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NICOLAS BERDYAEV: A CONSIDERATION OF HIS  
THOUGHT AND INFLUENCE

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10 JUN 1986

The aim of this thesis is to examine the general development of the thought of Nicolas Berdyaev, and then to examine in a more detailed way the influence of his work on some aspects of theological discussion in Britain up to the time of his death in 1947.

The thesis therefore falls into two parts. In the first three chapters there is an account of Berdyaev's career. Chapter 1 sets out the events of his early life in Russia and demonstrates how this influenced his spiritual and intellectual development. Chapter 2 goes on to look in more detail at the people who greatly influenced this phase of Berdyaev's development. By contrast, chapter 3 outlines Berdyaev's career in the West, with particular reference to his contribution to personalist forms of thought, mainly in France, but also in Britain.

Having completed a chronological account of Berdyaev's life and the development and influence of his thought, the second part of the thesis turns to a consideration of one particular aspect of his thought; the doctrine of God, which introduces us to many of Berdyaev's most important and often repeated ideas. The thesis proceeds to draw attention to how these ideas related to the discussion of the same subject among some British theologians of the time.

In the conclusion the thesis attempts to point to those aspects of Berdyaev's work which seem to connect with questions raised by modern theological inquiry. Here we deal with broad themes rather than detailed analysis. It is the present discussion of these themes which would seem to justify our interest in the work of Nicolas Berdyaev.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BE	<u>The Beginning and the End</u>
CCW	<u>Christianity and Class War</u>
D	<u>Dostoevsky</u>
DH	<u>The Divine and the Human</u>
DM	<u>The Destiny of Man</u>
DR	<u>Dream and Reality</u>
EOT	<u>The End of Our Time</u>
FS	<u>Freedom and the Spirit</u>
MCA	<u>The Meaning of the Creative Act</u>
MH	<u>The Meaning of History</u>
RI	<u>The Russian Idea</u>
RR	<u>The Russian Revolution</u>
SC	<u>The Realm of Spirit and the Realm of Caesar</u>
SF	<u>Slavery and Freedom</u>
SR	<u>Spirit and Reality</u>
SS	<u>Solitude and Society</u>
TR	<u>Truth and Revelation</u>

CHAPTER 1. EARLY YEARS IN RUSSIA.

i. Family Background and Childhood Development.

The sources of information about Berdyaev's life and background are few. Not the least reason for this is his own reticence in writing about himself, about biographical details, that is, as opposed to expounding his intellectual positions. In the preface to his autobiography, Berdyaev asserts that "I do not want to write reminiscences about the happenings which occurred in the course of my life"<sup>(1)</sup>; although it is a work of autobiography, he does not intend that it should conform to the normal sort of catalogue of past experiences. It will, rather, be "a philosophical autobiography or a history of spirit and self-knowledge."<sup>(2)</sup> There can, then, be little objective reflection on the events which surround Berdyaev's early life. An aspect of his character which also contributes towards this reticence about biographical details is his rejection of family bonds. At the beginning of Dream and Reality he comments: "I was never conscious of 'belonging' to my parents; and the relations of kindred, the ties of blood, the 'generic' evoked a strange aversion in me."<sup>(3)</sup> Thus, he disliked intensely the notion of family likenesses and, indeed, family life in general. This feature of Berdyaev's personality extended also to his own marriage to Lydia Yudiforna Trusheff. Nowhere in this book does he ever refer to her as his wife, although the marriage was an intensely happy one; instead he prefers to speak of her as a "Life-long friend".<sup>(4)</sup>



However, Berdyaev's autobiography does provide us with some details of his life and career. And perhaps his subjective manner of writing has the beneficial aspect of offering a personal judgement on his inner experiences, as opposed to leaving that to others to make. Apart from Berdyaev's autobiography, the other primary materials which still exists is a collection of Berdyaev's correspondence. At least some part of this has been preserved intact<sup>(5)</sup> and this was left after Berdyaev's death in the keeping of his friends.

Donald Lowrie acknowledges his indebtedness to the members of the Berdyaev Society in Paris, from whom he received much unpublished information about Berdyaev. In particular, Lowrie mentions those sections of Berdyaev's correspondence, together with her own reminiscences, which Eugenie Rapp, Berdyaev's sister-in-law, gave him, and the historical details and reminiscences of Mme. Tamara Klépinine, a close friend of Berdyaev. Mme. Klépinine has herself produced a definitive bibliography of Berdyaev's works, together with a chronological outline of his life.<sup>(6)</sup> These two works, by Donald Lowrie and Tamara Klépinine therefore assume, in the absence of other material, an authority which gives them a value not much less than that of Berdyaev's own autobiography.

Nicolas Alexandrovich Berdyaev was born in March 1874.<sup>(7)</sup> His father was Alexander Michailovitch Berdyaev and his mother was born Princess Kudashev. His father's family had a distinguished military history, his grandfather having been an ataman of the Don Cossacks. His mother's family were half French and part of the aristocracy; his maternal grandmother was the Countess Choiseul. Thus, Berdyaev is able to remark quite casually, "I am by origin a member of the Russian gentry: this is not, I believe, mere chance, for

has left its mark on my mental make-up. My parents belonged to 'Society', not simply to gentry."<sup>(8)</sup> It is certainly true that throughout his life Berdyaev was aware of the existence of an aristocracy, and claimed membership of it, although he rejected the notion that it should be based on distinctions of social class.<sup>(9)</sup> However, it is also clear that Berdyaev inherited some of the more distinctive traits of his parents. Berdyaev confesses to being "quick-tempered and inclined to outbursts of anger", a characteristic which he might well have inherited from his father, whom he describes as "extremely impetuous".<sup>(10)</sup> This hot temperament is also seen in Berdyaev's brother, Serge, whom Berdyaev describes as "unstable, neurotic, lacking in character and very unhappy because he was not able to realize his gifts in life."<sup>(11)</sup> Serge Berdyaev's relations with his parents seem to have been extremely stormy; in part this was due to the fact that he refused to pursue a military career. He developed an interest in oriental religion and the occult, and it may be that Nicolas was first introduced to this by his brother; certainly it features repeatedly in his later work.<sup>(12)</sup> As a student, Serge got into trouble with the authorities for revolutionary activity and was thereafter always under police surveillance. He married and died young. Lowrie quotes a letter in which Serge's son, Alexander, writes from Russia to a friend in Paris, "We are the last of the Berdyaev's - with us the family dies out."<sup>(13)</sup>

From his mother, Berdyaev inherited a refined sensitivity and delicateness. Descriptions of his mother and a photograph made in the mid-eighteen-nineties, suggest that Berdyaev inherited some of her fine features, especially her eyes.



Berdyaev acknowledges this sensitivity in his character; he declares that he is "particularly sensitive to smell" and is "profoundly appreciative of physical beauty".<sup>(14)</sup> However, this aspect of his character also revealed itself in poor health. "Illnesses have played a considerable part in my life", Berdyaev writes, and this seems particularly to have been true of the early part of his life. One ailment which remained with him for the rest of his life was a tic douloureux. This was a nervous disorder, and something which Berdyaev was quite unable to control, even though towards the end of his life he was occasionally able to avert a spasm. Lowrie records a description of this affliction:

Those who knew him well became so accustomed to it that they, like Berdyaev himself, almost failed to notice it, but for strangers it was a painful, almost frightening, experience. Almost without warning the head would be thrown back, the fine face distorted with a tortured grimace, and from the twisted, wide-open mouth the tongue would be thrust out. In a few seconds the spasm would pass, and the face return to its normal state..... For both boy and man, this infirmity was doubtless a significant element in Berdyaev's psychology. It certainly increased the child's feeling of peculiarity, a part of his earliest consciousness.<sup>(15)</sup>

The tic was to become the source of great torment to Berdyaev when as a boy of ten he was sent to a military Academy in the Kiev Cadet Corps, near where his family lived. Until this time he had enjoyed the security of

the family home in Kiev, or life on family estates in the country. The experiences of living a largely solitary and ungoverned life in the tempestuous atmosphere of his home was a formative part of Berdyaev's development. Lowrie points out that Nicolas was fifteen years younger than his brother Serge, and it was therefore with relatively aged parents that he grew up. This, coupled with the privilege of private income, meant that he "grew up almost uninfluenced by the outside world. From his first childhood steps he never knew any authority and never recognized any - never experienced such a thing as external control.....

Apparently his outbursts of anger, when he would beat his head on his small chair, were not considered anything for which he should be corrected."<sup>(16)</sup> That Berdyaev was a difficult child whom his parents did not fully understand is hinted at in his autobiography, when he mentions the development of his father's affection for him as he grew up.<sup>(17)</sup>

It is also probably fair to say that the inclination of Berdyaev's father towards liberal views did not inspire him to discipline his son. It may well be that the young Berdyaev inherited his rejection of the establishment, which eventually led to participation in Marxist revolutionary activity, from his father. Berdyaev writes that his father's convictions "underwent a crisis and he made liberal ideas more and more his own. He gradually broke with established traditions and often came into conflict with the society in which he lived."<sup>(18)</sup> Another aspect of life at home which contrasted sharply with the Academy was Berdyaev's ability to read and to learn. He comments that he knew French and German from childhood, and by the age of seven had travelled

to Karlsbad with his mother. (19) Although this may or may not show an aptitude for learning, Berdyaev claimed that "I read Schopenhauer's World as Will and Idea, Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind and the first part of the Encyclopaedia in my father's library." (20)

This gives a picture of Berdyaev having a lively mind and wilful temperament. It seems that the disciplining of the latter at school seriously affected the former. The curtailment of his freedom, together with social failure among his fellow cadets, combined to produce an unsatisfactory school career, which seems to have continued on into university days. Berdyaev offers his own explanation for this, for he comments that:

Fundamentally I was unable to reconcile myself with any institutional education, even that of the University. This is, perhaps, partly due to the fact that I never managed to succeed at school, even though, or because, I began to develop intellectually earlier than usual . . . . . My abilities betrayed themselves only when I took the initiative in my thinking, when my mind became consciously active and creative: they remained hidden and unknown to myself while my mind was passive, merely assimilating or memorizing something that was external to me. . . . . I am incapable of retorting, echoing in a passive way; I instantly want to develop my own line of thought. (21)

We have dealt in some detail with these aspects of Berdyaev's childhood background and development, because they do provide a very important contribution to the way his thought was to

develop. It is, of course, difficult to know how much of the mature man the author of an autobiography is writing into an account of early childhood. Inevitably, some reflections cannot be disputed. Berdyaev undoubtedly belonged to the Russian gentry and enjoyed in childhood all the benefits of that class. It seems likely that his parents were highly strung, and some aspects of this tension have been inherited by Berdyaev himself, the tic being an example of this. It also seems likely that Berdyaev's early childhood was largely undisciplined. One senses that in his chapter on this period Lowrie is making use of personal reminiscences from one source or another; for example, the details of the incident with the chair are not mentioned in Dream and Reality. Given these facts, it is highly probable that Berdyaev was not successful at the Academy. From these various aspects of his background there emerge some quite distinctive features of Berdyaev's later thought.

The first, most obvious feature to emerge is Berdyaev's feeling for his native land. This, of course, could be true of any Russian, but it might also be fair to say that Berdyaev's membership of a Russian family whose distinguished military history went back several generations heightened this awareness. He records with some pride the story of how his grandfather "conquered" Napoleon<sup>(22)</sup> and at the end of his autobiography he offers the following observations on the Nazi invasion of Russia: "I felt that my Russia was exposed to mortal danger, that she might be dismembered and enslaved.... For my part, I never lost faith in the invincibility of Russia, although the dangers to which she was exposed were a source of unspeakable agony for me. My inborn patriotism..... reached an extraordinary intensity. I felt myself one with the

successes and failures of the Red Army."<sup>(23)</sup> And this comes from one who had been exiled from Russia for twenty years.<sup>(24)</sup> We have already observed that Berdyaev's awareness of his membership of the Russian gentry gave him a feeling of aristocracy which he develops beyond the category of social class in his philosophy. The following assessment is offered by President Masaryk:

The lack of the democratic spirit characterizes the apostates of Signposts ( a symposium to which Berdyaev contributed in 1909). Berdyaev, one of their spokesmen, aspires towards a mystical form of aristocracy. Aristocracy is ever mythopoeic and mystical.<sup>(25)</sup>

In addition to Berdyaev's social background, the period into which he was born must be seen as a formative influence. For the nineteenth century was a time of enormous cultural and philosophical development in Russia, and to this the revolutionary fervour of the early years of the twentieth century can be traced. Much of the development of philosophical thought took its inspiration from western sources. Nicholas Zernov speaks of the emergence of a new generation of educated Russians. Not drawn from the traditional land-owning class, and therefore possessing a different psychology, these believed that "Europe could provide them with ready-made weapons for combating the social and political evils of their own country."<sup>(26)</sup> This was the period of the development of the intelligentsia in Russia. In reaction to the state-imposed restrictions on the teaching of philosophy in the early part of the nineteenth century, the latter half saw a very rapid development. A corresponding cultural and religious development seems to have been

slower to get going. Nicholas Lossky comments on the reign of Alexander II:

In conditions of ~~of~~ far greater freedom than ever before the Russian philosophy developed rapidly and soon reached the level of Western-European thought .... In the domain of religious philosophy, Vladimir Solovyev's brilliant name was prominent. In this lifetime, however, religious problems had but little interest for the Russian Intelligentsia. One part of it was morbidly preoccupied with the problems of abolishing autocracy, and the other was equally one-sidedly engrossed in social and economic questions and the problem of introducing socialism. It was not until the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century that a considerable section of the Russian Intelligentsia freed itself from this morbid monoideism. Wide circles of the public began to show interest in religion, in metaphysical and ethical idealism, in aesthetics, in the idea of the nation and in spiritual values in general. (27)

It is exactly into this philosophical situation that Berdyaev's early thought is developed, and the contents of his father's library, Schopenhauer, Kant, Hegel, &c. reflect the trends of the period. Berdyaev mentioned the change in social outlook which he noticed in his father, a reflection of the influence of the liberal views prevalent in the country at the time. The same influence can be seen in Serge Berdyaev's unfortunate career. The embracing of a Marxist philosophy by Nicolas Berdyaev is also a part of this general trend, encouraged, in his case, by family considerations.

However, Berdyaev also inherits from his home background another interest in an aspect of Russian culture which came to fruition in the nineteenth century; that of literature. It is in the context of political stagnation that what Zernov terms "the golden classical age of Russian literature" develops. Lossky speaks of it as "having universal significance"; he offers as evidence of this the names of Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky.<sup>(28)</sup> Zernov lists many more.<sup>(29)</sup> These names appear again and again throughout Berdyaev's work. Obviously he was deeply influenced by them, and in particular by Dostoevsky. In this respect, the fact that Berdyaev grew up in a household which was well supplied with the works of these men is another reflection of the formative influence of his early years. Part of the attraction of some of these works, Tolstoy's War and Peace for example, might be the sentimental regard for a first novel from father's library. Berdyaev himself suggests a sentimentality of this kind in his autobiography, and he comments on the strength of this bond:

As I recall my childhood and adolescence and even my last years, I realize the tremendous significance which Dostoevsky and Tolstoy had for me. I always felt some peculiar bond with the heroes of Tolstoy's and Dostoevsky's novels; with Ivan Karamazov, Versilov, Stavrogin, Prince Andrey, and even those whom Dostoevsky called 'the pilgrims of the Russian land'... This feeling marked, perhaps, my deepest ties with Russia and her destiny.<sup>(30)</sup>

Rebellion, and its associate, freedom, are two motifs which run throughout Berdyaev's life and work. If, as we are suggesting here, they stem from a certain aspect of his own character, this is not to deny that he found encouragement for them in what he read and experienced. For this reason, Ivan Karamazov's rebellion is of particular importance to him, as is "The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor". In the latter, the problem of freedom is raised in an acute form and it was an interest in this which motivated so much of Berdyaev's thought. The concept of freedom was the basis of Berdyaev's interest in Jacob Boehme, the German mystical philosopher. Here, an attraction to a certain author can again be seen to stem from Berdyaev's own particular development and personality:

Some have called me the philosopher of freedom and a reactionary Russian bishop once said that I was 'the captive of freedom'. I do, indeed, love freedom above all else.... Freedom is a primordial source and condition of existence and, characteristically, I have put freedom rather than Being, at the basis of my philosophy..... I might say that all my life I was engaged on hammering out a philosophy of freedom.

I was moved by the conviction that God is truly present and operative only in freedom. (31).

Boehme's conception of freedom, which is based on the idea of a primary ungrund or "groundlessness" from which freedom issues was the only teaching on the subject which Berdyaev found "satisfactory". It could also be pointed out that Boehme's esoteric and gnostic style of writing probably appealed to Berdyaev's sense of aristocracy of spirit and other-worldliness. Berdyaev speaks of "the prominence in



myself of homo mysticus over homo religiosus." Acknowledging Eckhart, Boehme and Angelus Silesius as more congenial to him than many other doctors of the Church, he comments that this "has set a seal upon my whole philosophical outlook.... mysticism understood as a mode of knowledge rather than a finished product has always exercised my imagination."<sup>(32)</sup> One final point about Berdyaev's home background and its influence upon his development is the very city in which the family lived, Kiev. As a large industrial town and provided with a University, Kiev contained two important elements for a revolutionary atmosphere in which Berdyaev was to develop ; the students were equipped with political theory which fuelled their revolutionary activity, while the factory workers provided them with a cause for which to campaign. At the time when Berdyaev was a student at the University, Kiev was "one of the chief centres of the Social-Democratic movement at the time; there was a secret printing press, and revolutionary literature was produced in considerable quantities."<sup>(33)</sup>

#### ii. University and Political Activity.

So far we have looked at the particular influences which contributed to Berdyaev's development during the first twenty years of his life. As we move on to this section, which deals with his student days, it is possible to see how some aspects of his development reflect a wider trend in the upper classes of Russian Society, and in particular among the rising intelligentsia.

Berdyaev entered the University in 1894 and enrolled at first to read Natural Science, then changed to Law. He comments in Dream and Reality that by this time he had already felt compelled to break with the gentry; he even went so far as

"to seek only the company of those (particularly of Jews) of whom I knew for certain that they were neither of the gentry nor my relatives."<sup>(34)</sup> It was, therefore, inevitable that Berdyaev should choose the most extreme and active of the two revolutionary parties in the University, the Social Democrats; the other, the Social Revolutionary Party, was a strongly Slavophil organization. Berdyaev comments on the differences within the revolutionary movement of this period, differences which were later reflected in the Menshevik and Bolshevik factions during the turmoil of 1917:

Marxism in Russia involved a crisis among the left Intelligentsia and led to a breach with a certain number of its traditions. It arose among us in the second half of the 'eighties as a result of the failure of Russian narodnik socialism, which was unable to find any support among the peasantry, and of the shock to the party of 'The People's Will' caused by the murder of Alexander II. The old forms of the revolutionary socialist movement seemed to be outlived and it was necessary to seek new forms. A group known as 'The Emancipation of Labour' took its rise and laid the foundations of Russian Marxism. Among the members of this group were G. V. Plekhanov, B. Axelrod, V. Zasulich. The Marxists gave a different value to the narodnik idea that Russia could and should avoid capitalist development. They were in favour of the development of capitalism not as in itself a good thing, but because the development of capitalism would promote the development of the working class and that would be the one and only revolutionary

class in Russia.... A strong Marxist movement developed in Russia in the second half of the 'nineties and it secured its hold upon ever wider circles of the Intelligensia. At the same time, a workers' movement also came into being. Within a large number of groups a conflict was going on between the Marxists and the narodniks and victory inclined more and more to the side of the Marxists; Marxist periodicals made their appearance. (35)

Against the background of this development of political ideology in intellectual circles, Berdyaev himself at this transitional stage between school and university experienced an important and formative personal development. He speaks of this as a "first conversion", and yet not a conversion in the accepted sense. He does not refer to a religious experience. Memories of Orthodoxy as part of his early life seem to be few; he therefore had no occasion to fall away from, or to return to, a traditional faith. (36) Berdyaev writes instead of a two-fold motive in man's life, and it was the particular moment of his perception of this which marked what he terms "a true inner revolution". He understood this two-fold motive as a search for meaning and a search for the eternal. As the pattern of his life emerged, the search for meaning led him towards a Marxist philosophy. This was in order to make sense of the destiny of man and his place in society. But the other aspect of the motive, a search for the eternal, led him to a search for God. Here he found the source of Truth. It is of some importance to understand that Berdyaev regarded aspects of this motive in his life as inseparable; in his

search for the eternal he wished to find something which would render life meaningful. Even if his search were to be in vain, Berdyaev could not but believe that the very search itself would give to life some significance.

