of the three orders. As N.P. Williams writes,

...the hypothesis of a "Fall" is essentially an inference from the facts of human weakness and sin, considered in the light of the infinite holiness of God<sup>67</sup>.

This is the basis of its appeal in the view of C.A.

Campbell<sup>68</sup>, and the primacy of this apprehension for Augustine and Pascal is evident in the Ecrits sur la Grâce where Pascal establishes, as the basic premise of his theology of grace with all else subordinated to it, the omnipotence of God as principle of all human willing, and the prevenience of divine grace as the sole condition of conversion, perseverance and final election.

Evelyn Underhill<sup>69</sup> observes that in the conversion experience union is usually felt to be with Christ, by incorporation with whom, Otto believes, the sinner is felt to be cleansed and made fit for the divine presence. Rashdall<sup>70</sup> states that it was Augustine's anxiety to preserve the omnipotence of God which determined his view of the Atonement as a vicarious punishment effected solely by Christ's death and suffering. The centrality of Christ in the theology of Augustine and Pascal, and, by extension, that of the Church and the Eucharist, are clearly explicable on these terms. Bremond deplores this exclusive function of Christ in the Jansenist theology of Pascal, an opinion echoed by Mersch.

... le "Jésus-Christ" de Pascal, au lieu d'aplanir et d'élargir toutes les voies possibles qui mènent à Dieu, nous est au contraire présenté comme un voile, un écran, si j'ose dire, entre Dieu et nous. Pascal exalte le "médiateur", mais il cache, il exile Dieu<sup>71</sup>.

The theme of the "Dieu caché", unattainable except by his own self-revelation, would seem to give substance to this claim.

The intuitive experience of union with God in Christ sanctioned for Augustine the ecclesiastical structure of the Church as the Mystical Body, sole mediator between man and

God, outside of which is no salvation or true virtue. Belief in the atoning work of Christ in Scripture and in the sacraments of the Church, crowned by a similar experience of certitude, must therefore be, for the religious temperament like Pascal, the only condition of true conversion<sup>72</sup>. Moreover, the desire for permanent union with Christ requires an ascetic rejection of worldly attachments and pleasures, leading to purity of life and obedience, which will purge the Christian of all that stands between him and the saving grace of Christ.

Pascal's second conversion, recorded in the Mémorial, plainly provided compelling non-rational grounds for the uncritical acceptance of the Augustinian doctrine and the authority of the Church<sup>73</sup>. Allport observes that the immature religious sentiment is characterized by just such "a defensive ruling out of disturbing evidence"<sup>74</sup>, founded as it is upon the self-centred need for certainty and escape from loneliness. A.V.G. Allen goes so far as to designate Pascal's religion "thorough-going agnosticism" since, with no trace in nature of a God who is withdrawn from his world, "his faith rests on a precarious foundation which the intellect refuses to examine"<sup>75</sup>.

In "The Natural and the Supernatural", John Oman suggests that if the sense of the holy does not evolve from an emotional response of awe to one of reverence for the content of its revelation, "from sensation as feeling to its disappearance in information", it does not confer the true freedom of absolute independence but merely the quietitude inherent in the acceptance of an authoritarian rule.

The sense of the holy may be enslaving, not emancipating, and may impose an abject, not an independent, mind.... As reverence, the sense of the holy is the humility which is the fountain-head of all right and courageous independence in seeking truth, and truth only: as awe it is a timid and even shuddering fear of all enlightenment.... Something similar to it as awe, as the shuddering of the creature before the overwhelming and basilisk-like fascination of fearsome mystery, we may feel in any venture upon a wider and higher environment, and is not to be escaped any more in religion than in any high adventure. It is the first impression and a necessary beginning. But, as it is there for us to overcome in the physical sphere, so in the spiritual, where it is the high challenge to the spirit to win its freedom in independence of all that dismays. When this is won, it is the supreme emancipation from all meaner fears; and only as it is thus the liberty of the children of God is it truly human and perfectly divine<sup>76</sup>.

Oman insists that such an abdication from freedom in the face of the numinous is the sole disaster, "no one is a truly religious person till he realises the utter loneliness of his spirit in it and desires to hear nothing but what it says in this aloneness, and not to seek deliverance..."<sup>77</sup>.