Unfortunately, the account of this experience which Berdyaev wrote at the time was taken when he was arrested by the police while a student. Berdyaev himself regretted having lost the manuscript, and it seems almost as though some part of that experience, which was a determining factor in his life, was lost with it. He writes:

I should have liked now to read what I wrote then, so as to re-live and recapture a first initiation into the mystery of life. This was undoubtedly a kind of conversion - the most powerful and perhaps the only one in my life. It was the conversion to the search for truth:..... But the change was not evidence of a conversion to any religious confession, either to Orthodoxy or even to Christianity in general. It was above all a re-orientation towards spirit and spirituality. (37)

It is important to understand that Berdyaev's basic orientation in this direction was established before any other ideology was adopted. For this is at the heart, not only of his adoption of Marxism, but also of his progression through it to Idealism and finally Christianity. Reflecting on his Marxist days, he observes that "I never abandoned this fundamental attitude, not even throughout my Marxist period. I do not think that people holding such a basically 'spiritualist' conviction can ever be thoroughly going materialists, or are susceptible of any orthodoxy, religious or otherwise." (38)

Although before going up to the University, Berdyaev had already developed an inclination towards Marxism, his introduction into Marxist circles actually took place during his first year there. He became a close friend of a fellow student in the Faculty of Natural Science, David Logvinsky. This friendship, although close, was not to last long; Logvinsky was exiled to Siberia and died there. He seems to have shared Berdyaev's philosophical interests and was responsible for introducing him into an active Marxist group, among whom was Anatoli Lunacharsky, the first Commissar of Education under the Soviet regime. Among the revolutionary factions in student circles at this time, Berdyaev speaks of his attraction to the Marxist Social Democratic Party as focused in its "characteristic appreciation of the moving forces below the surface of history, its consciousness of the historic hour, its broad historical perspectives and its universalism."<sup>(39)</sup> The westernizing influence of this group was also very strong. It is interesting that in spite of the profound effect which Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, &c. had on Berdyaev's early life, he can at this period find himself feeling "very anti-nationalistic."

Berdyaev appears to have been an enthusiastic member of the Party and to have played a leading role in its affairs. He speaks of giving lectures, reading papers and even travel abroad on its behalf. Lowrie mentions that Berdyaev attended a meeting of European trade unions in Zurich in the summer of 1897<sup>(40)</sup> and Berdyaev himself speaks of meeting the "founders and leaders of the whole movement," and being in touch with the emigres, a group led by Plekhanov, Axelrod and Vera Zasulich,<sup>(41)</sup> It was at about this period that Berdyaev was arrested for the first time. Lowrie attributes

the cause of the demonstration to the news that a woman in St. Petersburg had committed suicide in protest against the régime.<sup>(42)</sup> But the event had not been serious and no charges were made. The demonstration, arrest and subsequent release do serve, however, to illustrate the highly excitable atmosphere in which Berdyaev was living. He writes of this period of his life as one of the most exhilarating, enthusiastic and creative. He also had other interests outside the Marxist circle. Among these was Professor Georgi Chelpanov, a man of varied interests, whose critical judgement Berdyaev valued, and whose Society offered a valuable contrast to "the specific intellectual atmosphere of Marxist circles."<sup>(43)</sup> Another friendship formed at this time was that with Leo Shestov. He was probably one of the closest friends Berdyaev ever had; their association lasted until Shestov's death in Paris just before the second World War. They both shared an interest in Dostoevsky but also in Nietzsche.

It was also in this period prior to his exile that an unease came over Berdyaev and his views began to change. Among his interests outside party matters was an appreciation of Russian symbolism; he speaks also of reading a great deal of Ibsen, who at this time became a favourite writer. These were signs of an alienation from orthodox Marxist circles, though that alienation did not become fully evident until the period of exile. Yet, in spite of these differences, Berdyaev was still able to write that "the period before my exile was also the time of my greatest popularity."<sup>(44)</sup>

Early in 1898 the Social-Democratic Party suffered a major set-back when a hundred and fifty of its leading members were arrested, Berdyaev among them.<sup>(45)</sup> Initially, the conditions in which the prisoners were kept were relaxed and they were able to hold meetings. The prison was visited by the Governor-General of Kiev, General Dragomirov, a friend of Berdyaev's parents, who showed some understanding of the students' views. Through the influence of his father, Berdyaev was not held long and was released on bail. However, as a result of the evidence that had been collected against him, Berdyaev was sentenced two years later to exile under police surveillance in the Vologda province. It was during this period immediately prior to exile that Berdyaev began to write. His first article was entitled "F. A. Lange and Critical Philosophy in its Relation to Socialism," and was published in German in a Marxist journal entitled Neue Zeit.<sup>(46)</sup> Berdyaev's first book was also written at this time: it was entitled Subjectivism and Individualism in Social Philosophy and was published in St. Petersburg in 1901.<sup>(47)</sup> Berdyaev comments on this book that it sought to define the relation between 'a priori' and concrete man. The signs of his departure from what was acceptable in orthodox Marxist circles are evident here, and for this reason the work is important in Berdyaev's development. He claims in his autobiography that in this book he "repudiated the metaphysical implications of materialism".<sup>(48)</sup> Another important feature of this book is that it contained a preface by Peter Struve. Berdyaev obtained special permission while still on bail to go to St. Petersburg. While there, he met Peter Struve in the home of his cousin, Prince Trepov, a Minister of the Interior.

The formation of a connection with the intelligentsia in St. Petersburg was significant for Berdyaev: it gave him an opportunity to meet with intellectuals who were sympathetic with his own views but critical also of Marxist philosophy. Berdyaev says of Struve that he was

the doyen of the intelligentsia at the time, and a central figure in its mental evolution... he said in a letter to a friend that he had 'great hopes!' of me. But, though we were part of the same movement of so-called critical Marxism, I occupied a much more leftish position than he. Struve gave out the impression of being attracted by the doctrine of Marx because it seemed to him to provide an historical justification for industrial capitalism. (49)

Berdyaev also alludes to the literary connections which he made while he was in St. Petersburg: these were to be of great importance in the years after his return from exile.

It is not easy to assess what the period of exile was like or exactly what effect it had on Berdyaev. The regime under which Berdyaev lived seems to have been extremely congenial. He had accommodation at an Inn called the 'Golden Anchor' and was allowed a considerable degree of freedom. This was due largely to the influence of distant family relations. (50) However, the company seems not to have been so pleasant, being made up mostly of Social Democrats. The feelings of aristocracy of spirit again reveal themselves during this episode. In reaction to his fellow exiles, Berdyaev writes that "I just could not feign enthusiasm for this whole mental atmosphere and I do not think my reaction was evidence of



any intellectual snobbery. The exiles, in their turn, looked down on me as a romantic, an 'aristocrat' and a 'black swan'." (51) However, perhaps a considerable part of this feeling of estrangement stemmed from the publication of Berdyaev's book, not long after their arrival at Vologda. Berdyaev notes that the book caused some discussion among the Vologda exiles, among whom Lunacharsky and the "empirico-criticist Bogdanov" were especially hostile. It was as though Berdyaev had been exiled with the wrong people; he was now leaving the Social Democrats behind and travelling his own path. He now found himself "along with some others, at the head of the movement subsequently christened by Sergey Bulgakov 'From Marxism to Idealism'." (52) But the book no longer interested Berdyaev, who had moved further along the road to Idealism. The use of these terms has a particular application in Russia at this time. Masaryk observed that "when we talk of From Marxism to Idealism, we have to understand by idealism, religion as the definite opposite of materialism. In Russia, materialism signifies irreligion or antireligion, and in the narrower sphere, atheism." (53)

A reaction to this loneliness seems to have taken place in the form of a "surrender to the Dionysian element". Exactly what the nature of the surrender was, Berdyaev does not say. He merely comments that it was a characteristic feature of the 'nineties which entailed a substitution of beauty for truth, and of individualism for social responsibility; it was a mood which lasted though from the latter part of his exile until about a year afterwards, during which time he wrote almost nothing.

It was the note of individualism which caused alarm to Berdyaev's fellow exiles; for this was the sign of a tendency towards a quite different form of revolutionary feeling, towards the Russian socialism of Milhailovsky and Belinsky. This latter was concerned far more with a love of humanity - what Belinsky terms "Marat's love", and therefore rebelled against all forms of suffering. Here, Berdyaev's earlier sympathy with Dostoevsky's hero, Ivan Karamazov, again emerges. He observes that "Belinsky had already sharply underlined the problem of how 'the little child's poor tears' are a necessary condition of creation of the problem which Dostoevsky later put into the mouth of Ivan in The Brothers Karamazov..... Russian nihilistic and atheistic socialism arises out of compassion for the suffering personality and defence of it against society. The purely Russian socialism of the so-called narodniki (lovers of the people) was individualistic in its origin: one still notices that in the 'seventies in N. Mikhailovsky, who built up a whole theory of 'the struggle for individuality'"<sup>(54)</sup>. Berdyaev had earlier developed an interest in Mikhailovsky but this had been lost beneath the influence of the Marxists he had encountered in the University. During this period of restlessness the questions raised by the relation between the idea of humanity and the individual were stirring in Berdyaev's mind. Lowrie describes this period as one in which Berdyaev showed a surface carefree abandon but underneath there was "deep unrest and even dismay".<sup>(55)</sup>

This was in the period after the exile when Berdyaev went to

live at Zhitomir, before being permitted to return to Kiev at the end of 1903. A description of Berdyaev's loneliness and disorientation is well presented by Michael Vallon; he observes that "at heart (Berdyaev) kept harbouring his past leanings towards Marxism. But he also sensed that the relationships with the revolutionaries had reached the point of no return: he could not backtrack on his present ideological position."<sup>(56)</sup> The way forward for Berdyaev was through the friendship of Serge Bulgakov, whom he had first met while visiting Kiev from Vologda. At this time, Bulgakov was working as professor of political economy at the Polytechnic Institute in Kiev, though he had "already definitely adopted a religious position and was a Christian and a practising Orthodox."<sup>(57)</sup>

Bulgakov's progress away from Marxism had not been so different from that of Berdyaev. In Losky's opinion he had shown signs of dissatisfaction with orthodox Marxist economics as early as 1900 in his work on economics, Capitalism and Agriculture.<sup>(58)</sup> However, it had been five years earlier than this that Bulgakov had experienced his first crisis: through intellectual growth the light of his childhood had faded and a religious emptiness had taken hold of his soul; "and then suddenly this came .... Mysterious calls rang on my soul, and it rushed to meet them."<sup>(59)</sup>

(It should be noted that Bulgakov had come from a strongly clerical family: he was, therefore, rediscovering the faith of his fathers. Berdyaev comments that Bulgakov's "whole background was pervaded by the atmosphere of Orthodox Tradition" (Dream and Reality p.174) This atmosphere was unfamiliar to Berdyaev.) In 1902 Berdyaev contributed an article entitled "The Ethical Problem in the Life of

Philosophical Idealism" to a symposium which contained essays by Bulgakov, Struve and other "ex-marxists and neo-idealists."<sup>(60)</sup> On his return finally to Kiev in 1903, Berdyaev consolidated his friendship with Bulgakov; philosophically they had much in common, though Berdyaev had not yet developed a Christian outlook. He decided that a break with former associates was now the only possible course available to him. He therefore enrolled for a semester at Heidelberg to study under Professor Wilhelm Windelband; here Berdyaev was in the midst of the neo-Kantian school. Although Berdyaev had earlier in his life read and been influenced by Kant, the decision to go to Heidelberg was made under different conditions. The revisionism of Marxists like Struve, Bulgakov and others was dependant largely on a Kantian philosophy. Masaryk comments on the movement at this time:

For the Russian revisionists.... the name of Kant is little more than a catchword. The reference is really to neo-Kantianism or, to speak more strictly, to the various German philosophers of the present day whose thought is related to that of Kant. F. A. Lange, Schuppe, Riehl, Cohen, Windelband, Rickert, Stammler and others, have been the teachers of the Russian revisionists. Properly speaking, therefore, Russian revisionism falls back upon Mikhailovsky. The revisionists accept Mikhailovsky's subjective method. The orthodox marxists regard this as a reversion to the narodnichestvo or at any rate Plekanov identifies subjectivism with the narodnichestvo.

But as far as the metaphysics and the philosophy of religion are concerned, the revisionists find Mikhailovsky inadequate, and therefore these sometime marxists have returned to Solovyev and Dostoevsky. (61)

Berdyayev's alignment with this revisionism was complete by 1903 and this semester at Heidelberg had set the seal on his break with marxist materialism. Lowrie quotes from a letter which Berdyayev wrote in May 1903, setting out the stage he had then reached. Berdyayev writes that his article "The struggle for Idealism" (published in June 1901)<sup>(62)</sup> was the beginning of his final move from positivism to metaphysical idealism; he claims to belong to the idealistic tendency which is becoming ever more definite, and which is expressed in the symposium Problem of Idealism. (63)

iii. S. Petersburg, the Symbolist Poets and Religious Renaissance.

The rise and decline of Berdyaev's interest in Marxism covered a period of about ten years, from the time he was at school, through university days in Kiev, ending in exile. Having noted the course of his disenchantment with the materialist ideology of the Social Democrats, we see now how he attempted to resolve his uncertainties. We look first at the years Berdyaev spent in Strasbourg and then at his remaining years in Russia which he spent in Moscow.

On his return to Kiev from Heidelberg, Berdyaev became involved with an illegal organization called the Union of Liberation, which had been formed in 1904 by Struve. As a result of his association with this organization, and through the agency of his friend, Bulgakov, Berdyaev met Lydia and Eugenie Trusheff, the daughters of a Kiev solicitor. The sisters were both talented. Lydia wrote poetry and Eugenie was a sculptress; they had not long been released from Detention, having been arrested for political activity. Berdyaev proposed to Lydia and the marriage took place in 1904. In the autumn of that same year, Berdyaev moved to St. Petersburg to take over the editorship, in conjunction with Bulgakov, of a new periodical: Novy Put' (New Way). For the next three years Berdyaev immersed himself in the cultural life and activity of St. Petersburg. This period was one of great political unrest, overshadowed by the disaster of the Russo-Japanese war in 1905. That was the year, too, of 'Bloody Sunday', the massacre of unarmed workers who were led by a young priest, Fr. Gapon. In June there occurred the mutiny by the crew of the battleship, Potemkin. The latter part of the year saw the proposition

of the establishment of a Duma: in December an armed uprising in Moscow registered disappointed reaction to the proposals. The attractions of the glittering society of St. Petersburg, in which Berdyaev's dandyism proved a great success, soon palled. He sensed a lack of real inspiration; there seemed to be an obligation among certain circles to conform to patterns of artistic style; idealism was the philosophical norm: Russian Symbolists dictated the acceptable literary genre. Lowrie quotes from a letter in which Berdyaev writes that "in all the St. Petersburg society I have scarcely met any purity or nobility. I am so painfully surprised at the impurity and shallowness of this milieu, that I am resting my spirit in the country."<sup>(64)</sup> Berdyaev recalls again the emergence of a Dionysian element in the life around him but he ultimately found it oppressive. There was a great awareness of the momentous times in which they were living and this was heightened by the "ecstatic creative experiences" which seemed to fill the atmosphere. It appeared as though a new dawn had coincided with the end of the old age. In later life, Berdyaev was able to speak of this outburst of cultural interest as the summing up of Russian thought during the nineteenth century:

Only those who themselves lived through that time know what a creative inspiration was experienced among us and how the breath of the spirit took possession of Russian souls. Russia lived through a flowering of poetry and philosophy. Intense religious enquiry formed part of its experience, a mystical and occult frame of mind. As everywhere and always, with the genuine exaltation

there went the following of fashion and there were not a few insincere bubblers. There was not the necessary strength and concentration of will for a religious renaissance. There was too much cultural refinement.... The extraordinary sense of right, the extraordinary simplicity of Russian literature disappeared. (65)

Among the people Berdyaev encountered in St. Petersburg at this time were various of the Symbolist poets, some of whom Berdyaev admired. Perhaps the man whom he most respected was Dimitry Merezhkovsky, who was closely associated with the editing of Novy Put'. Also connected with the journal was Merezhkovsky's wife, the poetess, Zinaida Hippus, whose startling character greatly attracted Berdyaev. He speaks of having long discussions with her, far into the night during the winter of 1905. (66) However, their characters seem to have been too alike to be compatible; that friendship also ended, although Lowrie records that "friends felt that he never fully recovered from the break with Hippus." (67) Berdyaev also knew Andrey Bely who frequented the salons of Merezhkovsky and Hippus and who gives in his book The Beginning of an Age a vivid description of Berdyaev's presence at these gatherings; Berdyaev in turn speaks of him as "the most original and most influential of the Russian Symbolists." (68) In addition, Berdyaev earned the admiration of Vassili Rozanov, a flamboyant writer, to whose brilliance Berdyaev pays great tribute, although he admits that Rozanov's advocacy of a pre-Christian, Jewish and pagan religion of sex was "a betrayal of the human person." (69) An author whose work was of some influence on Berdyaev was Vyacheslaw Ivanov. He was one of the few in the St. Petersburg



circle who attempted a move away from the individualism which had typified their outlook. He advocated a symphonic culture, an idea which evoked the kind of communion envisaged by the untranslatable Russian word sobornost. Berdyaev was also attracted to the mysticism in which Ivanov was interested, peculiar though it was to Ivanov himself. The friendship between Berdyaev and Ivanov is mentioned in Dream and Reality but a dissatisfaction underlies the description of it. Berdyaev used to chair the Wednesday evening gatherings in the Ivanovs' flat, which was known as "the Tower". His observations on the irrelevance of these gatherings to the existence of the ordinary men and women who lived around them probably sums up Berdyaev's feelings about these three years in St. Petersburg. He notes, "I cannot help realizing that "the Tower" was in the fullest sense of the word an ivory tower, while below in the streets of Petersburg the revolution was raging and the tragic destiny of Russia took its course."(70)

The periodical which Berdyaev had come to St. Petersburg to edit did not prove to be much of a success. The reason for its failure was that two interests were being represented within the same Journal; the compromise between the literary and the philosophical and political factions proved to be unworkable. However, after this venture had failed, Berdyaev undertook, together with Bulgakov, the organization of a new journal, entitled Voprosy zhizni (Questions of Life). This began publication in 1905 but lasted for only one year. Already in Petersburg Berdyaev had found that he was moving away from the outlook of the intelligentsia and Idealism. The new work in which Questions of Life involved him was

instrumental in developing this move. He describes the journal as undertaking "the formidable task of giving expression to the crisis in the world outlook of the intelligentsia; to the spiritual searchings of the time; the climate to the movement towards Christianity, and to the change in the climate of religious opinion." (71).

The religious aspect of the journal's work was probably what affected Berdyaev most during this period. The move from Kiev had not answered fully the questions which were being asked within himself. St. Petersburg had considerably widened Berdyaev's horizons but there remained "some hidden process going on within me as yet not susceptible of expression but pointing towards a deeper appreciation of the religious element." (72) He attempted to express these stirrings in his book The New Religious Consciousness and Society, which was published in St. Petersburg in 1907.

A significant development in St. Petersburg in this period had been the establishment in 1903 of the Religious-Philosophical Society. The meetings of this Society were to provide an encounter between the intelligentsia, among whom there was an awakening of interest in religion, and the leaders of the Orthodox Church. The leading figure of the Orthodox representation was Bishop Serge Stragorodsky, the Rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Seminary, and later, under Stalin, the Patriarch of the Russian Church. There was inevitably a great difference between the two sides engaged in these meetings. On the one hand there were the representatives of Orthodoxy, closely identified with the establishment and equipped with their own theological language and system, while on the other hand there were

the intelligentsia, the revolutionary representatives of arts and letters, who approached religion with interest and caution, ignorant of its traditions and state of growth. Zinaida Hippus was particularly struck by the differences which emerged in these meetings; "it was not simply the difference in outlook, but even in customs, habits and language; everything was different. We seemed to represent two distinct cultures. The fact of ordination was of no real importance."<sup>(73)</sup> Merezhkovsky was similarly aware of the differences; he expressed them as an awareness on his part of inadequacy, for even though he and his friends had heard the second call of Christ, yet "we are still in the darkness, but we are approaching the festival hall, though we feel ashamed of our secular dress, which is so unsuitable for an ecclesiastical occasion."<sup>(74)</sup>

Berdyayev says little in his autobiography about these meetings, or the effect they had upon him. The time that he spent in St. Petersburg was a period of bewilderment, expectation, disillusionment and estrangement. These feelings were both a symptom of his movement towards Christianity and a goad in that direction. In speaking of the general course which this progress took, Berdyayev writes that "my original impulse was bound up with a bitter feeling of discontent with and dissent from the world with its evil and corruption".<sup>(75)</sup> This formed an important part of Berdyayev's interest in the meetings in Petersburg. For the representatives of culture were wanting to know whether Christianity was simply an ascetic religion, removed from the problems of man, society, the world &c. Since in this area no clear cut solutions can easily be

given, it is not surprising that the answers received were unintelligible, or unsatisfying. Berdyaev also points to the chasm which appeared between the two groups; "To the representatives of the clergy, Christianity had long become a matter of everyday prose, whereas those who were in search of a new Christianity wanted it to be poetry."<sup>(76)</sup> The cause of the difficulty in communication may well have lain, not in the different traditions of the two groups but in the peculiar aspect of Russian westernized learning which was the basis of Orthodox theology at that time. Russian theology was only beginning to develop, in the wake of the philosophical and cultural changes which had taken place during the nineteenth century. Berdyaev comments that "there existed no theology at all for a long while, for there existed only an imitation of Western scholasticism. The one and only tradition of Orthodox thought, the tradition of Platonism and Greek patristics, had been interrupted and forgotten."<sup>(77)</sup>

The Orthodox leaders had, therefore, welcomed encounters with the intelligentsia; for "Marxism caused no fears to the Christian thinkers of the day; rather it opened for them the doors to return to Kant, Hegel and religious idealism,"<sup>(78)</sup> and it was out of this idealism that there emerged the new impetus contributed by Bulgakov, Berdyaev, Struve and others.

The question which now faced Berdyaev was what the outcome of this development would be. Having progressed from the Marxism of Kiev to the Idealism of St. Petersburg, he now needed another move in order to find new surroundings in which to explore the implications of his new interest in religion. The feeling of approaching a new dawn had not

disappeared during his time in Petersburg; now, however, he wanted continuity with the past as well. Even at the meetings in Petersburg, the expectation of a new Christianity, an era of the Holy Spirit, was rejected.<sup>(79)</sup> Christianity was called upon to be a religion of the flesh, bound up with society, culture and history. Lowrie quotes from a letter which Berdyaev wrote at about this time; he wrote to Filosofov that "I am greatly concerned about the organic connection with the holiness of the old Church... .. It is becoming clearer to me that there cannot be some kind of special and new religion of the Holy Spirit. The religion of the Holy Trinity will be only the final fulfilment of the command of Christ, i.e., the appearance of the Holy Spirit."<sup>(80)</sup> When Berdyaev left St. Petersburg in 1907, his estrangement from the circles of the intelligentsia there was about complete. He spent that winter in Paris, where, according to Zernov, "he studied modernism and other contemporary religious and philosophical movements."<sup>(81)</sup> He also encountered the Merezhkovskys but the meeting was not pleasant. Berdyaev was regarded as being dangerously close to joining the Church, and therefore suspect. He himself was weighed down by religious problems: "I felt that I must face these issues in earnest in order to extricate myself from the half-truths and half-realities which dominated the scene of my life in Petersburg."<sup>(82)</sup>

iv. Moscow and Conversion to Orthodoxy.

In some ways the move to Strasbourg had a false start. Having been freed from the unacceptable philosophy of Marxist materialism, Berdyaev had hoped to find satisfaction among the literary figures of the intelligentsia. However, we have observed his disenchantment with the conventionalism of these circles. It was acceptance of the Christian faith, expressed by the Orthodox Church, which finally provided Berdyaev with satisfaction. In this last section we see Berdyaev, now well into his thirties, reach the climax of his intellectual development and influence in Russia.

In 1908 Berdyaev returned from Paris to Moscow, which then became his home until exile in 1922. Here, he discovered an environment in which he was able to develop all his interests. He found several outlets for his writing, and the association with Bulgakov, who was now teaching Political Economy, gave him an entrance into Orthodox circles. (83) The mystical theology of Vladimir Solovyev, at this time very influential in Moscow, provided Berdyaev with fertile ground in which to sow the seeds of the "homo mysticus". It was at this time that Berdyaev became acquainted with the work of Jacob Boehme, who had been much read by Solovyev. Berdyaev was also able to develop an interest in the Slavophil writers (among them Khomiakov had probably the greatest influence) and the ways of Holy Russia. In Moscow, Berdyaev also experienced the beauty of Orthodox liturgy, something formerly unknown to him. (84) In these years, Berdyaev produced what he considered to be his finest work, The Meaning of the Creative Act, written in 1912 at the end of a visit with

Eugenie and Lydia to Florence and Rome. The creative outpouring of Renaissance man had a profound and inspiring effect on Berdyaev, and in particular the work of Botticelli and Leonardo.<sup>(85)</sup> Berdyaev had now found friends, an audience, respect, and when Eugenie went to live with him and Lydia, in 1914, domestic happiness. Thus he writes in his autobiography: "My life in Moscow was a period which I regard as one of the happiest."<sup>(86)</sup>

Of the intense activity which took place in Berdyaev's life at this time, a few significant details should be noted. The most important contribution which Berdyaev made to philosophical and political discussion in this period was his article in the symposium entitled Vekhi (Signposts). This was published in 1909, containing articles by seven young intellectuals: N. A. Berdyaev, S. N. Bulgakov, Gershenson, A. S. Izgoev, B. A. Kistakovsky, P. B. Struve, and S. L. Frank, with the intention of providing a critical exposition of the failings of the intelligentsia.<sup>(87)</sup>

Frank, in his Reminiscences of P. B. Struve comments that "our task was to denounce the spiritual narrowmindedness, ideological deficiency, and dullness of the traditional outlook."<sup>(88)</sup>

Berdyaev's contribution to the symposium was entitled "Philosophical truth Istina and the Moral Truth Pravda of the Intelligentsia". In this essay, Berdyaev denounces the idolatrous attitude towards the people and the proletariat, which was taken by the intelligentsia. He criticises their opportunism for its utter disregard of truth; they value an idea, not because it is true, but because it would further the theories of socialism.

C. S. Galian comments that "these Marxists gave a different value to the narodnik idea, which encouraged rather than discouraged capitalist development. Of course, their promotion of capitalism was not because they thought it a good thing, but because the development of capitalism would more quickly develop the working class, which would in turn be the one and only revolutionary class in Russia."<sup>(89)</sup>

Zernov quotes the following passage from Berdyaev's article:

"The misfortune of the Russian intelligentsia is that its love for justice, for the general welfare of the common people, has paralysed and all but killed its love for truth ... All the historical and psychological evidence points to the conclusion that the Russian Intelligentsia can come to a new mind only as the result of a ~~synthesis~~ <sup>thesis</sup> between faith and reason which can produce union between theory and practice."<sup>69</sup>

Berdyaev's criticism reflects the importance which he attached to Truth. It was the question for this which had been the foundation of his "conversion" prior to going to University, and it was an ideal which remained for the rest of his life. A significant aspect of Berdyaev's contribution to this symposium is that he had now given expression for the first time to his belief in Christianity and membership of the Orthodox Church. From this position, the economic materialism of orthodox marxists was a betrayal of Truth of the highest order. The Vekhi Group, as they became known, took their stand on the Russian tradition, "based on its Christian heritage of truth, law and social morality. Their criticism of the intelligentsia pointed out that those who claimed to be enlightened among the orthodox marxists had, in fact, borrowed the empty form of atheistic socialism,



without the latter's essential Christian heritage."<sup>(91)</sup> Masaryk suggests, by way of assessment, that the Vekhi Group offered little more than a recantation of Marxism; he points to their rejection of the traditional masters of the intelligentsia, Belinsky, Herten, Chernishevsky and Mikhailovsky, and the canonisation in their place of Chaadev, Solovyev, Dostoevsky, Khomiakov and Lossky. In their demands for the theoretical and practical primacy of the spiritual over the outward forms of life and in their expectations of what this would produce, they were probably over-optimistic. In general, the tone was intemperate, reflecting the heady enthusiasm of a newly-championed cause.<sup>(92)</sup>

The effect which the publication of Vekhi had can hardly be underestimated, however. From the Church, the response was one of basic approval. A review of the book was written by Metropolitan Anthony of St. Petersburg. Although the review was not uncritical, it welcomed the revival among Marxists of interest in religion. This, however, drew a sharp response from Berdyaev. In an open letter to the Archbishop, he spoke of the tortuous ways by which he had "come to faith in Christ and in His Church, which now I consider my spiritual Mother."<sup>(93)</sup> This son, however, was born into the role of loyal opposition; for as obstacles to faith, he criticised the Church's spiritual poverty, its violence and condoning of capital punishment. The letter is of importance in that it is the first explicit expression in public of Berdyaev's membership of the Church. But the sensation caused by the publication of Vekhi was most effective in the area of philosophical debate. It showed the

materialist opponents of religion to be unable to answer the criticisms made against them. The symposium marked the arrival of a new school of thought; it was a trend which could not be ignored. Zernov records the following assessment of its influence, from the Autobiography of a liberal agnostic, I. V. Hessen:

The success of Vekhi was astounding. There was no single periodical which did not react against that book. The intelligentsia defended itself with ardour.... (but) did not produce any impression. For the first time I realized that our epoch was coming to an end; I saw that Vekhi had coined the slogans of the future, which were supported by modern knowledge; even science was moving towards metaphysics. (94)

Beyond the successful publication of Vekhi and The Meaning of the Creative Act (in 1916) the significance of these years in Moscow lay in the influences which were prevalent among Berdyaev's circle of friends. Perhaps the most obvious was that of Orthodoxy itself. Through Bulgakov he met, for example, Paul Florensky, a man much influenced by the work of Solovyev. In 1909, Florensky was appointed Professor of the History of Philosophy at the Moscow Theological Academy, a couple of years after which he published his most famous work, The Pillar and Foundation of Truth. Of this book, Berdyaev comments that "Florensky substituted Sophia for the living person of Christ, and cosmic order for the freedom of man" (95).

Debate in this area gave Berdyaev a stimulus towards

investigation of these subjects. The Moscow Religious-Philosophical Society, founded in memory of Solovyev, provided him with a forum for this. Thus, Berdyaev encountered the strong Slavophil movement, associated with the work of Khomiakov, whose exponents, V. I. Neshelov, and M. Novoselov, had a great influence upon him.<sup>(96)</sup> One aspect of this association was the interest which Berdyaev developed for the pilgrims, tramps and vagabonds of Holy Russia. He used to attend gatherings of these people at a Moscow Inn called Yama (The Pit). Berdyaev also pursued this interest while on holiday in the country. He records the profound effect which "a simple peasant, an unskilled labourer, illiterate and almost blind" named Akimusha, had upon him.<sup>(97)</sup> In this way, Berdyaev met the people whose simple beliefs provided the raw material of Orthodoxy. He notes also that many of the people he met reminded him of Jacob Boehme, who was not unknown in Russia: "But Boehme's memory was kept alive only among 'the people', where he was even regarded as a saint and a prophet."<sup>(98)</sup>

## CHAPTER 2.      FORMATIVE INFLUENCES.

We have now looked at all four stages of Berdyaev's early life in Russia. Each of these stages, childhood at home and school, university and exile, life in St. Petersburg and finally life in Moscow, contributed something to his overall development. Inevitably, some of these early influences were stronger than others. But perhaps because it was the setting of what remained a life-long interest, Moscow was the scene in which the most important influences converged. It will not be possible to give here an account of all the people, events, books, &c. which belong to this period of Berdyaev's life. Instead, we shall consider those groups which are of particular importance. They are Vladimir Solovyev and Jacob Boehme; Alexey Khomyakov and the Slavophiles; Dostoevsky and Nietzsche. The ideas of all these groups are inter-related and they were not necessarily new to Berdyaev when he arrived in Moscow.

### i.    The Mystics.

#### (a) Vladimir Solovyev.

Vladimir Solovyev was born in Moscow in 1853; his father was a Professor in the University there. He developed early an interest in Russian folk lore; at university he studied in the departments of Mathematics and Physics, and History and Philosophy; he also undertook a course at the Theology Faculty. His primary inclination was towards mysticism, though this could not be separated from his philosophical thought. Early in his career he experienced three mystical visions of the Divine Wisdom which he described in a poem entitled Three Meetings. Throughout his life, Solovyev vacillated between extremes; in youth between atheism and

religious fervour; in later years between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism.

The outcome of Solovyev's 'meetings' was the development of his sophiology. Berdyaev comments that "Solovyev's doctrine of Sophia, the eternal feminine, and his verses devoted to it had an enormous influence upon the symbolist poets of the beginning of the twentieth century, Alexander Blok and Andrey Bely."<sup>(1)</sup> Zenkovsky notes in his History of Russian Philosophy that Solovyev became enthusiastic about the idea of Sophia as a result of his study of the mystical doctrines of people like Jacob Boehme.<sup>(2)</sup> But there are important differences between the sophiology of Boehme and that of Solovyev. Berdyaev describes Boehme's Sophia as "virginity, the completeness of man, the androgynous image of man",<sup>(3)</sup> whereas Solovyev's Sophia was a personification of a purely feminine spirit. According to Zernov, it is Solovyev's sophiology which Bulgakov sought to develop in his work on the subject, entitled The Wisdom of God.<sup>(4)</sup> Yet, this understanding of Sophia as feminine, as opposed to Boehme's virgin figure, led Solovyev to his own peculiar view of sexual love and eroticism: "he insisted that the only real object of sexual love was the Divine Sophia: she contained the fullness of created life... she alone was the attraction which drew and held each individual lover."<sup>(5)</sup> But sophiology was not Solovyev's only interest, nor were the visions he experienced the only sources of his spiritual development. Helmut Dahm gives the following brief outline of the progress of Solovyev's thought:

Solovyev starts with Spinoza, Hegel, Edward von Campenhausen, and Schopenhauer. With a fine sense of the danger of hypostatizing logical metaphysics, he quickly achieves the theosophical gnostic turn of the later Schelling, which goes back to Boehme via von Baader. He ultimately arrives at Plato - noticeably using Leibnizian motifs particularly within epistemology - or more exactly at Plotinus as the concatenation of Philo's Alexandrian doctrine of logos and of Augustine.<sup>(6)</sup>

On the basis of this outline it is possible to appreciate the assessment by Peter Zouboff of Solovyev's contribution to Russian thought, which he led "out of the temptations of socialism, through the allurements of German Romanticism and Idealism, to the primary problem of Christianity - the tragedy of the Church schism, of the body of Christ rent in two - and called Christendom back into unity."<sup>(7)</sup> Solovyev's conception of the unity of the Church stems from the period in his youth in which he developed Slavophil ideals. He envisaged a kind of theocracy which would give concrete expression to Christianity's claims to be a universal religion; this unity in the spiritual sphere would be reflected politically by the rule of a king who would be spiritually but not politically subordinate to the head of the Church, the High Priest.<sup>(8)</sup> A comparison can here be drawn between Solovyev and Ivan Karamazov; the similarity between these two figures need not have been accidental.<sup>(9)</sup>

If one were to point to a single work by Solovyev which was of decisive influence upon Berdyaev, it would be the Lectures on Godmanhood, which were published in 1878. These twelve lectures deal with the questions of creation and redemption. So much of what Solovyev writes here is echoed in Berdyaev's work: in the background there are strains of Boehme's mysticism. Solovyev sees the cosmic process culminating in the appearance of man, as the nodal point to which also the theogonic process leads:

As the cosmogonic process terminated in the birth of the human being endowed with consciousness, so the result of the theogonic process is the appearance of the self-consciousness of the human soul (or its awareness of itself) as the spiritual beginning, free from the domination of natural gods and able to conceive the divine beginning in itself and not through a medium of cosmic forces.<sup>(10)</sup>

Within the process of revelation, Solovyev's inclusion of Hindus, Greeks and Jews reflects much of the scope of Berdyaev's interest.<sup>(11)</sup> Man, as the central point of this revelation, both its content and the perception of it, is one of Berdyaev's greatest interests. That man could be at once divinity and nothingness, as Solovyev would insist, is the basis of Berdyaev's anthropology: "Man combines in himself all possible opposites which can be reduced to one great polarity between the unconditional and the conditional, between the absolute and eternal essence and the transitory phenomenon or appearance."<sup>(12)</sup> The fall and redemption take their place within the system of the working out of

this process. In Christ the eternal destiny of mankind is revealed within history: he is the Second Adam who inaugurates the new and final stage of man's development:

The incarnation of the divine Logos in the person of Jesus Christ is the manifestation of the new and spiritual man, the Second Adam. As under the manifestation of the new, natural, Adam, we must understand not only a separate person among other persons, but the all-inclusive personality, including in himself all natural humanity, so the Second Adam is not only this individual being, but at the same time also the universal being, embracing all the regenerated spiritual humanity ... The Second Adam was born on earth not in order to complete a formal juridical process, but for the real salvation of mankind, for its actual deliverance from the power of the evil force, for pragmatic revelation of the Kingdom of God in humanity. (13)

In any assessment of the importance of Solovyev's work, it is the eschatological dimension which must emerge as most distinctive, for it colours all his writing. Nor does the monism of his theology imply mystical or ascetic withdrawal from the world; a point which in itself Berdyaev was keen to emphasize. (14) S. L. Frank suggests that it is in this area of a religious world-view that Solovyev (and therefore Berdyaev) has most to offer to the West, where a different outlook has prevailed. For Solovyev "combines a bitter awareness of the power of evil, unconquerable until the end of history, and the foreboding of trials to come, with a



keen sense of the Christian's responsibility for the world's evils and insistence upon active struggle for Christ's truth in every domain of human life."<sup>(15)</sup> C. S. Calian asserts that Berdyaev rejected the gloom of Solovyev's later apocalyptic thought, as he did the idea of theocracy which, within the historical context, seemed to detract from the central idea of the Kingdom of God.<sup>(16)</sup> But Calian also points out that Berdyaev worked out from Solovyev's doctrine of the Godmanhood an active eschatology, which called upon man's creativity to bring about the Second Advent of Christ: Berdyaev constructed "an eschatological metaphysics which connected the coming of the end with a final triumph over the idea of objectification and complete victory from the problems of evil, suffering, and subsequently death itself, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the God-Man."<sup>(17)</sup>

A quite different assessment of the relationship between Berdyaev and Solovyev is offered by Dahm. He maintains that the four leading philosophers, Berdyaev, Bulgakov, Frank and Struve, who were converted from materialism to idealism under the influence of Solovyev's writing, failed to see in the latter the advance from a theocracy to a new ethic based on natural morality. Instead, Dahm asserts "the Russian philosophers of the early twentieth century reverted to the traditional conception of a Slavophil Utopia."<sup>(18)</sup>

Dahm's criticism cannot be denied but it can be qualified. In respect of the work of Berdyaev, the interests which he developed immediately after his "conversion" were undeniably Slavophil. However, this was not the final stage of his development. One need only point to his book, Destiny of Man, to provide a demonstration of his appreciation of

the possibilities opened up by the use of a natural morality. Berdyaev is adamant that the creation of a utopia is not possible within the historical confines of this world; even the Kingdom of God does not bring this about: "For in the Kingdom of God and in the perfect divine life there is neither state, nor economics, nor family, nor learning, nor any social life determined by law.... It is left to man himself in his freedom to find a creative solution of the problems that continually confront him. The Gospel is concerned not so much with teaching us how to solve them as with healing and regenerating the texture of the human soul." (19)

(b) Jacob Boehme.

We come now to a consideration of the second of these two influences upon Berdyaev: Jacob Boehme. Boehme has been linked with Solovyev not only because of the similarity of their interest (in the area of sophiology and speculative mystical theology) but also because it seems likely that it was through their common interest that Berdyaev came to appreciate Boehme's work. Jerome Gaïth observes that Berdyaev's move from S. Petersburg to Moscow was an important factor in this respect. For Moscow was the centre of the Slavophil school which took its inspiration from Solovyev: "Berdyaev fell heavily under his influence.. It was the theandric doctrine of Solovyev which formed the basis of his conception of freedom." (20)

It was, not surprisingly, in view of what has already been said, through the idea of man as a free being that Berdyaev was attracted in this direction. Solovyev's understanding of this was that man is not a being who is free by his own

decision: "His being is by definition his freedom, which is itself given to him by a free act of the divine will."<sup>(21)</sup> This is an understanding of man and freedom which, in Berdyaev's opinion, Solovyev had derived from Boehme, but indirectly, through Schelling. In an introduction to Boehme's Mysterium Magnum Berdyaev writes that "Schelling drew together Boehme's ideas of indeterminate freedom, although he did not always understand Boehme.... For Schelling, freedom is the will. He was the first in German philosophy to develop Boehme's voluntarism."<sup>(22)</sup> A similar sequence of thought is outlined by Masaryk also. He says that Solovyev's interest in Boehme followed on from the slavophil concentration on Plato and Plotinus, and so he "passed to Schelling, and Schelling smoothed his path to Baader, Jacob Boehme and all the mystics."<sup>(23)</sup>

We have already referred to Berdyaev's statement in his autobiography about his dependance on the ungrund of Boehme, his theory of uncreated freedom.<sup>(24)</sup> This is the difference between Berdyaev's approach to freedom, and Solovyev's, even though they both stem from the same source. Solovyev, as we have seen, identifies freedom and being with one another. Berdyaev, however, following on from Boehme's notion of the ungrund, rejects any idea that freedom can be created.<sup>(25)</sup> To imagine, therefore, that it is given by God to man "is tantamount to saying that if the nature of man has been created, it is not the same as his freedom. Freedom precedes being: it is anterior to the understanding of creation." (Porret)<sup>(26)</sup> Further exploration in this area led Berdyaev to the understanding of the symbolic nature of the language and the structures of what he was trying to say.