Allport<sup>78</sup> defines the characteristics of such a mature religion as: a critical attitude towards the content of doctrine; a felt freedom for the good; and the conviction that as belief is tentative it must be tested by experience and that belief must always issue in moral action. The inconsistencies in Pascal's writing on grace reveal the presence of assumptions corresponding closely to these: of reason as arbiter of Tradition and of conscience as independent of the authority of the Church; of reason as moral consciousness recognizing human values as objectively valid for all; of a freedom of will in man to follow the law of the Gospel and thus test the validity of belief; and of belief as not only intellectual but as giving

direction to the moral life, all assumptions unconsciously negating the fundamental Augustinian presupposition. In Reason and Authority, R.R. Orr describes the evolution of the religious sentiment of William Chillingworth who, like Augustine and Pascal, sought deliverance from uncertainty in the inerrancy of the Catholic tradition, as an "infallible Guide in the Way to Heaven"<sup>79</sup>. Unlike Pascal, Chillingworth won emancipation from fear in recantation and in an acceptance of intellectual freedom and doubt which demanded the rational scrutiny of doctrine as a necessary condition of belief. In the seventeenth century Chillingworth established the relation between reason and Revelation which Allport and Oman consider the mark of the mature religious sentiment. He concluded first that faith cannot bring certainty, and secondly, "that a faith which is critical rather than credulous accords with the principle of moral responsibility, whereas one which abdicates reason, and accepts the fiat of authority, has no intrinsic merit at all"<sup>80</sup>.

William James specifies two types of conversion: the volitional and gradual type or "the type by self-surrender", perceived as instantaneous but in fact the result of "unconscious" cerebration. These two types are the respective characteristics of the "once-born" and "twice-born" religious temperaments. Expressed conceptually in Aristotelian or Platonic terms<sup>81</sup>, each is intellectualized in the doctrines of the Eastern and Western traditions of the Christian Church. The difference is therefore attributable only to a psychological peculiarity which makes rational or non-rational elements predominate<sup>82</sup>. Pascal's "night of fire" places him firmly in the Western Tradition, but his

unconscious assumptions of reason, as judge of supernatural truth and morality, and of a true freedom of will, approximate more closely with those of the Eastern Fathers for whom salvation did not result from the impersonal operation of grace upon the will. In their view, "Christ as the invisible teacher of humanity, whose presence in the world, in the reason and conscience of man, is the power by which men are delivered from sin and brought into the liberty of the children of God..."<sup>83</sup>.

Each tradition clearly furnishes valuable insights from human experience into the nature and operation of divine grace. Both however are subject to distortion insofar as the mystical element in the one, or the purely ethical and rational aspect in the other, is exaggerated with a consequent overriding emphasis upon grace and predestination on the one hand, or reason and self-determination on the other hand<sup>84</sup>. In the Provinciales Pascal castigates, in the humanism of seventeenth century Jesuits, the extreme of rational theology, where, stripped of all spirituality, religion becomes mere superstition and hypocrisy, a cold business operation offering salvation on easy terms and destroying the concept of grace as the love of God.

Equally harmful for grace as love is the predominance of non-rational elements in Augustinianism where the basic premise of God's omnipotence makes grace an arbitrarily bestowed, efficacious and irresistible power in irreconcilable opposition to the moral responsibility of the individual<sup>85</sup>. The Augustinian doctrine not only sanctioned the incorporation of divine omnipotence in the authoritarian

structure of the Church, as sole mediator of grace and guardian of Revelation which must be accepted as infallible authority<sup>86</sup>, but, more seriously, in the view of N.P. Williams it discriminated between "natural" virtues of pagans and those of baptised believers which were the effect of grace<sup>87</sup>. The fundamental immorality of Augustine's conception of grace can be seen to arise therefore from a faulty interpretation of his conversion experience, as a mystical transformation of the soul, rather than as a conscious insight into the nature of God which effects a change of life<sup>88</sup>. Similarly, as Otto points out, reason is a "principle of judgement and [of] acknowledgement" of a priori cognitions "given" in divine revelation. Without revelation, as Pascal demonstrates in the Provinciales, reason cannot produce such cognitions independently<sup>89</sup>. Augustinians, Pelagians and semi-Pelagians have all, in the view of Oman, started out on the wrong road, the first assigning too much to grace and the others too much to man<sup>90</sup>. If Augustine had revised his view of the divine omnipotence, as Burnaby<sup>91</sup> observed, allowing the possibility of refusal, the concept of grace as a loving relationship would still have accommodated many of his insights into the nature of its working.