Here, the tradition of apophatic theology, strong in Orthodoxy, provided Berdyaev with his conclusion. From his reading of the mystical writers, he accepted the distinction made by Eckhart between Gott, the revelation of kataphatic knowledge, and Gottheit, the unknowable depths of God's being, which neither reason nor concept can express. It was with the Gottheit of Eckhart that Berdyaev identified the ungrund of Boehme.<sup>(27)</sup> Here, Porret observes, Berdyaev's gnosticism "reaches a limit where it must prostrate itself before the mysterious. Human knowledge.... remains incomplete."<sup>(28)</sup> It is likely that the gnostic style of Boehme's writing appealed to Berdyaev's taste for the esoteric. W. R. Inge, for example, comments that Boehme's theory of the seven Quellgeister bears a striking, if coincidental, resemblance to Basilides' system of emanations.<sup>(29)</sup> But an important aspect of Boehme's mysticism is its concern with the problem of evil and suffering. There were two periods in Boehme's life when travel beyond his home town of Alt Seidenborg in Silesia brought him into contact with widespread human suffering. These were when, as a young man, he travelled in search of agricultural work, before being apprenticed to a cobbler, and later, when as a tradesman he and his family shared in the hardships brought about by the Thirty Years War.<sup>(30)</sup> Whereas with Berdyaev a social concern expressed itself in a political philosophy, with Boehme this awareness was translated, under the influence of Lutheranism, into a personal sense of human sinfulness and the wrath of God. So, Boehme could write that "your heart in Time does not synchronize with God's Heart in Eternity. And there is a jar. From this one primordial discord arises every discordant element in our life."<sup>(31)</sup> The core of Boehme's

mysticism is the antithesis between good and evil, between Yes and No. It is thus that he envisages strife or longing within the Godhead, by which what is Nothing yearns to become Something; the will to create is a will for the lover to receive from the freedom of the beloved the response of love. This becomes one of the fundamental aspects of Berdyaev's theology. He takes as a motto for his book, The Meaning of the Creative Act the line from Angelus Silesius, a spiritual descendant of Boehme: "I know that without me God cannot exist for a single second. If I cease to be, He too must cease necessarily to exist." It is the centre of this strife which Boehme refers to as the Ungrund. R. Otto agrees with Berdyaev that this bears some similarity to Eckhart's thought, for they both find a starting point for their speculation in a 'primal bottom'; here is located Boehme's voluntarism and his theodicy. The ungrund stands to Boehme "not for being an Above-Being but for stress and will; it is not good and above-good but a supra-rational identification of good and evil in an indifferent, in which is to be found the potentiality for evil as well as for good." (32)

Boehme also appealed to the 'homo mysticus' in Berdyaev. Rather like Solovyev, Boehme experienced a number of periods of mystical illumination. Although Berdyaev never seems to have experienced anything like this, there are suggestions in Dream and Reality of something similar. (33) Beyond this, the significance of Boehme's place in the development of Western mysticism is not unimportant. He was, in the opinion of Evelyn Underhill "a channel through which the teaching of the German mystics - Eckhart, Tauler, The 'German Theology' - affected the Protestant world." (34)

The richness of this seventeenth century mysticism and its diversity, are reflected in Boehme's writing. The strength and pervasiveness of this trend is indicated by the fact that Boehme never had any formal education beyond that of the village school. From the local Pastor, Martin Moller, however, he received instruction in many of the greatest mystics.<sup>(35)</sup> Within his own age he inherited an interest in alchemy and the speculative theology of the Cabbala. Thus, when in Russia the intelligentsia developed an interest in religion, it was probably inevitable that a tradition such as this, which was not necessarily tied to any denominational confession, would appeal to them. Zernov comments that in this period there was an enormous demand for a new type of literature which would stimulate the growing interest in religion and mysticism. A feature of this was the publishing company set up by Emil Medtner, who "introduced to Russian readers a number of the works of Western mystics such as Francis of Assisi, Eckart, Ruysbroeck, Jacob Boehme and Emmanuel Swedenborg." <sup>(36)</sup>

An assessment of the overall influence which Boehme had on Berdyaev's work would probably point to two features: the style of writing and its prophetic tone. Berdyaev himself speaks of the prophetic nature of mysticism and in the West this is an aspect of his work which has been particularly noted.<sup>(37)</sup> Berdyaev's style also reflects the mystical strain of Boehme. It has been observed that part of the difficulty of understanding Boehme's work is that he uses words in his own peculiar way, and it has also been pointed out that the reason for this is simply that no language then existed which would express what he wanted to say. A

similar point could be made about Berdyaev's work. Although the terms and the language have all been hammered out, yet nevertheless he expresses the conviction that rational thought and language cannot be adequate for the purpose of speaking about the mystery of God. A link in the development of this can be seen in the symbolist poets.

ii. Alexey Khomiakov and the Slavophiles.

This group includes the names of Andrey Bely, Alexander Blok, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Dmitry Merezhkovsky, Valery Bryusov &c. These poets were developing their new style of writing in the last years of the nineteenth century. They were much influenced by Solovyev, and through him the general trend of German Romanticism. Their interests also ranged as far as the Cabbala, the 'atman' of Hindu philosophy, and Christ as Logos. As part of the reaction to the materialism which was dominant in Russian philosophy at this time, they developed a sense of the spiritual, of mystical inspiration. Thus, Russian Symbolism became "a philosophy which proclaimed that a poet possessed the ability in moments of creative ecstasy to perceive the other, the 'real' world"<sup>(38)</sup> Berdyaev retains this awareness of the penetration into another 'real' world through creative ecstasy; for him this creativity is the life of the spirit in man, which is expressed in the material, objective world, whether by poet or mystic, through symbol. He offers the following assessment of this flowering of Russian poetry:

The fundamental influence upon the symbolists was that of Vladimir Solovyev; he expressed the essence of symbolism in one of his own poems in this way:

Everything visible to us  
 Is only a flash, only a shadow  
 From what cannot be seen by the eye.

Symbolism sees a spiritual reality behind this visible reality and the symbol is a link between two worlds, the mark of another world within this world.<sup>(39)</sup>

In addition to the influence of Solovyev there is that of the slavophil movement and its leaders, Kireevsky and Khomiakov. This was particularly strong in Moscow during the time that Berdyaev lived there, and he has worked certain aspects of their thought into his philosophy. It is to a brief consideration of their ideas that we shall now move.

As a distinct and recognisable school of thought, slavophil philosophy emerged in Moscow at the middle of the nineteenth century. The slavophiles developed a concept of the destiny of Russia as a prophetic nation among the nations of Europe. They "absorbed the Hegelian idea of the Vocation of peoples and what Hegel applied to the German people they applied to the Russian".<sup>(40)</sup> Moscow was to become the Third Rome. Their rejection of Western thought was on the grounds that it was rationalist; only Orthodoxy preserved an inward integrality of spirit and for this reason only the Orthodox are free. Berdyaev sees this feeling for freedom as the foundation of Khomiakov's philosophy, a foundation derived from the work of Kant and German Idealism.<sup>(41)</sup> Masaryk sees similar influences at work in the thought of Kireevsky, who used Schelling's teaching as a directive back to the true faith, based on the Fathers. Thus, Kireevsky accepted the datum of Kantian criticism that the highest religious truths are not cognisable by the understanding: "With the



establishment of this proposition Kant deprived European rationalist civilization of its roots but he failed to take the further step that was necessary. Schelling was the first to turn away from rationalisation to intuition, to intellectual contemplation."<sup>(42)</sup>

Such were the bases of slavophil thought. Their opponents were the westernizers whose views were expressed most clearly by Pëter Chaadaev. This party regarded Western civilization as the goal towards which Russia should work. In the early days of their development, these two groups shared a common interest in German idealism and official discouragement of their work; an independent intelligentsia was mistrusted by the insecure Tsar, Nicholas I. Although originally the leaders of both parties had been friends, they became estranged from each other on ideological grounds. The Westernizers moved towards a revolutionary programme, and atheism; the slavophiles developed their own form of political utopia.

Although Khomiakov became the popular leader of the movement, it was Kireevsky who outlined the fundamental ideas which were to be developed. Lossky offers the following account of Kireevsky's thought, the kernel of slavophil philosophy:

He does not rate highly 'abstract logical thought'; for the possession of truth, he says, it is essential to gather together all one's capacities into a single whole, logical thought, feeling ('the heart'), aesthetic sense, the conscience, love. Truth is unfolded only to the whole man; the inner root of understanding is there 'where all the separate

faculties unite in one living whole vision'.<sup>(43)</sup>

From the emphasis on wholeness, on the unity of man, both as an integrated individual and corporately as mankind, there follows the idea of sobornost, which is developed by Khomiakov. Kireevsky had seen that the inner life of man cannot be lived in isolation from the people (or the world) around him: "Each moral victory is in the inmost depths of one Christian soul is a spiritual triumph for the whole Christian world."<sup>(44)</sup> The word sobornost is impossible to translate. It is derived from the verb sobirat, which means "to bring together" or "to assemble": sobornost is, therefore, the state of being together.<sup>(45)</sup> Berdyaev defines it as "a unity which knows of no external authority over it, but equally knows no individualistic isolation and seclusion."<sup>(46)</sup> In this sense it derives its unity from the Unity of God, for the Church exists in a two-fold form. It has as its members a multitude of rational creatures, and yet its spiritual nature is that of a single body. There is a continuity between the Church on earth and the Church in heaven. Nor is the Church to be seen as existing in isolation from those who are not her members: "The rest of mankind, whether alien from the Church, or united to her by ties which God has not willed to reveal to her, she leaves to the judgement of the great day."<sup>(47)</sup> It is from this that Berdyaev developed his ideas about the traditional understanding of hell. His universalist doctrine issued from this belief that if mankind forms a unity, it is impossible to conceive of the salvation of some, and the eternal damnation of others. In a similar way, man's relation to the cosmos and to the earth itself has this aspect of unity which signifies the eschatological significance of the whole

created order.

Understood in this way, the Church could never be thought of as located geographically in any particular place; its unity and existence do not depend upon place. It would, therefore, be impossible to understand Sobornost as meaning 'catholic'. And it is along these lines that Bulgakov defines it. He writes that catholicity is the metaphysical depth of the Church; "Catholicity has neither external, geographical manifestations. It is perceived by the Spirit which indwells the Church and searches the heart."<sup>(48)</sup> However, the slavophil notions of the Church were not so spiritual that they prevented any comment on the non-Orthodox demominations. The Church in the West was fiercely criticised by Khomiakov, the Roman Church for its authoritarian and aggressive spirit and the Protestant Churches for their individualism. It seemed as though Russian Orthodoxy had a monopoly on truth. But, to be fair to Khomiakov, this awareness that Orthodoxy had something precious to offer the West gave him an interest beyond Russia itself. Zernov comments that "he realised that the Roman Catholics and the Protestants represented, though in opposite forms, essentially the same type of Christian tradition and that the East possesses the key to its possible synthesis."<sup>(49)</sup> An example of this interest is the correspondence between Khomiakov and the Reverend William Palmer, a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford.<sup>(50)</sup> The idea of Russia's special mission to establish Church unity between the divided Churches featured also in Solovyev's thought: he wrote that "Russia has a religious calling of world-wide significance," and that the sufferings of her people signified their election to this role.<sup>(51)</sup> Berdyaev expresses a similar attitude, though more muted, aware

of the course taken by the Orthodox Church in Russia after the revolution.<sup>(52)</sup> This aspect of Berdyaev's work has been noted by his readers in the West. From America, Vallon comments that "above all, he was the first original theologian of Russian Orthodoxy and an authentic spokesman of the Russian Church."<sup>(53)</sup> In France, Eugene Porret commented on this theme of the relation between Russia and Europe; that in the West the Russian people could not be ignored, for, as Berdyaev had pointed out in 1912, the world-wide theme of our generation is to be 'East and West': Porret writes that "among the Russian philosophers in exile, Nicolas Berdyaev is without doubt the best known and the one whom France has most welcomed. From his first works translated into French, this spiritual son of Dostoevsky has interested a number of readers not only on his own philosophy, but also in Russian thought in general."<sup>(54)</sup> It would be misleading, however, to imagine that Berdyaev simply adopted the attitude of a slavophile nationalist; nationalism was for him simply an abstraction beneath which an individual personality was lost. J. L. Segundo comments that on his arrival in Paris in 1924 Berdyaev was, as he always had been "l'homme universel". However, as such, Western society provided him with a less congenial atmosphere in which to live; thus "we see that it was for him the concretization of that world of necessity, the dislike of which was the source of his metaphysical thought."<sup>(55)</sup> Freedom over against the world of necessity was a theme which Berdyaev valued most in the work of his spiritual parent, Dostoevsky. Freedom is not exercised without pain and suffering; it is a burden to be borne though some may rebel against such an ordering of the universe. We move now to a consideration

of the influence of Dostoevsky and Nietzsche on these aspects of Berdyaev's thought.

iii. The Rebels.

(a) Feodor Dostoevsky.

Feodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky was born in Moscow in 1821. His parents were of the intelligentsia class, families involved with the Church, the Military and the medical profession. His father, Mikhail Dostoevsky, a doctor, was a man of oppressive moodiness, given to outbursts of temper. He was, however, adored by his wife, Mariya Fyodorovna, a weak character who suffered bad health. She died prematurely in 1837, after which Mikhail Dostoevsky took to drink. His stormy temperament deteriorated and in 1838 he was murdered by his serfs. Feodor was sent to a private boarding school, passing in 1839, to the College of Military Engineering in St. Petersburg. Although unhappy there, he passed his examinations and was given a commission. However, he soon resigned to pursue a literary career, following the success of his first novel, Poor Folk, published in 1846. A friend wrote to him at this time that he was "good, generous, trusting, and completely unfit for life's realities - and that is how he will remain for ever."<sup>(56)</sup> His career did not go well and he was constantly in debt. He became involved with socialism, through the influence of Visarion Belinsky, and, necessarily, with atheism. For as a socialist Belinsky knew that "he had before all else to dispose of Christianity; he knew that the revolution must necessarily begin with atheism."<sup>(57)</sup> As a result of this <sup>Dostoevsky</sup> was arrested in 1849 and condemned to death, though reprieved at the last moment and imprisoned

for four years in Siberia. The experience is described through the character of Prince Myshkin in The Idiot. It was a crucial event for Doestoevsky ; "his life was split in two, the past was ended, there began another existence, a 'rebirth in a new form'." (58) This division remained a source of conflict for much of Dostoevsky's life; he was torn between atheism and the Christian Faith. Of "The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor" he wrote in Journal of an Author that "even in Europe there are not and have not been atheistic expressions of such force: consequently, it is not as a boy that I believe in Christ and confess him, but my hosanna has passed through a great furnace of doubts." (59) This autobiographical note is sounded at the end of Dostoevsky's last novel, The Brothers Karamazov, where just before his exile, Mitya comments to his younger brother, Aloyosha, "You wanted to make a new man of yourself by suffering. Well, as I see it, all you ought to do is remember that other man always, all your life, and wherever you may run away to, that will be enough for you." (60) Following his imprisonment, Dostoevsky was allowed to return to Russia in 1859. He devoted the next years to journalism, working on a successful but not lucrative periodical called Vremia (The Time). This was suppressed in 1863 and a period of further hardship followed. In 1864 his wife died, and his brother soon after. Debts compelled him to live abroad but also to produce a source of income. The novels of this period (Crime and Punishment; The Idiot; The Possessed) were the result. They won him stability and literary acclaim. In 1867 he married again and settled down to family life. The two most important products of this period were a publication entitled Journal of an Author, which was started

in 1873, and The Brothers Karamazov, published just before his death in January 1881.

Zernov has suggested that all Dostoevsky's writing can be treated as ~~auto~~-biographical, for each of the heroes re-lives the passions, hopes and fears which Dostoevsky himself experienced.<sup>(61)</sup> We find here a life which is in many ways similar to that of Berdyaev. The dominant themes are rebellion in the name of Truth and justice, and a profound religious awareness. Dostoevsky was a leading figure amongst the slavophiles and from this aspect of his work Berdyaev developed an important theme, a sense of destiny. Berdyaev wrote that Dostoevsky combined this historical sense with an apocalyptic element which infused his writing with a prophetic spirit.<sup>(62)</sup> Dostoevsky's intuition about the future is what Berdyaev sees as a prediction of the inevitable outcome of the Revolution. For this reason, he maintains, people in the West have heard within themselves an echo of Dostoevsky's warning, and they have "turned to the great Russian and universal genius who had first explored the inward abysses and foretold a catastrophe for the world."<sup>(63)</sup>

The source of Dostoevsky's prophetism was his understanding of man. In 1839 he wrote to his brother, Mikhail, that "man is a mystery; if you spend your ~~entire~~ time trying to puzzle it out, then do not say that you have wasted your time. I occupy myself with this great mystery, because I want to be a man."<sup>(64)</sup> What constitutes the state of being human was the issue to which Dostoevsky devoted his interest. And this could not be explored through the abstractions of political thought. Ahead of Freud, Jung, Adler, &c. Dostoevsky was

mapping out a new science of man - he was already working on a Christian anthropology. One of his disciples, Rozanov, observes that "Dostoevsky is first and foremost a psychologist; he does not depict everyday life.... but the human soul."<sup>(65)</sup> Man was for him a microcosm, related to the whole of the universe and its existence. So, "to solve the question of man is to solve the question of God. The whole of Dostoevsky's work is a plea for man", wrote Berdyaev.<sup>(66)</sup> For this reason the notions of socialism, an earthly utopia, were rejected by Dostoevsky, for they were man-made schemes which reduced every man either to a machine or to an abstract concept. This clear definition of the nature of human flourishing was to impel Berdyaev later towards the Personalism of Edward Mounier. As early as 1923 Berdyaev was pointing to Dostoevsky's exalted idea of personality, and his warning that man must not become part of a machine: Dostoevsky's "masterly criticism of social eudaemonism is directed towards demonstrating its incompatibility with the independence and dignity of personality."<sup>(67)</sup>

But "social eudaemonism" requires closer definition. The prevailing trend of Dostoevsky's time was a non-religious humanism. Zernov comments that in this Dostoevsky detected deep-seated motives behind the revolution which was impending: "beneath the ardent longing of the revolutionaries to assist the poor, to destroy the power of the rich, and to establish equality and justice, he saw another and even stronger desire to re-arrange the world according to their own will, to dethrone the Creator and



to prove that emancipated man can be the master of his own destiny." (68) Dostoevsky's penetration into the soul of man led him to believe that man could not be free or happy simply by the satisfying of his material needs; man as a microcosm has a spirit which has needs other than material welfare; the whole man has the need for love, for unity with his fellow man, and with the world in which he lives. Dostoevsky expresses this view through Fr. Zossima, the "staretz" in The Brothers Karamazov. From his discourses and sermons we read:

The world has proclaimed freedom, especially in recent times, but what do we see in this freedom of theirs? Nothing but slavery and self-destruction! For the world says: 'You have needs, and therefore satisfy them for you have the same rights as the most rich and noble' .....

That is the modern doctrine of the world. In that they see freedom. And what is the outcome of this right of multiplication of needs? Among the poor, envy and murder, for they have been given the rights, but have not been shown the means of satisfying their needs. (69)

This critique is of man understood as a natural object. But Dostoevsky uses his psychological insight to see beyond the limited objectives of the humanists' programme. The tragedy of the age in which Dostoevsky lived was in this area. Man was attempting to emancipate himself in the name of human justice from theology and metaphysics; the result was slavery to laws of nature and necessity. Dostoevsky witnessed man "conceived as a natural being, subject to the principals of profit and rational egoism: his metaphysical depth was

taken away from him, his third dimension - the image of God. Humanism wanted to exalt man, and shamefully degraded him." (70)

That man degrades himself when on his own terms he exalts himself is a theme which runs throughout Dostoevsky's work, from Kirilov's man-god ("if God does not exist, then I am God") to Ivan Karamazov's 'Legend of the Grand Inquisitor'. The central question which Berdyaev identified in Dostoevsky's work is that of freedom. Berdyaev observed that both Dostoevsky and Nietzsche "knew that man is terribly free, that liberty is tragic and a grievous burden to him." (71) This is expressed in the words of the Grand Inquisitor in the Legend. In himself and his colleagues (the unfortunate Jesuits) the Roman Church has lifted from its members the weight of freedom. He arrests and interrogates the silent Christ:

You knew, you couldn't help knowing this fundamental mystery of human nature, but you rejected the only absolute banner.... the banner of earthly bread, which you rejected in the name of freedom and the bread from heaven .... I tell you man has no more agonizing anxiety than to find someone to whom he can hand over with all speed the gift of freedom with which the unhappy creature was born. (72)

It would not be right to give the impression that Dostoevsky was not interested in the material, or believed that it was unimportant to human life. In his awareness of the extent to which the world is shaped by, and shapes

man's life, he shows a feeling for the soil of his Mother Country which was typical of the slavophil outlook. This attaches an almost mystical significance to the earth itself. Fr. Zossima tells his readers that when opposed by malevolent ones, they should "fall upon the earth, when left alone, and kiss it, drench it with your tears. And the earth will bring forth fruit from your tears." (73)

Part of the reason for Dostoevsky's great success was his perception of this aspect of the Russian mentality.

S. R. Sutherland observes that "it is slavonic soil which in almost magical fashion is invoked as a source of strength and purification. Inevitably, to Western minds this smacks of superstition." (74) It may have been for this reason that initially Dostoevsky's work did not spread wider into Europe. Berdyaev sees it as not a matter of chance that there is a relation between the consciousness of the Russian people and their native land; for the peasantry, in whom this feeling was strongest, had always lived with the task of dominating the land and overcoming the elements. So, the life of Russia is mapped out by its plains: "the geography of the land coincides with the geography of her soul, a symbolic expression of its spirit." (75) An aspect of the Russian mentality which is bound up with this feeling for the land is a kind of messianism. Land and people belong together, and from their knowledge of God intimated to them by their native land, the Russian people become God-bearers, distinctive among the peoples of the world. This is the great tragedy of the incursion of atheism into their culture, for it extinguishes what Dostoevsky called the spiritual well-spring of their life. So Fr. Zossima instructs his monks:

"The people will meet the atheist and overcome him, and Russia will be one and Orthodox .... for this people is a Godbearer." (76) Berdyaev quite rightly points out that these things have developed in the Russians an outlook similar to that of the Jews; for them both, land and national destiny have a particular significance, the dominant characteristic of which is not humility. (77)

From this mystical feeling for the land, Berdyaev develops two aspects in his own philosophy. The first is that of creativity. This sees man, made in the image of God, as properly reflecting that image through his use and employment of the earth's resources. In this way, his labour shows his real dignity, for it can be creative. Man alone is endowed with the spirit which will transfigure the earth ushering in the Kingdom of God. This idea was first developed by Nicolai Feodorov (1829-1903) and impressed both Dostoevsky and Solovyev. In 1877, Dostoevsky received a manuscript by Feodorov, sent anonymously. Dostoevsky commented in a letter that he had shown the manuscript to Solovyev, who also agreed with the unknown author. The following is an extract from the manuscript:

The true task is to transform Nature in such a way as to make it instrumental in general resurrection. The Kingdom of God or Paradise must be the creation of men themselves. It can only be the fruit of their matured knowledge, of their deep feelings, and of their utmost energy all directed towards the fulfilment of God's will. They can achieve it, not in their isolation, but only through

their corporate efforts in their entirety.<sup>(78)</sup>

If there is any sign that Dimitry Karamazov is moving towards some kind of regeneration, it is in this anticipation of the labour of his own recreation.<sup>(79)</sup> But the important point is also that this cannot be achieved by man as an individual. What torments Dimitry is that he will be alone, unless, that is, Grushenka can accompany him. This is the second aspect which Berdyaev develops. The estrangement of the human soul from communion with others was what Dostoevsky saw as the curse of humanism. V. Ivanov writes that Dostoevsky's "experience of the other-ego as an original, infinite, freely autonomous world, contains in itself the postulate of God as a reality."<sup>(80)</sup> This is the reality that humanism denied, this sobornost, the unity of spirit between free and autonomous individuals. Boyce Gibson points out that this concept is "primarily religious, and it enables Dostoevsky to present the following schema: Catholicism, unity without freedom: Protestantism, freedom without unity: Russian Orthodoxy, freedom in unity and unity in freedom."<sup>(81)</sup> It was in the quest for this unity that Dostoevsky saw the necessity of suffering. The brotherhood of man will be brought about when you have actually become everyone's brother and to bring this about human isolation must come to an end; men themselves must "suffer" a change of heart if they are to change the world.<sup>(82)</sup> It was this kind of transforming, uniting suffering which Dostoevsky envisaged when he wrote about it as an ingredient in the Russian soul. He wrote in The Journal of an Author in 1873 that "I think that the main, the fundamental spiritual necessity of the Russian people is the need of suffering, of constant ubiquitous suffering. It seems that we have felt that

need from time immemorial."<sup>(83)</sup> The elder Zossima became aware of something like this in an experience which led him as a young officer to resign his commission and go into the monastery. Suffering is not a state of mind which belongs to an individual in isolation; it is the sharing in a common destiny in which freedom and potential lawlessness of one's fellow man is a part of one's destiny. "So for the first time in my life", Zossima declares, "this question pierced me to the core. 'Mother, my dearest heart, every man is responsible for everyone, only people don't know it.'"<sup>(84)</sup> Dostoevsky's perception of this point about freedom and unity in a common destiny constituted his fundamental attack upon humanism. In Russia, Dostoevsky's work marked its defeat, not merely a crisis, according to Berdyaev, who regards Nietzsche as an ally in the struggle.<sup>(85)</sup>

(b) Friedrich Nietzsche.

Berdyaev himself speaks of having a high regard for the work of Nietzsche; he considered him to be one of the spiritual giants of the late nineteenth century. Nietzsche's background was German Protestantism but Berdyaev's interest lay in the tragedy of Nietzsche's life. This man of great intellectual sensitivity, profoundly influenced by Wagner and the spirit of German Romanticism, spent the last ten years of his life, having resigned his Chair at Basel, wandering homeless and tormented by migraine. It is from this period that his writings emerge. He died, after a final mental collapse, in 1900. Nietzsche saw man tormented by his existence; as Dostoevsky had pointed out in the Legend of the Grand Inquisitor, man is terribly free.

Nietzsche interpreted this as being faced by an open sea. He regarded man as living in an era in which Christian truthfulness had drawn its last and strongest conclusion - a conclusion against itself. Man then faces the moral question of what he is to do with his life. Dostoevsky posed the question, "Is everything permitted?" For Nietzsche "morality becomes a problem because neither the machiavellian or pagan good conscience nor the Christian bad conscience is any longer possible: the Christian faith has been undermined and has collapsed, and with it the entire European morality."<sup>(86)</sup> The loss of these norms imposes on man the burden of finding new laws by which to live; Dostoevsky's vision of the tragic consequences implicit in the humanist programmes is here restated from a different perspective. Nietzsche writes in The Will to Power that as soon as "no thinker can any longer relieve his conscience with the hypothesis 'God or eternal values', the claim of the lawgiver to determine new values rises to an awfulness which has not yet been experienced."<sup>(87)</sup> Nietzsche was among the first to put to modern man the possibility of non-being, of the absurd. In his rebellion against God, against the meaning of life, he oversteps the old limits. He has an affinity with Ivan Karamazov, the personification of the refusal of salvation, of whom Camus writes: "Ivan's most profound utterance, the one which opens the deepest chasm beneath the rebel's feet is his 'even if': "I would persist in my indignation even if I were wrong," words which might also be written of Nietzsche."<sup>(88)</sup> The question is, how far a man will really go. While Dostoevsky's rebel can regard his attempted theodicy as no more than bar-room

speculation, Nietzsche's language is more dramatic; his writing also reflects the horizons of his surroundings. "Nietzsche's thoughts were fascinated by unexplored forbidden regions of abysses, glaciers and mountain peaks. One can look down into the bottom of an abyss refusing the possibility of throwing oneself over the edge, but one cannot explore the possibility by a tentative jump."<sup>(89)</sup> Nietzsche's crisis of the decision between belief and unbelief, the lure of the abyss of non-being, was founded on a presentation of options, both of which seemed unacceptable. Just as Berdyaev regarded rational theology as presenting a choice between two unacceptable choices, monism, a denial of the dignity of man, and pantheism, a denial of the existence of God, so Nietzsche regarded the devaluation of all values (i.e. nihilism) as placing him in the same situation. Walter Kaufman writes that "to escape nihilism - which seems involved both in asserting the existence of God and thus robbing this world of ultimate significance, and also in denying God and thus robbing everything of meaning and value - that is Nietzsche's greatest and most persistent problem."<sup>(90)</sup> Berdyaev had profound respect for Nietzsche, not only for what he wrote, but also for the identification in his life of theory with practice. Nietzsche's agony was not simply an intellectual torment: it was that torment which shaped his life and drove him to madness. He experienced the dark human suffering of meaninglessness, unalleviated by the meaning which can be given to it by the mystery of the Cross: "Nietzsche says that it is not so much the suffering as the senselessness of it that is unendurable. Man can go through the most terrible suffering<sup>s</sup> if he sees a meaning



in them."<sup>(91)</sup> The theme of this kind of spiritual suffering is one which Berdyaev notes as particularly strong in Dostoevsky and, indeed, the Russian spirit. He takes suffering as an index of man's depth, for it is interior and metaphysical, not social and exterior. Man is responsible for it, and though it is an evil which must be hunted down and destroyed, it is paradoxically "the tragic road that man has to tread, the destiny of his freedom."<sup>(92)</sup> That Nietzsche trod this road was the basis of Berdyaev's admiration for him as a man who demonstrated true aristocracy of spirit and prophetic vision.

CHAPTER 3. EXILE - ENCOUNTER IN THE WEST.

Having considered in sequence the stages of Berdyaev's development from Marxism, to Idealism and finally Christianity, and having outlined also the most formative influences which emerge from those years, we come now to deal with Berdyaev's expulsion from Russia and his life in the West. We shall look first at the course of events which brought him and his family to Paris, where they remained for the rest of their lives. We begin with the period following the publication of Vekhi. (Signposts) and The Meaning of the Creator's Act (cf. Ch.2 iv) which is, in fact, the time of the Revolution in 1917.

1. Transition from East to West.

Berdyaev's reactions to revolution in 1917 were a mixture of satisfaction at the fall of the Holy Russian Tsardom, but a feeling also of personal involvement in the events which followed. In The End of Our Time, Berdyaev writes that the revolution did not take place outside or beyond him: "The revolution must not be considered only externally, as though one saw in it simply an empirical fact without any relation to my spiritual life and to my destiny ..... all are responsible for all."<sup>(1)</sup> But he also pointed out that this own lack of spiritual power was reflected in the course of events which followed the Revolution; though it may have been richly deserved, Berdyaev never saw it through rose-tinted spectacles: "on the contrary, I foresaw that in the Revolution the cause of freedom would be jeopardized and elements hostile to culture would prevail."<sup>(2)</sup> An interesting account of

the reaction by Berdyaev and his friends to the Revolution is given by Julius Hecker in a book entitled Moscow Dialogues published in 1932. Hecker, a Russian by birth, returned there after many years working in America. John MacMurray comments in the Preface to the book that on his visit to England, Dr. Hecker impressed those he met by his Christian character, his sympathy, simplicity and humanity. However, as an ardent supporter of the Soviet regime, Hecker showed no sympathy with the views of the anti-materialist philosophy of Berdyaev, Bulgakov, &c. In the Introduction to these dialogues (which reflect discussion with English-speaking friends on revolutionary philosophy) Hecker observes that "it is evident that the much talked about pacific and mystic qualities of the 'Russian soul' have proved a myth - a soap-bubble pricked by the exigencies of the Revolution."<sup>(3)</sup> He maintains that the new generation of Russians have characteristics quite unlike those portrayed by Tolstoy, Turgenev and Dostoevsky. Thus, it is not surprising that in Dialogue XIII his mouthpiece, Socratov, speaks of the romantic idealists and mystics like Berdyaev, S. Frank, L. Kersavin, P. Florensky and others as attempting to salvage "their shattered philosophical arsenal in the hope of finding new spiritual weapons to start an offensive against the hated Communists who had defeated them in the recent revolutionary battles."<sup>(4)</sup> A strong sympathy with the Soviet position underlies the reaction expressed by "the Professor" to Berdyaev's post-revolutionary writing (The Philosophy of Inequality and "The End of our Time): "Should one wonder that the Communists prefer that these savants continue their philosophizing and propaganda outside the boundaries of the

Soviet Union?"<sup>(5)</sup>

In 1920 Berdyaev was elected to the Chair of Philosophy in the University of Moscow where for a year he lectured quite openly and without hindrance and was able to offer his own criticism of Marxism. He notes that a change began to develop in this situation in the Spring of 1922 and in the Summer of that year, returning alone to Moscow from a holiday in the country, he was arrested for a second time. Shortly afterwards, he left Russia, exiled on ideological grounds.<sup>(6)</sup> The break with his mother-country was traumatic: "It is not easy", he wrote, "for me to speak of the experiences and emotions which stirred me when the moment came to take leave of my country, of all the things and all the people that had become the inmost part of my life."<sup>(7)</sup> But the departure was also the opening up of new creative possibilities. The Berdyaevs left Moscow for Berlin in the company of several other families exiled for similar reasons.

In Berlin, Berdyaev met Max Scheler, Oswald Spengler and Count Keyserling; with Scheler he found that he shared many ideas; Keyserling was much impressed by Berdyaev's work, and was to become influential in its publication in German. Among the exiles there were also a number of scholars, and within their circle there was a certain amount of cultural and social activity, much of it organized by the Y.M.C.A. Following the publication in Russian of The Meaning of History Berdyaev also published in Berlin a short book which offered his own reflections on the significance of the Russian Revolution. It appeared in 1924 under the title The New Middle Ages (the English edition is entitled The End of Our Time.) Berdyaev notes with uncharacteristic modesty the

enthusiasm with which the book was received.<sup>(8)</sup> Vallon comments that "the book achieved an immediate and lasting success. It was translated into fourteen languages and threw the author at once into the limelight of the European intellectual stage."<sup>(9)</sup> In this book, Berdyaev describes the period through which he was living as one of incubation, or comparable with the 'Dark Night of the Soul!' He writes that the world is going through a gigantic spiritual revolution which is more profound than what had happened in Russia, the latter had rather to do with the rotten elements of the old world, individualism and humanism, democratic theories and monstrous economic systems. Berdyaev wished to sound "the call to a new Middle Age ... to a complete renewal of consciousness."<sup>(10)</sup>

Berlin did not suit Berdyaev; it was too much a part of the Russian boundary. He sensed an atmosphere of impending doom, no doubt associated with the aftermath of defeat, but also related to the potential for recrimination which existed between the emigré and the Soviet Russians. Berdyaev himself encouraged dialogue between them.<sup>(11)</sup> In 1924 the Berdyaevs moved again, to Paris. Here they established themselves permanently, as did many other exiles. From this time until his death, Berdyaev became editor of the Y.M.C.A. Press and, in the following year (September 1925), he founded the Review, Put' (The Way), which ran until 1940. Berdyaev remained for the rest of his life a somewhat contradictory figure, a person who did not fit into any particular category. A friend who knew him in Paris wrote to him that he "often used to talk about his beloved Russia to close friends; to other exiles he seemed a Communist, but to the left-wing

French he remained an exile from Soviet Russia, while to his friends he represented Holy Russia."<sup>(12)</sup>

The years which Berdyaev spent in Paris formed a period of great activity, in many ways a continuation of the life-style which he had adopted in Moscow. The exiles made Paris their home in Europe, making their own particular contribution to life in the West. The regular gatherings to discuss religious and philosophical matters were again started soon after Berdyaev's arrival in Paris. These took an ecumenical outlook, comprising Orthodox, Catholics and Protestants. The presence of the exiles was strengthened by the development of the Russian Orthodox Institute in Paris, under the direction of Fr. Sergej Bulgakov. But Bulgakov, and rather more so, Berdyaev, were regarded with suspicion by many Orthodox, for holding views which were considered unsound. Although these meetings lasted for only a short period of time before they ran out of steam, they did provide an introduction for Berdyaev into the circles of the French intellectuals. He speaks of the value he attached to similar meetings at the home of Gabriel Marcel.<sup>(13)</sup> He also attended similar meetings at Pontigny, a large country house (originally a monastery) owned by M. de Jardin. These meetings "the Decades" lasted for a week and took place about three times a year. They were an international gathering, and it was here that Berdyaev met Martin Buber, André Gide, Leon Brunschwig, among others.<sup>(14)</sup> In this period many of his most important works were published: Freedom and the Spirit (1927-28), The Destiny of Man (1931), Solitude and Society (1934), Spirit and Reality (1937), Slavery and Freedom (1939), The Russian Idea (1946). During the course of this time,

Berdyaev's reputation spread. His work was translated into English and began to appear in this country from 1935.<sup>(15)</sup>

ii. Progressive Catholic Thought in France: Maritain & Mounier

Having considered how and why it was that the Berdyaev's came to live in Paris, we come now to look at what was happening in the theological and philosophical circles in France at that time. It is important to bear in mind the distinctively Russian and Orthodox tradition in which Berdyaev stood. For, in spite of obvious differences, there were striking similarities. It is for this reason that Berdyaev found Paris so congenial and was able to exercise the influence he did. This common understanding was the more welcome in that it came from unexpected sources; French progressive Catholics and a liberal Russian Orthodox. We turn now to consider the background of two leaders in the international scene in Paris, Maritain and Mounier.

Any assessment of Berdyaev's most significant contribution to philosophical and theological debate in France at this time would probably point to his association with the Personalist Movement. Having already considered some of the influences upon the formation of Berdyaev's thought up until the time he left Russia, it should be understandable why his interest developed in this direction. One can point to his appreciation of Nietzsche's grasp of devalued man's meaningless existence; to Dostoevsky's insistence that man must be more than just an individual; to Khomiakov and the concept of spiritual communion (sobornost) which binds individuals together in freedom and unity; to Solovyev's

exalted doctrine of man which finds its fullest expression in Jesus Christ, the Second Adam, the God-man. All these must be seen in the context of the general development of Berdyaev's thought. He finally rejected Marxism, which he had adopted in protest against his society, because he had slowly realised that it would, in fact, destroy what he hoped it would bring about, a society that ensured defence of the freedom, the rights, the dostoinstvo (dignity and worth) of the individual person. This theme was what had directed the other associates of Berdyaev (Struve, Bulgakov &c.) along a similar course. The direction of this trend is also noted by A. P. Mendel, who observes that what was facing the revisionists was "the problem of individualism, the conflict between determinism and free will, and the relationship of objective social and historical laws to goals, ideals and values."<sup>(16)</sup>

These were the issues which the incipient personalist movement was raising in France not long after Berdyaev arrived from Russia. Berdyaev became involved with this movement through his friendship with Jacques Maritain, whom he met shortly after arriving in Paris, in 1925. In spite of Maritain's Thomist outlook, there was a genuine friendship between them.<sup>(17)</sup> Berdyaev had been introduced to Maritain by Mme. Bloy, the widow of Léon Bloy whom he had met in Russia; Bloy had been a great friend and mentor to the Maritains. Jacques and Raissa Maritain showed a certain interest in the Russian exiles and groups of them often met at their house in Meudon.<sup>(18)</sup> The difference in their outlook was most obvious during these meetings. One who frequented them comments that "they were especially absorbing when Maritain and Berdyaev led the



conversation; it was a bout between two thinkers of exceptional speculative force and erudition. Yet Maritain was too strictly a Thomist and Berdyaev too much the representative of Eastern Mysticism to be able to agree."<sup>(19)</sup> However, in spite of their differences, they were agreed on some matters.<sup>(20)</sup> Berdyaev considered that Maritain's philosophy was largely unaffected by his "great sensitivity and responsiveness in regard to the social and cultural movements of the day."<sup>(21)</sup> The agreement between them in this area was given expression in their common interest in the growth of the Personalist Movement, and in particular the work of its journal, Ésprit. Berdyaev records in his autobiography that he was present at the meeting, largely of young people, at which Ésprit was founded. "I was greatly moved", he writes, "when it was unanimously adopted that the fundamental purpose and concern of Ésprit should be the vindication of man. I felt that there was a place where a new spirit was blowing."<sup>(22)</sup> This journal combined in its outlook socialism and personalism, for which it coined its own term, personalism communautaire. The founder and editor of the journal was Emmanuel Mounier, "a man of great intellectual gifts and remarkable energy."<sup>(23)</sup>

Emmanuel Mounier was born in Grenoble in 1905. His education was given its direction by Jacques Chevalier who brought to him the work of Descartes, Pascal and Bergson, together with a firm foundation in the principles of Catholic philosophy. In 1927, Mounier moved to Paris to study at the Sorbonne. A year later, he met Jacques Maritain and began to attend the monthly meeting at Meudon. They both shared an interest in the soldier-poet, Charles Péguy, a man who

remained an ambiguous figure during his lifetime but who achieved national fame after his death. (24)

Péguy had been of considerable influence upon Maritain, who was a student at the Sorbonne at a time when the anti-religious trend of philosophy was particularly strong in France. Although not a practising Christian at the time, Maritain and his wife were dissatisfied with the philosophical systems then in vogue. It was due to Péguy that the Maritains were persuaded to attend Bergson's lectures. Raissa Maritain comments in her memoirs that "at the time we were attending his lectures, shortly before the publication of Creative Evolution, we received only the benefits of the horizons he opened to us - away from the empty and colourless world of universal mechanism and towards the universe of qualities, towards spiritual certainty, towards personal liberty. 'The act which bears of the mark of our personality is truly free', he said." (25) The course of their conversion was aided by their meeting with Léon Bloy. Maritain writes of him as a man who combined the suffering and ecstasy of a mystic with the temperament and impatience of an artist. Bloy's effect upon these "two young children of twenty" when they met him in 1905 was decisive:

They bore within them that distress which is the only serious product of modern culture, together with a kind of active despair illuminated only - they did not know why - by the inner assurance that the truth for which they hungered .... would one day be shown to them....In the meantime they had cleaned their minds, thanks

to Bergson, of the scientific superstitions with which the Sorbonne had nourished them - but knowing well that Bergsonian intuition was but a flimsy refuse against the scepticism all modern philosophies logically bring in their train .... Bloy seemed to us the very opposite of other men - who hide their serious deficiencies in the things of the spirit as well as so many invisible crimes under the carefully maintained daubing of the social virtues. Instead of being a whited sepulchre like the pharisees of all times, he was a charred, blackened cathedral. The white part was inside, deep in the tabernacle. (26)

Maritain's intellectual development now turned away from a materialist concept of man and society. He took up instead the integrity in man, an idea from Aquinas, whose work was receiving fresh attention. Rejecting the mechanistic approach of scientism, Maritain developed a theory which sought to base the social order on the primacy of the spirit. One of the greatest contributions Maritain made to the philosophy of personalism was the distinction he drew between the individual and the person. "The individual" refers to the concrete, physical single entity, while "the person" refers to the spiritual entity which indwells and transcends the individual. In 1919 Maritain initiated the circles d'études thomistes as a forum for the development of his new appreciation of Thomism; it was out of these that there emerged his Sunday evening gatherings, at which Mounier met many of the people who played an important part in the establishment of Personalism.