Grace Manifested as Love<sup>92</sup>

The criterion for measuring the relative rank of religions, according to Otto<sup>93</sup>, is the degree to which rational and non-rational elements are harmoniously combined. A concept of grace in which omnipotence and freedom are reconciled clearly demands, not a reversal, but a revision of the Augustinian distinction between the natural and the supernatural. The experience of the holy cannot be reduced

simply to a show of power that inspires an emotional response of awe. It must also be seen to include a revelation of absolute value which seeks to introduce the individual to the supernatural environment in which God manifests knowledge of Himself<sup>94</sup>. The faculty for its reception, and by which it is judged, is plainly reason<sup>95</sup>. This witness of reality to itself, Oman<sup>96</sup> states, is the only authority, not just in science, as Pascal affirmed in the Traité du Vide, but also in religion, an assumption which underpins the appeal made both in the Pensées and in the Provinciales. The obligation of the moral consciousness to sanction religious belief and to determine the actions which accord with it, and the assumption that even the authority of the Church should submit to investigation, are implicit in the form of the Provinciales and in the Jansenist insistence upon the autonomy of conscience guided only by grace.

In religion, then, as in science, the individual is alone in the face of reality and this independence, Oman observes, is the form of freedom.

We are free only as, in independence, we choose truth and beauty and goodness as at once our most real world and our genuine selves. On such freedom all worth in either our world or ourselves depends<sup>97</sup>.

Grace, manifested as love, in a personal relationship seeks to guide self-determined and independent individuals into true freedom, which, as Augustine saw, is emancipation from self and deliverance from a world of comparative values into a world of values which are eternal and which comprise the rule of charity<sup>98</sup>. Moreover, on this view, grace does take the form of an attraction or "delectatio" calling



forth a response from the will<sup>99</sup>, but not infallibly, for the holy as supernatural value, is only seen to be "worth", in Oman's sense, when it is freely accepted and revered as the goal of the moral life<sup>100</sup>.

Oman affirms that only if grace acts thus, as an appeal to conscience, following the circuitous and patient route of persuasion and education, can freedom remain a reality and God be seen as love, since evil can then be regarded, not as the inevitable and ineradicable result of original sin, but as the obverse of human freedom<sup>101</sup>. F.D. Maurice suggests just such a reinterpretation of the Fall story, with the expulsion from Paradise seen as a blessing, as the beginning of man's freedom rather than of his corruption, and as the means by which God, through this perpetual witness in the human conscience, seeks to recreate the divine image<sup>102</sup>. In this way the irreconcilable conflict between man and God is overcome by God's indirect dealing with us. Salvation is neither God's work nor ours, but rather His giving and our achieving through the only manifestation of omnipotence which honours the independence of human reason. The submission and dependence, which in Pascal are the response to a very real fear of abandonment by God, are replaced by the maintenance of an attitude of sincerity in the face of reality and of humble dependence upon its witness in conscience, so that our moral independence is the condition of dependence upon God<sup>103</sup>.

The "gouffre infini", or capacity in man for the reception of supernatural truth, "man's strange propensity to seek his own perfection"<sup>104</sup>, is clearly the seat of absolute values or the moral ideal in which he perceives

their realization to consist. Reason has a dual function, as Pascal unconsciously assumes, both as judge of supernatural truth and absolute value, and as moral consciousness described by Allport as "the indicator of the agreement between our conduct and our values", and "the knife-edge that all our values press upon us when we are acting, or have acted, contrary to these values"<sup>105</sup>. The cultural relativity of conscience is underlined by Pascal in the Pensées, yet, as Oman observes, conscience does not itself claim to be infallible but insists simply that its judgments be regarded as infallible<sup>106</sup>, for without absolutes of conscience nothing is sacred and there is no real morality or progress. The moral law, therefore, though a goal set before us in freedom, has its absolutes of value and authority<sup>107</sup>. Just as Augustine perceived that to become the slave of righteousness, by the power of grace, implies a gradual recreation, so, according to Oman, we do not receive salvation but are only becoming free, with the goal demanding an ever higher response to the challenge of the holy<sup>108</sup>.