Among the other people who influenced Mounier at this time was Père Pouget, an elderly Lazarist priest of encyclopaedic knowledge and interest. Although in the opinion of William Rauch, Mounier's debt to Pouget remains elusive, it is known that for a period of five years (1927-1933) Mounier regularly visited Pouget and "filled little notebooks with material on the Bible, the history of religions, the two St. Theresas, St. John of the Cross, the themes of action and meditation, and other subjects of a similar nature."<sup>(27)</sup> In addition, Mounier was friendly with the young Jean Daniélou, who also attended Maritain's gatherings and was to become a leading progressive among the Jesuits. Another long-standing friendship from this period was that of the Dominican Père Henri de Lubac, later one of the architects of the Second Vatican Council. The importance of these friendships is that they gave Mounier association with "circles that were noted for their interest in the many problems relating to the adaptation of Catholicism to the world."<sup>(28)</sup>

Mounier never offered any final or definitive account of what constituted Personalism. He did not regard it as a closed system or a fixed school of thought. Like Berdyaev, he rejected the idea of a philosophy which became an end in itself. Mounier regarded personalism as an approach to life, a state of mind, as attitude towards existence. He expected that it would be experienced as at the disposal of a convergence of wills. So he declares in the opening of A Personalist Manifesto that "we shall apply the term personalist to any doctrine or any civilization that affirms the primacy of the human person over material necessities."<sup>(29)</sup>

The distinction between person and individual is maintained by Mounier. He does not advocate a state of spiritual isolation; the centralization of an individual within himself is overcome by the necessity of communication with another person; this is the mark of personalism. It is to the problem of this communication that Mounier addresses himself. He writes that "the individual darkens communication by his very presence, which produces some degree of opacity whoever he is. My body itself gives me the most obvious image of this opacity."<sup>(30)</sup> Beyond the physical separation between individuals, there is also the element of custom, class, culture &c. In his Manifesto, Mounier observes: "One might say with Berdyaev that to live as a person is to pass continually from the zone where spiritual life is objectified and naturalized to the existential reality of the subject; that is, to pass from the exterior - from the zones of the mechanical, the biological, the social, the psychological and even of the moral code - to the interior."<sup>(31)</sup>

But within the spiritual life of man, no boundary is to be delineated. Dostoevsky spoke of man as a microcosm, as does Berdyaev.<sup>(32)</sup> Within this microcosm, Mounier perceives varying depths of consciousness; he refers to one's caprices, the scope of one's imagination, the desires and actions which run counter to one's intention. These varying levels are not, therefore, capable of being systematized or even isolated from each other; definition of the person cannot be given by means of a summary of his levels of existence. Or, as Mounier puts it, using a phrase borrowed from Marcel, "being is a reality whose contents 'cannot be put into an inventory'." <sup>(33)</sup>

Thus, while unhappy man might seek for an integration of himself into a unity, Mounier suggests that he will never achieve this. "My knowledge of my person and of the realization of my person is always symbolic and incomplete ... it is something beyond consciousness and beyond time. It is more vast than the vision I get of it, farther within me than the constructions I attempt of it."<sup>(34)</sup> It is possible to see here how the thought of St. Augustine was of importance to these personalists. For it is in this area that man discerns a faculty for his awareness of God. Mounier rejects the description of this in spatial terms, since "as St. Augustine said, God is closer to me than my inmost thoughts."<sup>(35)</sup> Marcel points out that Augustine was led to an extraordinarily precise awareness of this inexplicable presence within himself, because he had been through the experience of conversion; he continues "I am thus, as it were, essentially unequal to myself, I am too great for myself. By fathoming this mystery, St. Augustine will be led to recognise first of all that God Himself is in some way in our memory, but that this would naturally be inconceivable if the memory were in us a sort of container."<sup>(36)</sup>

The role of symbolic language was something which Berdyaev had already explored through his reading of Solovyev and encountered in the work of Boehme and the poets of the school of Bely, Ivanov, &c. Here, the personalists found themselves confronting scientists whose rationalised approach to man leaves no space between its definitions for what can only be hinted at by symbol. Thus, Mounier offered a critique of a philosophy which was in league with

scientists in ridding the world of man's presence; he sees the conception of existence being slowly drained of its substance. "This sort of world, in which no form of existence, with its opaqueness, its oddity, its unpredictability and exhaustible spontaneity, could withstand critical analysis, offered philosophy a temptation to which it has always been greedily susceptible. It could be systematically set out." (37) Against this is set the 'No!' of Kierkegaard's protest.

Mounier takes up the protest against the world as the theatre of absolute laws and functions; he affirms instead the person is an absolute, and for the Christian, the Absolute is personal. (38)

For those who were developing this kind of philosophy, Marcel's example of the Underground ticket collector seemed to become a standard reference. Here, man was presented as an agglomeration of functions, dispensible and worthless, the citizen of a 'broken world', living without mystery. On this subject Mounier directs his readers' attention to Marcel's Being and Having and Berdyaev's Solitude and Society. (39)

Mounier asserts that the picture of such a man confronts us with the world of the impersonal ('le monde de l'on'); this provokes an urge to inquire into the secret fulness of that person's existence, but this is an urge which, even though it confronts us with our own metaphysical problem within the context of everyday social encounter, is stifled. (40)

On this level, the kind of spiritual aristocracy of which Berdyaev had written is acknowledged. "This effort at personal transcendence" Mounier writes "constitutes the true quality of a man. It distinguished men among men... It is in this sense, and in this sense alone, that one can characterize a personalist humanism as aristocratic or anti-equalitarian -

if we may use words that usage has twisted about in a dangerous manner."<sup>(41)</sup>

The example which Mounier has given here as an encounter between two people demonstrates that irrespective of their state of being, there is some kind of a bond between them. The assertion of personalism was not that some men or women could achieve a greater degree of personal encounter and inter-personal awareness than others, but ~~that~~ that all men and women have the faculty for this and to find fulfilment in life must use and develop that faculty. Thus, personalism sought to proclaim the dignity of all people. It therefore sought also a proclamation of human community. Community is not to be found by an external ordering of life; every person must work to achieve it: "We thus find human communion implanted in the very heart of the person as an integrating factor of its existence."<sup>(42)</sup> This idea is not very different from Khomiakov's concept of the unity of mankind, or Dostoevsky's view of an integrated society based on common moral responsibility. As in the case of both those writers, Mounier asserts that this communion can only be established on the basis of freedom. The question asked by Mounier is: "In a world in which every freedom arose in isolation from all others, what would finally become of the community of persons? 'I cannot truly be free,' wrote Bakunin, 'until everyone round me, man or woman, is equally free.... I become free only through the liberty of others.'" <sup>(43)</sup>

This community is not to be envisaged as a disembodied spiritual association. Man exists subjectively and bodily in one and the same experience. He is thus intrinsically related to his environment. This idea echoes the



peculiarly Russian concept of a relation between the very soil of its land and a nation's communal destiny. Berdyaev frequently speaks of man's creative destiny in this area.<sup>(44)</sup> Mounier also speaks of man exploiting the possibilities of his natural environment through his creative liberty "Only then," he writes, "when the belonging to nature turns into the mastery of nature, is the world joined to the body and man to his proper destiny."<sup>(45)</sup>

### iii. Association with forms of Personalism.

#### (a) In France.

The object of this brief outline of personalist philosophy has been to attempt a demonstration of its points of contact with Berdyaev's background and outlook. We should now attempt to set the personalist movement in its historical context. The social background of the growth of the personalist movement was the depression in France which from 1931 was the result of the Wall Street Crash. The atmosphere of crisis produced a polarization between the political left and right. The views of the right wing were circulated through the Monarchist newspaper and movement Action Française. On the left, a journal named Nouvelle Revue Française was established; although not professing any particular creed, this review published many articles by members of a group called Ordre Nouveau. The outlook of this group was shaped by Arnaud Dandieu and Alexandre Marc, a young Russian exile. Mounier was impressed by many of the tendencies of Ordre Nouveau, although his dealings with them were not always happy. Of Dandieu he notes that "his 'personalism'..... is a fundamental affirmation of the

creative power of the human person, Nietzschean in a sense, he admits.... In God, he literally sees an opposition to human creation", and of Marc he says: he "sees all things with his Catholic vision of the universe where God is a person living in the Christ and, through His Mystical Body, in ourselves." (46)

The development of a personalist outlook independent of Mounier's is a feature noted by Hellman. He identifies personalism as a movement wider than the confines of French Catholicism, observing that "most of the earliest and most important articulations of personalism were by German-educated, militantly anti-communist Russians" among others who, independently of the Gospels, were inspired in their defence of the person by Bergson and Nietzsche. Hellman lists Berdyaev as an example of these early personalists. (47)

In May 1931, Pope Pius XI issued the encyclical Quadragesimo Anno, which directed attention to economic and political problems. Although the Pope put forward practical plans for the ordering of society, plans which were generally ignored, the really constructive outcome of the encyclical was the assertion of the relevance of Catholic social doctrine and the encouragement given to examine its foundations. In his study of the development of Papal policy on social reform, Richard Cramp describes the encyclical's analysis of the social structure as "absurdly over-simplified". He continues:

Pius XI knew very well that society consisted of more than simply 'individuals and the state'. In fact, hundreds of different types of 'intermediary associations' existed for all classes, many of which had been created under the blessing and guidance

of the Church. Most of them had the specific purpose of giving the individual a collective voice in order to safeguard his or her interests. The Pope spoke of these at length on this same encyclical and clearly approved of them but when he referred to the structure of modern society, he seemed to forget that they even existed. Instead, he wanted a new structure in which a new set of intermediary associations would be erected and in which he thought it would be easier to achieve truly Christian principles of social order. His model was unmistakably that of the Medieval past. (48)

Kelly notes that the encouragement given to examination of the encyclical rejected both individualism and collectivism; it denounced "the evils and abuses of the capitalist system and attempted to lay down structures for a solution to some of the problems, strongly inspired by corporatist theory." (49)

This description of the encyclical's outlook reflects not only the intellectual viewpoint of the time but a viewpoint held by those both inside and out of the Church. Hellman describes it in the following way: "The assertion of the 'absolute value of the human person' was not simply an abstract affirmation of human dignity but rather a movement of defence against two antithetical threats: individualism and its manifestation, liberal capitalism, and communalism and its manifestation, communism. It mirrored the desperate effort of intellectuals in the early nineteenth century to navigate a 'third way' between Capitalism and Communism." (50) This movement can also be detected within the development of the theological thinking of the period. Karl Adam, a German theologian, had recently published a book entitled The Spirit of Catholicism. Writing in La Vie

Intellectuelle, in April 1932, Congar described the Mystical Body of Christ as a doctrine stimulating a 'communitarian spirituality' which negated religious individualism."<sup>(51)</sup>

Already in December 1930 Mounier had been asked to edit a review to be set up by Georges Izard and André Déleage, specifically for the consideration of these issues.

Throughout 1931 plans were being made and funds raised for the publication of Esprit. Various pressures were brought to bear on Mounier to choose contributors unlikely to arouse the hostility of Church authorities against the journal.

The Index still exercised considerable influence and had been the fate of Bergson's Les Deux Sources de la Morale et de la Religion in 1932. Since Maritain had agreed to underwrite its respectability, he felt entitled to have some say in its direction. In a letter to Mounier in July 1932 he suggests some names for the first edition - Arland, Roualt, Marcel, Nabokoff, and, with Berdyaev, it would make an interesting collection.<sup>(52)</sup> But before the journal could be published, serious differences within the ranks of its directors had to be sorted out. In August a conference was held at Font-Romeu in the Alps; the opposing sides were Mounier and Deleage, with Izard acting as mediator. The issue over which they were divided was that of the practical application of the theory of personalism. Deleage wanted to set up a pressure group; Mounier was unwilling to permit a divorce between theory and practice. The result was an uneasy compromise with Troisième Force set up as the political wing of a doctrinal movement. Mounier had insisted on the primacy of principle over practice, the spiritual over the material.

The first edition of Ésprit was published in October 1932. Mounier's article was entitled "Refaire la Renaissance" and was a "re-worked version of the paper which had been accepted at Font-Romeu as defining the spiritual directions of the review."<sup>(53)</sup> Much of the thinking behind this essay reflects the impression which Berdyaev's ideas had made upon Mounier. Rauch, basing his judgment on Berdyaev's books, The End of Our Time and Dream and Reality, and the correspondence and other material published in the collected Works of Mounier and the Bulletin of the Friends of Emmanuel Mounier ('Bulletin des Amis d'E.Mounier'), states:

Mounier sought the roots of the contemporary crisis in the distant past and initially defined personalism in this particular context. Drawing upon the work of Nicolas Berdyaev, the Russian Orthodox Catholic philosopher who was an early supporter and collaborator of Ésprit, Mounier's "Refaire la Renaissance" meant to assist in the downfall of an era of civilization born towards the end of the Middle Ages..... Capitalist in its structures, liberal in its ideology, bourgeois in its ethics."<sup>(54)</sup>

Mounier identified the modern crisis as a profound disorder in the spiritual world; the solution to the crisis could not, therefore, be found exclusively in political action, for, as R. Pierce has observed, "essentially, Mounier was a moralist; he believed that all political choices must be anchored in moral values and he did his best to elucidate them, but he knew that the specific application of values to concrete cases cannot be derived from any political system."<sup>(55)</sup>

Thus, the spiritual maintained a priority over the material: Mounier employed the ambiguous term le spirituel to convey a range of areas to which it could be applied, from religious or secular intelligentsia, to a Bergsonian concept of spirit. On the concept of spirit as a motivating force on political action, both Maritain and Berdyaev were agreed. In True Humanism, Maritain observes that "Berdyaev likes to point out the presence of this eschatological element in the thought of revolutionary communism."<sup>(56)</sup> It is in this area that Berdyaev undoubtedly exercised most influence over Mounier. As the Second World War broke upon Europe, Mounier wrote to Berdyaev telling him that "we are, perhaps, at the beginning of the new Middle Ages."<sup>(57)</sup> A friend of Mounier, Ignace Lepp, observes that it is the awakening of consciousness to a crisis in civilization which is the point of departure for personalist philosophy. Here Mounier found an affinity with Berdyaev, for they both had "the same keen sense of humanity, and the same horror of a disembodied intellectualism which took no account of the economic and political realities of the human condition."<sup>(58)</sup>

Berdyaev's contribution to the first edition of Ésprit was entitled "Verité et mensonge du Communisme." He pointed to the mixture of truth and error in Communism and attributed its success to a failure on the part of Christianity to appeal to the soul of the masses. The truth of Communism, he maintained, was to be found in its critique of an exploiting Capitalist system and the alliance upon between theory and practice. However, the error of communism lay in its employment of a Marxist economic determination, an affirmation of materialism to the

exclusion of spiritual interests; its denial of God was a denial of man. Thus, Berdyaev's main contention was, Hellman comments, that "Communism's great lie, even greater in magnitude than its partial truths, was its negation of God. The Russian regime had installed a new militant religion, exclusive of all others, 'the religion of the Kingdom of this world'." (59) In the opinion of Kelly, "Berdyaev's analysis, adopted by Mounier, became a classic statement of Ésprit's position on Marxism. (60). Maritain thoroughly approved of the article. In August he had written to Mounier telling him of his particular pleasure in the publication of the article which "was of great importance and on many points would position the review's first blow cleanly and precisely." (61) Among others who welcomed Berdyaev's statement on Communism was André Gide. Berdyaev refers in Dream and Reality to Gide's request to meet him as a result of reading his article in Ésprit, (62) and Maritain also comments to Mounier on their encounter. (63) Gide comments in his journal, around 1933, "remarkable, the article by Berdyaev: Truth and Communism's Falsehood, which I have just read in the first number of Ésprit. I read it with keen satisfaction and relief." (64)

As a journal, Ésprit proved to be successful. Kelly quotes figures to show the rapid growth in subscribers and points out that since many of them were study groups, schools and seminaries, as well as teachers and journalists, the influence of Ésprit was probably wider than its circulation. (65) However, the facts which had emerged at the outset continued to cause division within the movement. Troisième Force eventually split off to go its own way, leaving thereby Ésprit

with no organization for action. To combat this, Mounier began the Amis d'Ésprit, a series of study groups, following the idea of the Davidées with which he had at one time been associated.<sup>(66)</sup> Although the study groups were a successful development, they marked the limitation of the movement and a reason for its eventual decline. Personalism as a movement remained confined to the intellectual circles from which it had grown; as Rauch has observed "the positions of Mounier and Esprit never found significant expression in French political life. As a consequence, Mounier has been severely criticised for attributing greater efficacy to his engagement and témoignage than they actually possessed."<sup>(67)</sup>

Berdyaev maintained an interest in the work of Ésprit until the end of his life. In particular, he used his association with groups of young people to develop interest in the review. Helen Iswolsky recalls that her contributions to Ésprit began in this way: "I was working at the time with a group of young Russians who called themselves the 'Post-revolutionaries.' They were pupils of Berdyaev and specially interested in present-day Russia."<sup>(68)</sup> Berdyaev himself continued to contribute to Ésprit,<sup>(69)</sup> although most of the articles he wrote at this time were published in Put'. Although he had contributed much to the formation of the movement, he was also aware of its failings. In his autobiography he offers the following assessment: "The movement centred in Ésprit was deserving of the greatest sympathy. The only drawback was that it, like so many similar movements, was confined to a comparatively small group unable to do anything which could effectively influence the modern world, in which everything



seemed to move contrary to the aims of Ésprit.<sup>(70)</sup>

(b) In Britain.

We have now seen how Berdyaev fitted into the development of the Personalist Movement and how the distinctively Russian background of his thought contributed to and blended with ideas developed independently in France. A similar process can be seen at work in Britain. This has two outlets: one is mainly through the work of John MacMurray, and the other is through V. A. Demant and the Christendom Group. We now consider briefly both of these.

Even seen from outside the movement centred on Ésprit, Berdyaev's association with Personalism was very strong. Writing in England just after the Second War, J. B. Coates observes that cardinal importance attaches to the thought of Nicholas Berdyaev in connection with the development of Personalism, which he sees as a reaction to the establishment in Europe of a Marxist Communist State and, "more generally, by the new political totalitarianism with their attacks on the rights of the person."<sup>(71)</sup> Coates indicates that in Britain a distinct personalist group did not emerge until after the War, although personalist conceptions had, prior to that, been evident in the work of some thinkers: Coates<sup>e</sup> mentions Aldous Huxley, John Middleton Murry, H. G. Wells, Arthur Koestler and John MacMurray. Among these, John MacMurray perhaps most clearly shows an assimilation of personalist thinking. His Gifford Lectures for the years 1953 and 1954 were published under the title The Form of the Personal. MacMurray is aware of a crisis

within European thinking and society, one which he clearly identifies as a crisis of the person, suggesting two areas in which this is to be seen: the apotheosis of the State and the decline of religion. The first of these "involves the subordination of the personal aspects of human life to its functional aspect" (a remark reminiscent of Marcel's ticket collector), while the second betrays "a growing insensitiveness to the personal aspects of life and a growing indifference to personal values."<sup>(72)</sup> MacMurray's critique of modern philosophy points to its egocentricity; he observes that "firstly, it takes self as its starting point and not God, or the world, or the community; and that, secondly, the self is an individual in isolation, an ego or 'I', never a 'thou'."<sup>(73)</sup> The distinction implied here is similar to that made by Maritain between a person and an individual. MacMurray's way out of this idealism was through a kind of Kantian "Copernican Revolution". Albert H. Nephew describes this as "like reversing the relation between sun and earth". Thus, MacMurray reversed the relation of subject and object, making the object dependent on the subject, that is, making knowledge dependent on the categories of the mind of the knower.<sup>(74)</sup> In so doing, MacMurray was in no way intending to withdraw from the world of objects into a state of mind-dependent existence. For human life in its fullness not only binds up together "in dependence upon one another but equally in dependence on the natural world. The two forms of dependence - upon other people and upon nature - are interwoven and inseparable. They constitute the community of all existence."<sup>(75)</sup>

Nephew also notes that MacMurray regards the self-as-thinker-and-knower upon whom this individualistic metaphysics is centred is in fact a "chimera of contemplation, a non-existent 'pure self'." (76) This is a reflection of the movement which personalism outlined away from the abstraction of a collective towards the individual person. A similar view is expressed by H. D. Lewis, who writes in the same collection of essays in honour of MacMurray. Warning against collectivist thinking, he comments that "there is no bearer of any worth other than the individual. The 'soul of the people' is a metaphor." (77)

Aspects of the personalist movement were not only to be found in the area of philosophy. Just as in France Ésprit had been intended to unite both theory and practice, so in England there developed at about the same time an interest in social action by members of the Church. Interest in a critique of society from a largely personalist viewpoint had been the brief of a journal called Christendom: it was a journal of Christian Sociology, edited by Maurice Reckitt, Ruth Kenyon, V. A. Demant, and P.E.T. Widdrington. It was probably through the visits to this country arranged by the Fellowship of S. Alban and S. Sergius that Berdyaev encountered this group. In Dream and Reality he writes, commenting on the valuable contribution of Christendom to the study of sociology, that "the Anglo-Catholics struck me as genuinely alive to the issues in modern society." (78) Many of the areas investigated by French personalists were at the same time being investigated by some of these English theologians. V. A. Demant wrote in 1933 that the Churches had come to recognise the social life of

man as material for redemption, acknowledging that "the problems of the individual soul are problems raised by the necessity of the individual person living with the three-fold task of relationship to his personal destiny to his fellows and to the natural world." Among the evidence that Demant produces for the recognition of this fact he mentions the Russian exiles in Paris who were attacking the whole question of the relationship between religion and civilization, referring specifically to Berdyaev and Bulgakov.<sup>(79)</sup> Demant locates the emphasis on man as the crown of the universe quite firmly within the Christian tradition, citing Eusebius of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine and Pascal and, among modern authors, Berdyaev and his book, The Destiny of Man.<sup>(80)</sup> He sees the future of Christianity in the presentation of a doctrine of man which involves all the tragedy and paradox found in Berdyaev's work. He maintains that "if the truth of man as a being is to be upheld it must be sustained by the dogma of his link with God as transcendent. This link is constituted by his specific nature in the divine order of the world; in so far as he is truly human, he is in the right dependent relation to God, which is his essence."<sup>(81)</sup> The **leaders** of this school of Christian Sociology also saw the future task of Christianity as the ordering of every aspect of human life towards an end beyond the temporal. L. S. Thornton pointed out in an essay entitled "The Meaning of Christian Sociology" (which appears in the first edition of Christandom) that at the Incarnation Jesus had assumed human nature in its completeness. "If, then," he wrote "in the name of religion the Church suppresses the legitimate emancipation of human individuality or remains

indifferent to human liberties, that suppression or moral indifference are as blasphemous as the heresy of Apollinarius."<sup>(82)</sup> Berdyaev's contribution to the consideration of how Christianity should face these issues was warmly welcomed by the Christendom group. In December 1931 they published in English for the first time in this country an article by Berdyaev. It was entitled "The Problem of Christian Culture in Orthodox Consciousness." In 1937 the Destiny of Man was published in England, and was reviewed in Christendom by A. L. Lilley, who wrote that:

it is in Berdyaev's treatment of these concrete problems as they confront the creative spirit of man, and especially of the problems which centre around the conceptions of the state and society, that readers of Christendom are likely to be most immediately interested. In each case the problem raised by the paradoxical nature of the moral judgment which the absolute claims of the free human spirit must pass upon entities which condition its existence in time.<sup>(83)</sup>

Other people beyond this group also showed interest in the issues it was discussing. In a book published in 1932 entitled Belief in Man, P. S. Richards offered a critique of Russian Communism which shows a personalist outlook similar to that of Berdyaev. Richards points to the way in which Soviet Russia has dedicated itself to an abstract collective understanding of man, by which the individual man is, in fact, oppressed, and he described this as "a functional and quasi-religious devotion to the idea of the proletariat, conceived as an entity greater and holier than any or all of its members."<sup>(84)</sup>

Among the people interested in the Christendom Group there was an awareness of the changing philosophical view of man. This had been acknowledged by Berdyaev in The End of our Time and was a theme which had been taken up by Mounier in his first article in Esprit. In a similar vein, E. L. Mascall contributed an item to Christendom on the end of humanism. Referring to The End of our Time and Maritain's True Humanism, he observes that "it is generally agreed today that the humanist era which began with the Renaissance is drawing to an end. Lippman, Aldous Huxley and Huizinga all bear witness to this but perhaps the most detailed analyses have been made by Professor Berdyaev and M. Maritain. Their substantial agreement on this point is all the more striking because there is in general little similarity between the apocalyptic, semi-gnostic Russian Orthodox .... and the calm, scholastic French Catholic."<sup>(85)</sup>

#### iv. Post-War Years.

Berdyaev's remaining years in Paris were overshadowed by the war and German occupation. Unable to take part any longer in the social activities he enjoyed before the war, he spent the time writing and reading;<sup>(86)</sup> he still entertained on Sunday evenings and their house in Clamart became a centre for Russian patriots. In the period after the liberation of Paris Berdyaev speaks, in Dream and Reality, of his growing nostalgia for Russia and the development of his connections with those of a "soviet orientation". He reflects on the irony of the fact that although his work was quite widely known in the West, almost nobody had heard about him in his own country. Approaching the end of his life, Berdyaev

felt tormented by his exile and he writes:

Never have I felt so close to Russia, and yet there is so little joy in that feeling, and my heart bleeds every time I think of her. I am faced, again and again, but never so vividly as now, with the complexity and tragic nature of Russian destiny. I do not think that people in Western Europe will ever know or understand it. But nothing can prevent its being a destiny and nothing can deprive it of its meaning. It must be lived out to the end by Russia. (87)

In September 1945 Berdyaev suffered the loss of his wife, Lydia, and was comforted by her sister, Eugeny. In 1946 he visited Geneva to give ten lectures at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey. The following year, he visited England to receive the degree of Doctor of Divinity 'honoris causa' from the University at Cambridge. In March 1948, two days after the customary Sunday evening "at home", Berdyaev died suddenly while working at his desk. (88)

## P A R T     T W O

CHAPTER 4.     AN OUTLINE OF BERDYAEV'S DOCTRINE OF GOD.i.     Man's knowledge and Apprehension of God.

If we were to pose the question, "Does God exist?" and then to look for an answer in the works of Nicolas Berdyaev, we should be hard put to it to find anywhere a systematic argument in reply to our question. There is much space given over to discussion about belief and non-belief (or rather, the rejection of belief) in God. But the fact that there is no logically worked out argument for the existence of God does actually tell us something quite important about the way in which Berdyaev thinks and speaks about God. For here he abandons the titles of "philosopher" or "theologian" and seeks to take up instead that of "mystic". In the tradition of the East, Berdyaev pursues the way of apophatic mysticism - the "via negativa." "Mystery, 'docta ignorantia,' have a profound significance .... mystical negative theology alone brings us closer to the depths".<sup>(1)</sup>

So Berdyaev rejects the arguments for the existence of God which many would regard as traditional. He regards them, attached as they are to the "play of concepts"<sup>(2)</sup> as stultifying. His rejection of the importance of such arguments results in an open and shut case; they are dismissed without further discussion: "We must recognize conclusively that all the traditional proofs of the existence of God, ontological, cosmological or physico-theological, are not only insolvent; they are quite unnecessary, even



harmful."

Berdyaev here refers to Kant: "Kant's criticism of these proofs of God's existence is very convincing and has not been overthrown by traditionalist apologetics."<sup>(3)</sup>

Instead, Berdyaev focuses on the nature, the disposition, the quality of the person considering the question "Does God exist?" What Berdyaev is concerned to investigate is rather more the question of how and in what way we are able to know whether or not God exists. Knowledge of God is not something which can be attained through reasoned argument; it belongs to the two-sided nature of a relationship or drama played out between God and man.<sup>(4)</sup> The way in which that relationship is revealed (that is, the extent to which it is revealed as existing at all) will, therefore, be in some part governed by the attitude of the human partner: "Revelation is tinged with various colours according to the state of the human mind and the whole trend and bent of the man."<sup>(5)</sup> But even a disposition towards believing that a deity does exist may not lead to the sort of knowledge of God that Berdyaev envisages. For arguments that affirm God's existence can be apprehended and given assent by the mind; they do not, however, bring a man into the relationship with God which is properly revelatory. Thus, man cannot be handed belief as a sort of package deal: "Revelation is not something which drops into man's lap from outside and in which he has nothing but an entirely passive part to play."<sup>(6)</sup>

Berdyayev is quite emphatic that knowledge of God requires man's complete response; the response to what he sees as God's longing for a loving response from what He has created. The language that Berdyayev uses to express this, however, reflects his own deeply held belief that man is not completed without his relationship with God. Thus, he speaks of man's awakening response to God as though it were the creation of God by man: "This birth of God in the human soul is the true birth of man." (7). By this he means no more than S. Augustine did when he said "Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee." Berdyayev quotes a similar idea from Augustine: "God is more deeply within me than I am myself". (8) This theme is one that occurs again and again in Berdyayev's writing. (9) We should note, however, that Berdyayev, in using this language, is careful to distance himself from the ideas of the birth of God in human consciousness that are found in German Idealists like Feuerbach. It should, of course, also be remembered that Berdyayev (along with Bulgakov, Struve, Frank) and others passed through an "idealist phase" in their conversion from Marxism to Orthodoxy. In Truth and Revelation Berdyayev comments: "Not only is man made in the image and likeness of God, but God is also made in the image and likeness of man. Feuerbach was half right." (10)

Elsewhere, Berdyayev offers a critique in three "acts" of German metaphysics. In "Act 2" ("Idealist Philosophy") he discusses Feuerbach, among others, and cites his book Das Wesen des Christentums as "one of the most remarkable books of the nineteenth century" (11) However, he is critical of Feuerbach whom he regards as exclusively anthropocentric.



He considers that Feuerbach sees man's knowledge of God as merely the self-consciousness of man himself, of his own human nature. But at the heart of his criticism is not that Feuerbach has deified human nature; rather, that it is human nature in abstract, the race, or society, that has been deified. Such a move Berdyaev opposes as ultimately materialist, as leading, of necessity, to the subjection of the individual personality to the rule of the racial or of the universal. That was the basis of his rejection of Marxism.

Here he comments that "Hegel renders to God what belongs to man whilst Feuerbach renders to man what belongs to God... Feuerbach was the child of Hegel, as was Marx later on. Thus did destiny overthrow that dialectic (between the divine and the human) of genius".<sup>(12)</sup>

So the first and perhaps most important thing to say about Berdyaev's understanding of man's knowledge of God is that it is divine - human. God's revelation to man is divine-human because man as the recipient of that revelation is required to take part in bringing it about. The part that man must play in the forming of this relationship with God "could not be revealed by man to God, it had to be brought to light by the destiny of man himself. Otherwise, there would be no freedom of creative power, there would be no answer made by man."<sup>(13)</sup>

Berdyaev is, however, critical of the way that man has responded to God's call, to the formation of a divine-human relationship. His criticism arises from the fact, mentioned above, that he regards the 'via negativa' as the way to knowledge of the Truth. Man, on the other hand,

has elaborated a rationalistic, logically determined system of belief in God. The nature of this belief in God, the way in which man speaks about or conceptualizes God, is a topic that he discusses in several of his books, and it is important for our understanding of his thought to try to grasp something of the meaning of the terms that he uses repeatedly. He states the nature of the problem thus:

"There is an immense distinction to be drawn between God and the human idea of God, between God in His essence and God as Object. Between God and man there stands human consciousness, the exteriorization and projection of the limited condition of that consciousness there stands objectification."<sup>(14)</sup>

Berdyayev's use of the word 'objectification' is frequent and technical. It requires further explanation. We have already seen that Berdyayev rejects the ontological and cosmological arguments for the existence of God. This rejection stems from the conviction that such arguments view God in too naturalist and phenomenal a way. He says that "all the proofs of the existence of God are naturalist in character and conceive of God as an objective reality similar to that of the natural world." He also says that arguments against the existence of God are "naturalist and naively realist."<sup>(15)</sup> Berdyayev is concerned to see the idea of God (e.g. man's consciousness of God) and the reality of the existence of God. But this reality is a spiritual reality and is experienced spiritually. Therefore, to speak of a spiritual reality using the language of the natural world is inappropriate and will, inevitably, lead to distorted notions about the nature of God. We might take as an

example ontological argument for the existence of God. This stems from the understanding of God as Perfect Being. But such a notion is derived from naturalist conceptions. It is, Berdyaev maintains, a projection by man of qualities derived from human existence but envisaged in such a way as to make them non-human (e.g. "perfection" is a human notion of the attainment to something whole or complete, yet since it is never realised by man it is also a non-human quality). So he writes: "Man has made God in his own image and likeness. . . . Whole groups of people, whole nations have adjusted Christianity, as they have all religions to their own level and have stamped upon the image of God their own desires, and applied to this image their own limitedness, and all this has provided an admirable opening for the denial of the very existence of God" (16). This statement raises a question put with force by Dostoevsky. "The kind of denial that Berdyaev has in mind here is not philosophical but one that is in a sense more "religious", e.g. the atheism of a Nietzsche or an Ivan Karamazov. Berdyaev formulates the question, therefore: "Is a rationally elaborated category of being applicable to the spirit, to God?" (17) In reply to this question the answer must be that such a category can never be applied, simply because "spirit" is not an object. Hence its existence may easily be denied. But to leave open the possibility of denying the existence of God because He is "spirit" and not "object" is, clearly, to Berdyaev, a more honest approach than applying the category of being and ending up with God as "super-being" or "non-being" (categories which correspond to the transcendent or immanent antithesis). So, in answer to this question, he states:

"God is spirit because he is not object, because he is subject  
 ..... Spirit is revealed in the subject, whereas in the object  
 we can only discern an objectified spirit."(18)

Now it should be clear from this that Berdyaev uses the terms "subjective" and "objective" to refer to two different types of reality. One, not evident in object form (e.g. love, truth &c.), is still a reality, and a more "primal" one, Berdyaev would say. The other is the world of tangible objects (e.g. body, wind, heat &c.) or visible objects (e.g., light). At the end of Chapter One of the second Meditation of Solitude and Society, he asks the following question: "Why is the material and irrational object reflected in the immaterial and rational subject in the form of knowledge?"(19) In seeking to answer this question, Berdyaev pursues his understanding of subject/object further.

It is the introduction of a distinction between Being and Knowledge that Berdyaev regards as the effect of an "objectifying process". He considers that the subject, the personal being, man, elaborates a super-structure, above the subject. This superstructure is an abstraction; it is a form of knowledge. But as such it is impersonal and can have no life of its own. The strong distinction between what is general, abstract, impersonal, and what is personal and existential pervades all Berdyaev's thought on this theme. He says that to objectify is "to rationalize in the sense of accepting concepts - substances, universal ideas and the rest - as realities. Rational and objective thought is abstracted from the spheres of the irrational and of the individual."(20)

Thus, knowledge in the objective sense is "social" because it is not centred on the existential and personal; it is "that which is to be universally valid". There are various ways in which Berdyaev distinguishes between the personal and subjective and the impersonal and objective. He uses the term "existence" in preference to "life"; the latter being a biological category, the former an ontological one. Similarly, he sees "society" as an objective category and "community" as a subjective one. The objective is the world of phenomena and the subjective is the world of noumena. The connection between them is that "appearance is the objectified world, the natural and social world of necessity, servitude, enmity and dominance; whereas the noumenal world is spirit, freedom and creative power... What is called the other world is not an "other" world to me; it is pre-eminently my world."<sup>(21)</sup> The two worlds of phenomenon and noumenon form a part of man's own existence and are related symbolically. One might therefore, speak of objectification as symbolic for "it presents us with signs but not with realities".<sup>(22)</sup> It is this symbolic relationship that is so important for understanding Berdyaev's difficulty in putting into words the true meaning of what he believes. The intellection and knowledge of the subject is only ever imperfectly expressed in the form of language by which it becomes "Objective" and "social". So he writes:

"There is the interior logos, the inward word which is in close proximity to the depth of the one who exists, it is hard by the primary reality. And there is the exterior logos, the outward world which is oriented to this world and adjusted to its fallen state."<sup>(23)</sup>

It is this "interior logos" which provides man with the noumenal faculty through which he both apprehends God and enters into communion with his fellow men. This "interior logos" is "a creative act in the depth of being .... it is the innermost light itself in the depths of Being."<sup>(24)</sup>

Berdyayev further explains the relationship between the noumenon and the phenomeon in terms of cause and appearance. He says that the noumenon (the thing-in-itself) "is not a necessary cause of the appearance of the phenomenon .... necessary causal relationships exist only in the phenomenal world."<sup>(25)</sup> He refers to this also in our understanding of our relationship with God about which he says that causal relationships are "completely inapplicable" and in the reference to Kant he says that "Kant expressed this clearly, though he was inconsistent when he recognised a causal relationship between the thing-in-itself and its appearance."<sup>(26)</sup>

We have to acknowledge, therefore, that in dealing with the topic of the noumenal "spiritual intuition", the thing-in-itself, we are facing something which is "to the world of objects and the world of compulsion the least generally valid and convincing appearance, although it is the most universal. For this reason, the position of metaphysics has always been precarious, and open to suspicion."<sup>(27)</sup> On the universal nature of this intuition or knowledge, Berdyayev comments that how to arrive at its universality or "general validity" was a problem that Kant had faced. His own attitude to this is determined by "the social relations that hold good among men."<sup>(28)</sup>



If, then, we return to our point of departure, we might now be able to see why Berdyaev's thought about God takes a personal and "subjective" form. In a discussion of the existentialism of Heidegger and Jaspers, Berdyaev acknowledges that he has more in common with Jaspers than he has with Heidegger, and comments that "no concept is able to reveal the purpose of existence or its underlying values,"<sup>(29)</sup> Only in the personal sphere can the purpose of existence be found.