The world and human experience, as Pascal and Augustine rightly claimed, represent the vehicle of the evolving spirit and the instrument of salvation<sup>109</sup>. But, if grace is love, that representation is not effected simply through an illumination of the natural by a "Dieu caché" visible only to the elect. The ministry of Christ himself was preeminently secular<sup>110</sup>, and it is only within the context of personal relationships and possessions that the moral goal, deliverance from self, can be realized.

The problem of the world, as of ourselves, is

that it is both to be denied and possessed ... in this world, we have no abiding possession, but are strangers and pilgrims on the earth; yet there is no final freedom unless this fleeting world is in some way possessed by finding in evanescence deliverance from the slavery of the material into spiritual possessions which have the promise of being eternal<sup>111</sup>.

The supernatural then is the reality of the natural, cannot be embodied apart from it, and is inseparable from it<sup>112</sup>.

Augustine's theory of "use" and "enjoyment" of the world is valid, therefore, insofar as it is applicable to all men.

...if, in loyalty to the absolute requirement of the sacred, in courageous freedom following its guidance and trusting its power, we stand on our feet and allow experience to speak to us, and if we seek clearly to distinguish its true and abiding reality from its material and passing forms, and to use the world as the corruptible which may have in it the purpose of the eternal, and thus to face experience in all its possible reach, we can hope to find what justly claims absolute value because it is our true environment in which we find our true selves<sup>113</sup>.

Redemption is thus effected by the action of grace reconciling men to the world, not by asceticism, self-annihilation and withdrawal, but by self-denial and service in the pursuit of a moral goal which is already eternal life and not a down payment on blessedness in the next. The condition of enlightenment and progress is that laid down in the Traité du Vide for science, namely, the absolute freedom and objectivity of reason in the face of experience and of all authorities past or present; for like natural truth, moral absolutes, though binding, must always be regarded as relative and provisional. Revelation in Scripture and Tradition must clearly be dealt with freely in this way, as a foundation upon which to build, rather than as final truth and as the object of idolatry<sup>114</sup>.

If redemption is thus effected through grace as love by way of reconciliation there can be no place for any substitutionary or expiatory theory of the Atonement, which makes the blood of Christ a crude legal device by which God releases the elect from slavery to sin and infuses in the soul love for Himself. As Oman points out, "love can neither be directly given nor directly required. It can only be indirectly evoked by giving us ground for the faith that God is love. But, in that case, it is the consequence, not the condition of reconciliation"<sup>115</sup>. Justification cannot, then, consist in the imputation of the merit of Christ, for clearly guilt cannot be transferred so that another instead becomes blameworthy. The only deliverance from hypocrisy and sin, as Pascal insisted in the Provinciales, is through sincerity and repentance which is the condition and consequence of forgiveness. Grace therefore saves from sin by the transformation it initiates in the nature of the sinner, and the Cross can be seen as the final seal on God's commitment to the salvation of mankind.

Hastings Rashdall argues that the Atonement theory of Peter Abelard sums up what is common to all theories in the Christian Tradition, for it is stripped not only of the Ransom theory but also of the notion of an inherited guilt which required Christ's death and suffering for a neo-Platonic "universal" humanity. "The voluntary death of the innocent Son of God on man's behalf moves the sinner to gratitude and answering love - and so to consciousness of sin, repentance, amendment"<sup>116</sup>. Abelard not only recognized the immorality of whatever makes forgiveness arbitrary, but also appreciated that forgiveness can only consist in a

moral transformation which removes the demand for punishment. Deriving from the early Greek Fathers, this theory appeals both to reason and the moral consciousness, for it interprets the death of Christ as no longer isolated from his incarnation, life and teaching, but as the final act of a life which fully expressed God's loving relation to man, intended to call forth an answering love and consequent regeneration of life.

When we see in the death of Christ the most striking expression and symbol of the spirit which dominated His whole life, our recognition of the divine love which shines forth in that death ceases to be dependent upon our accepting any of those always difficult and sometimes repulsive theories of substitutive or expiatory or objective efficacy which were once connected with it<sup>117</sup>.

Such a view of grace as the atoning love of God necessarily implies the rejection of the Augustinian conception of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ, the fellowship of baptized Christians to whom God has shown particular favour by the special gift of his grace. Admission can no longer depend upon unqualified submission to Tradition and the waiving of intellectual scrutiny<sup>118</sup>. The sacraments and other avenues of grace cannot be regarded as vehicles by which the divine omnipotence arbitrarily seizes the will of the chosen few<sup>119</sup>, a view which informs the expectation and *raison d'être* of the Pensées. Nor can the Church sanction an attitude of fatalistic indifference to the world and secular experience, supposedly devoid of divine self-revelation except insofar as it manifests God to the elect so that their actions can be ordered to the enjoyment of bliss in the next life. The centrality of Christ can no longer imply a redemption effected solely by his death; nor

can his passion be limited to the means whereby the elect are united in a mystical absorption through the voluntary acceptance of suffering and ascetic renunciation<sup>120</sup>.

Grace as love precludes both arbitrariness and irresistibility in God's relationship with man, which must necessarily take the form of a personal appeal to morally independent beings, the response to which must be won and never compelled. The only means of grace in such a communion must be the witness of the truth to the moral consciousness of the individual, with admission to that communion restricted only by the refusal to respond<sup>121</sup>. Revelation and the sacraments can be the instruments of omnipotence only insofar as they reveal the truth to individual minds and are seen as symbols of God's self-revelation in the whole of life and human experience. The Church cannot constitute an exclusive body divorced from the secular world, material possessions or human relationships, in the context of which alone the eternal order can be entered into and of which it is the true reality. The life, death and example of Christ must remain the central revelation of God's love, and redemption must consist not in a making good, but in an ethical evolution into freedom from self by the insight of reason into the truth of the divine revelation past and present, in moral independence and consecration of will.

While Pascal's theology of grace can rightly be regarded as "la géniale mise en oeuvre d'un enseignement traditionnel"<sup>122</sup>, it cannot nevertheless, for that reason, be regarded as the full expression of Christian religious consciousness. Like that of Augustine it speaks only for

the minor but nonetheless fanatical and vociferous "twice-born" sector of Christendom, and its psychological ground is plainly to be found in the particular idiosyncrasies of this specific religious type. The partial determinism of temperament which must colour all belief, was manifested in them as a felt bondage of will and a consequent need for deliverance which could be resolved only by a dramatic conversion<sup>123</sup>. Allport remarks, "the degree and type of freedom a man has depends in part upon what he believes.... A person believing he is free uses what equipment he has more flexibly and successfully than does the person who is convinced he dwells in chains"<sup>124</sup>.

The non-rational intuitions of divine omnipotence and human powerlessness determine the conscious presuppositions of their theology of grace - the discontinuity between God and man, grace and nature, Revelation and reason; an arbitrary predestination and an irresistible grace - which to a rational and ethical "once-born" Christian, who has experienced no such constraint upon the will, are incomprehensible and immoral. This essentially faulty and immature rationalization in dogmatic form of a particular individual experience of grace nevertheless sanctioned an authoritarian structure which continues to provide certainty and refuge for like-minded individuals. Allen rightly observes of Augustinianism and the Papacy, "So far as both yet linger in the modern world, it is an evidence that there are those who still need, or think they need, a religion based upon external authority, or a morality whose sanction is fear of the consequences of sin in the future world"<sup>125</sup>.

In the final analysis, however, as Pascal demonstrated

so brilliantly in the Provinciales, only the moral fruits which issue from belief can determine its true nature.

The divine can mean no single quality, it must mean a group of qualities, by being champions of which in alternation, different men may all find worthy missions. Each attitude being a syllable in human nature's total message, it takes the whole of us to spell the meaning out completely<sup>126</sup>.



## NOTES

## CHAPTER VI

1. For this section dealing with Pascal's relation to Jansenism, I have used as reference material: Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, pp.126-153; Thouvenin, Jansénisme. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique. Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, cols 318-448; S.T. Northcote, Jansenism. In Encyclopoedia of Religion and Ethics ed. J. Hastings, vol.VII, pp.476-481; Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, pp.88-152; Sedgwick, Jansenism in Seventeenth-Century France, pp.33-39.
2. see pages 97-98.
3. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.88.
4. J. Delumeau, Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire, p.116. see also Brunschvicg, B. Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules, p.53 and Sedgwick, Jansenism in Seventeenth-century France, pp.33-39.
5. cf. Traité du Vide, O.C., p.230. see also Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, p.135.
6. see Northcote, Jansenism. In Encyclopoedia of Religion and Ethics, vol.VII, p.476.
7. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, p.142.
8. Copleston, Aquinas, p.213.
9. see Entretien avec M. de Saci, O.C., p.296.
10. Thouvenin Jansénisme. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, col 431. The writer clearly believes that "le jansénisme est 'le cousin germain' du calvinisme", in its rejection of any freedom of will in fallen man.
11. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.104.
12. ibid. pp.96-97 cf. Brunschvicg, B. Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules, p.56.
13. cf. VI<sup>e</sup> Lettre aux Roannez, O.C., p.268. see also Northcote, Jansenism In Encyclopoedia of Religion and Ethics, vol.VII, p.476.
14. Chevalier, Pascal, p.79.
15. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.119.

16. B. Pascal, Pensées et Opuscules, p.55. see also Miel, Pascal and Theology, p.191.
17. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.118.
18. *ibid.* p.152.
19. *ibid.* p.151.
20. see page 32, note 1 for the source material used for this comparison.
21. P. Sellier, Pascal et Saint Augustin, p.619. see also Miel, Pascal and Theology, p.193; Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.121; and J.H. Broome, Pascal, p.15.
22. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.105.
23. Williams, The Grace of God, p.78.
24. *ibid.* p.40.
25. *ibid.* p.81. "...St. Thomas merely crosses St. Augustine's t's and dots his i's...". cf. Thouvenin, Jansénisme. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique. Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, col.426. "Cependant Jansénius, après s'être nettement séparé du thomisme, se réconcilie avec lui et déclare que saint Augustin est, en partie, d'accord avec les thomistes. La grâce du Sauveur, comme la prédétermination physique, produit toujours son effet: elle fait efficacement ce que la volonté veut".
26. Williams, The Grace of God, p.41.
27. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.132.
28. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, p.25.
29. Thouvenin, Jansénisme. In Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique. Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, col.318.
30. see pages 152-154.
31. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.108.
32. see P. Bénichou, Morales du Grand Siècle, p.115. see also page 173.
33. Bénichou, Morales du Grand Siècle, p.122.
34. see page 217.

35. see Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.92; Miel, Pascal and Théologie, p.190; Broome, Pascal, p.17; Northcote, Jansenism In Encyclopoedia of Religion and Ethics vol.VII, p.478.
36. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.93.
37. ibid. p.104.
38. ibid. p.105.
39. ibid.
40. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, pp.58-59.
41. de Lubac, Augustinianism and Modern Theology, p.35.
42. ibid. pp.63-64.
43. ibid. p.83.
44. ibid. p.83. In pp.75-85 de Lubac discusses Jansen's interpretation (in his view a misinterpretation) of the role of the "delectatio victrix" in the Augustinian doctrine of grace.
45. Burnaby, Amor Dei, p.223.
46. Abercrombie, The Origins of Jansenism, pp.148-149.
47. ibid. p.154.
48. cf. Thouvenin, Jansénisme, Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique Tome VIII, 1<sup>e</sup> Partie, col.400. "Ainsi la grâce du Sauveur est nécessairement une délectation victorieuse...".
49. Broome, Pascal, p.15.
50. see page 99.
51. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, pp.102-103.
52. The somewhat barbed remark of Allen in The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.4 with reference to Augustine seems applicable to Pascal "...like Newman after his perversion, there was nothing so obnoxious or irrational that he could not make it plausible to the reason...".
53. O.C., p.266, II<sup>e</sup> Lettre à Roannez.
54. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, pp.92 and 95.
55. O.C., p.466.

56. Laporte, Etudes d'Histoire de la Philosophie Française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p.119.
57. *ibid.* p.120.
58. see page 39.
59. D. Cupitt, Only Human (London, S.C.M. Press, 1985), p.166.
60. M. Blondel, Dialogue avec les Philosophes (Paris, Montaigne, 1966), pp.62-63.
61. Cupitt, Only Human, p.49.
62. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, p.89.
63. *ibid.* p.101. Williams in The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.483, rightly observes that Augustinianism is inconsistent with "a genuine belief in the goodness and justice of God, and in the moral accountability of man.
64. *ibid.* p.330.
65. *ibid.* p.378.
66. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, pp.279-280.
67. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin, p.492.
68. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood, p.284.
69. E. Underhill, Mysticism, p.344.
70. H. Rashdall, The Idea of the Atonement in Christian Theology, p.330.
71. Bremond, Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux en France, vol.IV, pp.389-390. see also E. Mersch, Le Corps Mystique du Christ, Tome II, p.324 and C.C.J. Webb, Pascal's Philosophy of Religion, pp.112-113, "It was in Jesus Christ and in him alone that he found the assurance of God's love".
72. see James, Varieties of Religious Experience, p.230.
73. *ibid.* p.244. James notes "the admirable congruity of Protestant theology with the structure of the mind as shown in such experiences".
74. G.W. Allport, The Individual and His Religion (London, Constable, 1951), p.72.
75. Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.312. see also E. Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion (New York, Bantam Books, 1972), p.35, in which the writer outlines the characteristic elements of the authori-

tarian religious belief typical of the "twice-born" religious temperament who seeks refuge in a system, and corresponding at all points with that of Augustine and Pascal.

76. Oman, The Natural and the Supernatural, pp.308-309.
77. *ibid.* p.338.
78. Allport, The Individual and His Religion, pp.61-83.
79. R.R. Orr, Reason and Authority (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1967), p.12.
80. *ibid.* pp.162-163.
81. see Otto, The Idea of the Holy, pp.94-95 and Underhill, Mysticism, p.103. "As every one is born a disciple of either Plato or Aristotle, so every human soul leans to one of these two ways of apprehending reality".
82. see Allport, The Individual and His Religion, p.151 and Copleston, Aquinas, p.221.
83. Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.162.
84. Pascal stresses this danger in fragments L173, B273 and L183, B253.
85. F.R. Tennant in Philosophical Theology, vol.II, pp.220-221 underlines the inadequacy of any theology which thus limits the scope of God's action. "Such beliefs, implying that omnipotence may treat persons, for their personal good, as impersonal stocks and stones, are survivals of an imperfectly moralised religion, evincing inadequate discernment of the essence of morality and personality. It would be unduly dogmatical, however, to deny on ethical grounds the possibility of any divine contact with persons that is of the sub-personal, or of the subconscious, order. For the 'whole man' is more than the rational and ethical agent to which the austere puritanical moralist would reduce it".
86. see Allen, the Continuity of Christian Thought, p.170.
87. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin pp.374-375.
88. see Oman, Grace and Personality, pp.28-29.
89. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, p.177.
90. Oman, Grace and Personality, pp.86-87.
91. Burnaby, Amor Dei, p.230. see page 158.
92. For this final section of the Conclusion in which an alternative view of grace comprehending both rational

- and non-rational aspects of religious experience is attempted, I have relied heavily upon the work of John Oman in The Natural and The Supernatural, pp.61-103 and 285-343, and Grace and Personality. Of the latter F.R. Tennant writes in Philosophical Theology, vol.II, p.226, note 1: "On the subject of moral personality and its significance for theology, especially in connexion with the conceptions of grace and revelation, the reader is referred to Dr J. Oman's work, Grace and Personality. As a presentation of the Christian view of the relations between God, the world, and man, in its ethical majesty unclouded by tradition of doubtful morality, this little book, if one may take the liberty to say so, is one of the more valuable treasures in theological literature". H.R. Macintosh, in his article Grace - Christian In The Encyclopoedia of Religion and Ethics, vol.VI, p.366, similarly deplors Augustine's disregard of the ethical dignity of human personality "as though religion could be passed into the soul like a stream of electricity", and also cites Oman's conception of grace as encompassing human moral responsibility and divine omnipotence.
93. Otto, The Idea of the Holy, pp.141-142.
  94. Oman, The Natural and the Supernatural, p.61.
  95. see I. Threthowan, Absolute Value, p.210 and also Rashdall, Conscience and Christ, pp.9-15.
  96. Oman, The Natural and the Supernatural, pp.99-102.
  97. *ibid.* p.286.
  98. *ibid.* pp.69-70.
  99. see Trethowan, Absolute Value, p.207. "Moral obligation is religion at that point where it arises for us; it is the awareness of God who acts in us and draws us to him".
  100. Oman, the Natural and the Supernatural, p.311.
  101. *ibid.* pp.327-328. cf. Williams, The Grace of God, pp.122-126 where he concludes that only if sin is seen as a repression of "God-consciousness" and the action of grace as the Holy Spirit seeking to free this blockage in an interpersonal relationship is the need of the "once-born" for true moral responsibility satisfied. H.D. Lewis, in Our Experience of God, p.18 sees such a relationship consisting in ethical illumination and a response of repentance as the only working of grace which enhances the dignity of man. Trethowan in Absolute Value, p.246 defines moral evil as the rejection of value, i.e. of God. "The awareness of moral freedom and the awareness of God are bound up with one another".
  102. F.D. Maurice, The Patriarchs and Lawgivers of the Old

- Testament 3rd ed. (London, MacMillan, 1867), pp.50-67. C.A. Campbell in On Selfhood and Godhood, pp.279-280 similarly rejects the basic premise of the Augustinian Fall doctrine, of an inherent bias to evil in fallen human nature. It implies that the feeling of personal responsibility in moral experience is sheer delusion and, in his view, the facts simply do not support this. Fromm in Psychoanalysis and Religion, p.81 points out that Christian traditions have stressed the element of sin but have ignored the fact that it is "the emancipation from the security of Paradise which is the basis for man's truly human development".
103. Oman, Grace and Personality, p.67. Such dependence cannot therefore imply, as in the Provinciales that the human mind, as "conscience" in the Christian, is "the passive mouthpiece of God" (see Tennant, Philosophical Theology, p.221), but rather that by maintaining the openness of the "subliminal" door, "something ideal, which in one sense is part of ourselves and in another sense is not ourselves, actually exerts an influence, raises our centre of personal energy, and produces regenerative effects unattainable in other ways". (James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, p.498).
104. Allport, The Individual and His Religion, p.76. cf. Trethowan, Absolute Value, p.216, "We find we have an all-over obligation to make something of ourselves, and this I have proposed, is itself an awareness of God...".
105. Allport, The Individual and His Religion, p.100.
106. Oman, The Natural and the Supernatural, p.317, and Grace and Personality, p.270.
107. Oman, The Natural and the Supernatural, p.312.
108. *ibid.* p.338. cf. p.291 where Oman describes the supernatural as an "order of freedom". Trethowan in An Essay in Christian Philosophy, p.72 states that the meaning of God is value and on pp.123-124 that God's purposes are the aim set before the will and his will our sanctification and blessedness. D. Cupitt in The Sea of Faith (London, British Broadcasting Corporation, 1984), p.270 writes: "To speak of God is to speak about the moral and spiritual goals we ought to be aiming at, and about what we ought to become.... The true God is not God as picturesque supernatural fact, but God as our religious ideal".
109. Oman, The Natural and the Supernatural, p.336. cf. Lewis, Our Experience of God, p.7.
110. Oman, Grace and Personality, p.178.
111. Oman, The Natural and the Supernatural, pp.304-305.
112. *ibid.* p.331. cf. C.C.J. Webb, Nature and Grace. In

- The Journal of Theological Studies, vol.XXXVII, p.130. Webb observes that the distinction between nature and grace is one in which they "overlap" since human nature is itself the effect of grace, "and since it is distinguished as human by the stamp upon it of God's image; the effect of Grace, as experienced in the order of redemption, being the renewal of that image where it has been defaced by sin, and the realization thereby of the capacity for Grace which it from the first possessed or rather was".
113. Oman, The Natural and the Supernatural, p.325. C.C.J. Webb in Problems in the Relations of God and Man (London, J. Nisbet and Co. Limited, 1911), p.121 describes grace as "a spiritual environment of the soul, consisting in social and personal influences to which it responds by conscious acts...".
114. Oman, the Natural and the Supernatural, pp.99-102. cf. Tennant in Philosophical Theology, vol.II, pp.225-226.
115. Oman, Grace and Personality, p.129.
116. Rashdall, the Idea of the Atonement in Christian Theology, p.358.
117. *ibid.* pp.361-362.
118. Oman, Grace and Personality, pp.160-169.
119. *ibid.* p.176.
120. *ibid.* pp.264-265.
121. As Trethowan observes in Absolute Value, p.212: "if we are all destined to attain to God (unless we deliberately reject him), how is this destiny to be accomplished for vast numbers of people who appear to have no means of contact with him except through their consciences?"
122. Russier, La Foi selon Pascal, p.230.
123. cf. Burnaby, Amor Dei, p.221. Burnaby describes just such an "agony of moral impotence" in Augustine which made a nonsense of Pelagius' view of grace.
124. Allport, The Individual and His Religion, p.79.
125. Allen, The Continuity of Christian Thought, p.5.
126. James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, p.466.



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