### ii. God: Person or Absolute?

It is to the personal sphere that we should now turn to pursue Berdyaev's thinking further. In Destiny of Man he writes that "personality is the image and likeness of God in man."<sup>(30)</sup> This leads him to talk about God as alone being the universal concept or thought common to all mankind while not abstracted from mankind. He writes: "God is the most exalted of universals and at the same time He is the most concretely individual. He is personal. God is the one, true and admissible hypostatization of the universal."<sup>(31)</sup> God is revealed in the fact that man exists not just as an organ in society or as an organism forming a particular species. Such categories as these relate to man in an abstract or "objectified" way. They reduce man to a collection of individuals who bear no relation to each other at all, or they obliterate the significance to the individual with a universal concept. But Berdyaev is convinced that the existence of personality "presupposes the existence of God; its value pre-supposes the supreme value - God." <sup>(32)</sup>

This paradoxical view of God is typical of Berdyaev's writing. He views God as both universal and yet uniquely personal. The paradox turns on the way that the term universal is understood. By this he does not mean a sum total or an all-inclusive unity, as he maintains Vladimir Solovyev had taught: "The idea of the all-inclusive unity, which is tempting to philosophical reason, is an abstract idea of God." (33) So it appears that to understand fully the concept of unity, universalism, totality that Berdyaev has in mind we should have to find out what he means by 'sobornost', an untranslatable Russian term, and a concept which lies behind all Berdyaev's notions of God as both universal and personal. Berdyaev himself has alluded to the idea in the following way:

"It might be said that the Kingdom of God is by no means objective unity.... The Kingdom of God is, above all, personalistic. It is a personal and free Kingdom, not a unity which stands above personal existence, but a union, a communion in love." (34)

The most important idea of God as personal that Berdyaev uses is that of the Trinity. This is for him a doctrine of tremendous importance "which must be understood mystically, in terms of spiritual experience, and not by rational theology." (35) The importance of the Trinity has always played a significant part in the thinking of Eastern theologians and this is no less true of Berdyaev. (36)

It is the notion of the community of the persons of the Trinity which together form a unity that leads Berdyaev on to speak of God as "personal": "God as a Person pre-supposes his other, another Person, and is love and sacrifice. . . . The Holy Trinity is a Trinity of Persons just because they pre-suppose one another and imply mutual love and intercommunion." (37)

Elsewhere Berdyaev writes that the Trinity reveals the interior life of the Godhead; it indicates the surmounting of duality and division. It is only because the triune God is "personality" that man is able to form a relationship with him and is not dissolved in divinity. (38) Man can only have any knowledge of God through a personal relationship with him: "Personality exists in the relation of love and sacrifice. It is impossible to conceive of a personal God in an abstract monotheistic way. A person cannot exist as a self-contained and self-sufficient Absolute." (39)

The development of man's relationship with God reveals the inner life of the Godhead to man. It is here that man discovers the divine longing for a relationship with him. Here man discovers that "God is active in the matter." (40)

Berdyaev is critical of the view of God that is normally given by theologians, portraying God as an "absolute and immobile Divinity". (41) Once more, it is the understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity which leads Berdyaev to reject such a notion: "It may even be said that such a doctrine which fears to admit the mobility of the divine

life subject to its own inner tragedy, is in blatant contradiction with the fundamental Christian mysteries of the Divine Trinity, of Christ as the centre of the divine life and of Golgotha."<sup>(42)</sup>

Berdyaev has so clear a notion of God as person, as personality, that the concept of an immobile Absolute inevitable contradicts it. For a person cannot be abstract; a person must have what Berdyaev would call an "existential centre" and as such must be capable of feeling sorrow and joy. He speaks of the notion of God as ACTUS PURUS as a "degradation of the majesty of God".<sup>(43)</sup> Clearly, here Berdyaev is rejecting a Thomist approach to theology which he regards as denying potentiality and the possibility of motion in the divine life; offering instead "a rationalist doctrine of God which is based upon Aristotelian Philosophy."<sup>(44)</sup> He comments that "if God is ACTUS PURUS, then the creation of the world, that is, creative activity in God, remains unintelligible. On this point Berdyaev refers us to a work by Laberthonnière, Christian Realism and Greek Idealism which he says "treats this problem very well." Berdyaev is quite insistent that the concept of God as the unmoved cause is essentially foreign to the Christian tradition: He reiterates the point; taking up the theme from Laberthonnière:  
 "The static conception of God as ACTUS PURUS having no potentiality and completely self-sufficient is a philosophical, Aristotelian, and not a biblical, conception."<sup>(46)</sup>  
 Elsewhere, Berdyaev refers to the influence of Greek philosophical thinking in relation to the development of Christian doctrine. He writes: "Greek philosophy had already

the fundamental types of philosophical approach which were to be developed in later history.... Thus, Parmenides and the Eleatic philosophers conceived the deepest spiritual and divine reality, that is, the true metaphysical reality as something that was unique and immobile. But Heraclitus, one of the greatest philosophers, conceived it as fiery movement." (47)

In outlining a concept of God which he regards as more in the tradition of Christian revelation and experience, Berdyaev suggests that we should conceive of God as "one who suffers and yearns for an Other, as one who loves and gives Himself in sacrifice". (48) Berdyaev considers that the notion of God as self-sufficient may, indeed, imply an imperfection in the divine life, for it implies the lack of creative movement. Together with this goes the movement of love which seeks for a response from man. The question that is put before us is whether it might not be more worthy to ascribe to God "a longing for the loved one, a need for sacrificial self-surrender?" (49) In place of self-satisfaction, self-sufficiency, stony immobility, pride" we should conceive of God as one who "shares in the sufferings of man (who) yearns for his other, for responsive love." To ignore this is to ignore the fullest expression of this love seen in the crucifixion of the Son on Calvary, the deepest mystery of Christianity. For "if Christ the Son of God suffers a tragic destiny, and if historical destiny and movement are also manifest in Him, then this constitutes the recognition of the tragedy experienced by the divine life." (50) We should note that Berdyaev is careful not to imply any idea of patripassianism, as he

points out specifically in Freedom and the Spirit: "It is not God the Father who suffers, as the Patripassians used to hold, but the suffering of the Son is a measure of the suffering in the inner life of the Trinity".<sup>(51)</sup>

The idea of a movement from God to man which reveals itself in the suffering of the Son is revelatory also of the dynamic movement which within the divine life found expression in the creation of the world. It is in this way that God shares in the destiny of His creatures: for the same dynamic, yearning love that was seen at the creation is to be seen also in the unfolding of the world's destiny. It is the dynamic movement within the relationships of the Trinity which is at the heart of both creation and redemption, and of the divine love:

".... the mystery of the creation of the world cannot be understood intimately and esoterically except through the inner life of the Divine Trinity, the divine dynamic."<sup>(52)</sup>

Berdyayev conceives of the involvement of God with the history of the world as the sharing in a destiny which is from its beginnings a tragedy. That is the nature of the drama that is played out between God and man. For God's movement to man is complete and totally self-giving, as was shown by Christ. But what of man's response to God? It is with this in mind that Berdyayev quotes from the French writer, Léon Bloy: "God is the lonely and uncomprehended sufferer."<sup>(53)</sup>

The relationship between the creation of the world and the life of the Trinity, Berdyayev sets out as follows:

"The creation of the world by God the Father is a movement of the deepest mystery in the relation between God the Father and God the Son. The

revelation of the divine mystery in the depths of the divine and spiritual life, of the inner passionate divine thirst and longing for an other self, that other self which may be the subject of a great and infinite love on the part of God, and that infinite thirst for reciprocity and love on the part of the other self, determines for the Christian consciousness the very principle of movement and process. This inner tragedy felt by God for His other self and its longing for reciprocal love constitutes that very mystery of the divine life which is associated with the creation of the world and of man. (54)

ii. Mysticism and the Language of Symbols.

We may not proceed without heeding the warning that Berdyaev gives at this point. For here we approach the very brink of mystery and find ourselves on a "razor edge". Berdyaev reminds us of the notion of the COINCIDENTIA OPPOSITORUM which is for him a truth of spiritual experience. To express his understand of "the coincidence of motion and rest in God" he quotes from S. Simeon the New Theologian: "Come Thou, who remainest unmoved yet who ever moveth and dost direct Thyself towards us." (55)

This idea he considers to be more profound and an advance beyond Greek and Scholastic rationalism; an idea that belongs to the mystical tradition, in connection with which both Augustine and Nicholas of Cusa are cited. (56) We

have already suggested that Berdyaev abandons the position of theologian or philosopher at times and takes up that of mystic. In speaking of God as the coincidence of opposites, we are very much in the realm of mysticism. In addition to those that have just been mentioned, we might offer the names of Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyassa, S. Martin, Jacob Boehme, Francis Baader and Vladimir Solovyev,<sup>(57)</sup> as typical of or influential on Berdyaev's thought. We should, however, make completely clear that Berdyaev envisages no logical relationship between mystical experience and rational or positive theology or philosophy. We return here to the problem of language. It should be stressed that Berdyaev's writing is so unsystematic and contradictory because he is struggling to put into words something which he has experienced within his own spirit but which he can express at best symbolically, as he says in the preface to Freedom and the Spirit : "I recognize that there is something essential which I cannot put into words, and that I cannot adequately develop my inmost thoughts."<sup>(58)</sup>

These inmost thoughts form a part of the spiritual life in such a way that they should never be questioned. To ask whether mystical experience is some form of auto-suggestion is to imply a form of detachment and external objectivity quite foreign to such experience. Berdyaev points out that God and man are neither external to each other, nor are they identified together. But the expression of this experience does not correspond to any adequate concept: "it can be expressed in symbols. Symbolic knowledge which throws a bridge across from one world to another is apophatic."<sup>(59)</sup> Here we can see most clearly the influence



of the mystical tradition of the East (and certain elements of the West) on Berdyaev's thought. In particular, of course, Jacob Boehme. Part of the reason for this may be found in Berdyaev's appreciation of Boehme's use of language: "Boehme uses the language of symbol and myth, and it may be just for that reason that he succeeds in letting in some light upon that depth, the knowledge of which is not attainable in rational philosophy."<sup>(60)</sup>

Berdyaev distinguishes symbols from realities and yet they lead us on to realities. This is the mark of growth and development in the spiritual life. The external world of nature, history, society &c. belongs to the realm of symbol. Yet it is these things which are the highway of the spirit, the path to the spiritual realities which they symbolize. For it is among these symbols that life is lived; through these external things life proceeds. The relationship between the inner life of the spirit and the external life of symbols is explained by Berdyaev thus: "As we pursue the course of our spiritual development we launch out into the objective world of symbols, and then we return again to achieve a fresh integration of ourselves in the inmost depths and at the very centre of life and reality."<sup>(61)</sup>

The "centre of life and reality" is quite clearly a spiritual centre which is discovered only beyond the symbols. Too often, Berdyaev suggests, the symbol is mistaken for the reality itself. But to be bound to the symbol as though it were a reality is to prevent a real transfiguration of life. For example, Berdyaev comments as follows on the symbolism of the Eucharist: "In the sacrament of the

Eucharist the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ. But this is a realist and symbolic trans-substantiation behind which there lies the mystery of the basic and original life, for it is in the inmost depths of existence that the Lamb of God is offered in sacrifice for the sins of the world. It is by means of the sacrament that the other world penetrates into ours... The matter of the sacrament is not accidental, for it is <sup>m</sup> symbolically linked with the outward spiritual phenomenon itself.... The true symbol is not an allegory and the sacramental possesses a cosmic nature, for its significance is not confined merely to the human soul. Its symbolism is real and absolute but its reality originates in the spiritual world and not in our natural world."(62)

This transfiguration is to be discerned in the lives of the mystics. Mysticism demonstrates the realities behind the symbols because it is unfettered by the dogmatic or canonical structures which belong to "official theology". Berdyaev notes the suspicion with which mysticism is regarded by the Church and equates the life of the mystic with that of the prophet as one who is free and open to the life of the spirit. He does, however, also note that mysticism or prophecy is the vocation of only a few, though he draws the following distinction: "We may resort to conventional terminology and call religion "democratic" and mysticism 'aristocratic'."(63) Since mysticism is concerned with the realities behind the symbols it is incapable of being rationalized. To this extent it might be said that mysticism is concerned with that which is unknowable. Its "unknowableness" should not, however, imply an absolute and irreconcilable rupture between God and man: "Apopathic theology is mystical rather than

agnostic".<sup>(64)</sup> Indeed, it is this very "mysteriousness" rather than rational argument, which leads to the knowledge of God. For "the world is bounded by a mystery in which rational thought ends"<sup>(65)</sup> and man falls back on the use of myths and symbols. The importance of myths is, for Berdyaev, similar to that of symbols. He has some sympathy with the gnostic systems because of the way in which they employed myth. He considers that mythology will make possible an understanding of "the essence of celestial history." "Only a mythology, which conceives the divine celestial life as celestial history and as a drama of love and freedom unfolding itself between God and His other self....can provide a solution of celestial history and, through it, of the destinies of both man and the world."<sup>(66)</sup>

The importance that Berdyaev attaches to the use of symbolic language when speaking about the mysteries of God can be seen in the criticism that he offers of his friend and fellow exile, Fr. Sergei Bulgakov. He maintains that Bulgakov's work implies a knowledge of the inner life of the Trinity which he considers to be objectified and over-familiar. Berdyaev is here thinking of Bulgakov's Sophiology.<sup>(67)</sup> He also offers at this point a criticism of two of his oldest friends, Bulgakov and Shestov, and suggests that they are, in fact, polar opposites. He says: "Shestov sets revelation and faith in opposition to reason and knowledge. Bulgakov wishes to make use of reason and its apparatus of concepts for the knowledge of revelation." Both, however, he maintains, raise the problem of what he calls his "critique of reason". This pre-supposes that God is not

above or subordinate to Truth but that He is "existent truth". As such, He is also "spirit, freedom, love, conscience". Berdyaev wishes to "spiritualize" <sup>e</sup>revelation not in the sense of introducing an antithesis between spirit and matter, since "the body also can be in the spirit". The "critique of revelation" will enable him to move away from rationalistic theology, towards mystery and mysticism. It should be a critique, not of reason but of the spirit; "and there is no criterion of Spirit outside Spirit itself".<sup>(68)</sup> Bulgakov's system Berdyaev regards as dependent on the antithesis between transcendent and immanent which, for him, is "out of date." Berdyaev associates with this outdated antithesis all ideas about monism and dualism and the significance of pantheism. These ideas follow from a rejection of the symbolism which links God and the world.

Berdyaev maintains that the abandonment of a symbolic way of thinking leads to a dualistic theism which is, in fact, a two-fold atheism. For there is an atheism which regards God as unknowable, utterly transcendent and totally removed from the life of this world. There is also an atheism that regards God as so completely absorbed in this world that he has no "other" existence. But Berdyaev maintains that "God and man are not external to each other; neither are they identified, the one nature does not disappear in the other."<sup>(69)</sup> While rejecting all ideas of a transcendent/immanent antitheses and exclusively monist or dualist concepts, Berdyaev is more guarded about the idea of pantheism.

Beyond transcendental dualism and immanent monism, mystical experience does, Berdyaev suggests, triumph over creatureliness. That is to say, there is an awareness of both the divine nature of God which is revealed in the world and an awareness of the abyss between man and God which introduces into the spiritual life a dialogical struggle and inherent tragedy. It is this aspect of mysticism which, according to Berdyaev, theology labels "pantheistic". But it could only be susceptible of pantheistic interpretation in that it envisages a divine nature in both creator and creature.

Rational pantheism fails to explain the relationship between God and the world just because it is a rational system and as such cannot express something inexpressible. It ends in a denial of the reality of the world and of man; or, again, a form of atheism, a denial of divine reality."<sup>(70)</sup>

Berdyaev notes that theologians, and especially Roman Catholic theologians, are particularly critical of the idea of pantheism. But their criticism is due to the fact that they have not understood that mystical language is not pantheistic but paradoxical. What they cannot grasp is that pantheism is a heresy about man and not about God.<sup>(71)</sup> In Berdyaev's opinion, most theologians put forward a theology which is implicitly pantheistic in that it views God as holding and directing everything. Berdyaev wishes to avoid this by emphasizing man's freedom (which is not determined by God) and his capacity for creativeness. The fact that man does share in divine freedom and creativity is the extent to which pantheism is true. And it is true to the extent that it does not allow any kind of dualism. Man has a divinity similar to the way that God has a divinity, in that they are

both free creators, although man's autonomous creativity is given him by God. To this extent, God is in all things. But God does not determine everything. That is what Berdyaev would understand by a "false monism". This is a misinterpretation of pantheism, as he sees it; it is an example of rational theology pushing the terms of mystical understanding too far. Berdyaev really envisages something like a "paneuleutherism". He explains his idea in The Realm of Spirit and The Realm of Caesar:

To identify the realm of spirit with the realm of Caesar, in one or another form is a false monism, which inevitably gives rise to slavery. Dualism between the realm of Spirit and the realm of Caesar is an absolutely necessary confirmation of man's freedom. But this is not a final dualism; it is a dualism in the spiritual and religious life of man. The final monism will be confirmed in the Kingdom of God: it is only to be revealed eschatologically. (72)

This "false monism" is an abstract concept and for Berdyaev no sufficient explanation of a plural world. He maintains that it must ultimately be transformed into "another extreme and unresolvable form of dualism."<sup>(73)</sup> Deism is an example of such a process. Here there are combined false conceptions of dualism and monism which permit of "no transfusion of energy" from one realm to another and which brings us to atheism and the negation of religion. Deism is the fatal product of a rationalist theism which combines within itself an abstract dualism and an abstract monism. Berdyaev instead seeks to bridge the gap between the two worlds and to overcome such a hopeless dualism, to

discover an interior connection between man and God which will give some meaning to the drama that is played out between them. But the drama must be one that is freely determined on both sides. Unless this is properly a dual encounter, it will deny man the right to play his own role: "For man stands in the centre of the world and his destiny determines that of the world. Only this mystery of the mutual relations between God and man, of love and freedom, and of freely given love, can elucidate the depths of the inner divine life and the mobile plural world." (74)

Freedom here becomes the criterion of what is true and what is false. "Pantheism is false if only because it is bound to deny freedom." (75) The same is true of monistic or dualistic interpretations of the relation between creator and creature. In connection with this, Berdyaev cites N. Hartmann's form of atheism which is based upon the idea that human freedom and creative values are incompatible with the existence of God: "If God exists, man is not free and cannot create values", is the way Berdyaev puts it. He considers that "Hartmann's contention is false", but the problem is a real one. (76) For if God is everything there can be no response to His love; there would be no communion or "dialogical struggle" since the Almighty and Omniscient God is constantly confronted by Himself. And then, inevitably in this context, evil must be determined by God.

iv. Freedom.

Freedom is the coping stone of the whole structure of Berdyaev's thought. An investigation of his thought on this subject will both illuminate the ideas already outlined and open the way for further exploration. For, without an understanding of this aspect of Berdyaev's thought, it would be difficult to understand his thinking on the subjects of man, evil, the world, history, &c. Much of the reaction of Berdyaev's work was an interest in this theme of freedom. (77)

It should already be clear that Berdyaev had a very clear understanding of God as mystery. This meant that no analogy could be applicable to God. In this sense, one could say that God is freedom, for He is free from categories, free from being categorized, "objectified". But though God might be free, theology has made a slave of Him. Theology has enslaved God because it is based on cataphatic knowledge. But Berdyaev regards knowledge, or the basis of knowledge (that is the existential subject) as free, conditioned by a freedom which is "preontic" and irrational. This freedom is the essential condition of the existential subject. It is also, however, a source of tragedy. For it is the source of many errors, blunders, and insurmountable contradictions, although these will only be discerned if freedom is given the primacy over Being. In doing just this, Berdyaev maintains that he is rejecting the venerable tradition of ontology which goes back to Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas. He chooses instead an existential philosophy which is radically anti-ontological. For Berdyaev, the primacy of



freedom over being means the freedom to determine oneself from within and to be oneself: "Being is, as it were, freedom arrested and congealed." This concept of freedom is one that he took from Jacob Boehme, about whom he says that "I regarded his thinking concerning ungrund as susceptible of my own interpretation, and I identified ungrund with primordial freedom which precedes all ontological determination," and goes on to say "according to Boehme this freedom is in God; it is the inmost mysterious principle of the divine life; whereas I conceived it to be outside God, preferring as I do, not to speak of the unspeakable and ineffable apophatic mystery of God's life."<sup>(78)</sup> In several of his books, Berdyaev gives a brief outline of those aspects of Boehme's thought (concerning the ungrund) which are of most interest to him. Very often this is given in contrast or comparison with Eckhart's notion of the distinction between God ('Gott') and the Godhead ('Gottheit'). Within this tradition Berdyaev also shows interest in the work of Angelus Silesius and von Baader. Schelling is also mentioned.<sup>(79)</sup>

Looking at the difference between the two mystics, Boehme and Eckhart, Berdyaev suggests that this difference is due to the fact that Boehme takes his vision from the Cabbala Eckhart from Neo-Platonism. Berdyaev quotes from Boehme on the ungrund in "Spirit and Reality". He seeks to explain the vision of the ungrund as something deeper than God. He quotes:

'The cause of the will is the nothingness'  
and

"The uncauseable and uncaused is an eternal

nothingness, and the cause of an eternal beginning, a craving; for nothingness is a craving for something."(80)

We may recognise here something along the lines of a meonic freedom, but Berdyaev rejects the idea that this may be the meon in the Greek sense; for in this we are beyond the realm of Greek intellectualism and ontology. The simplest and basic definition that Berdyaev proposes is that "freedom is NOT CREATED."(81)

For Berdyaev this established Boehme as the first in a tradition of voluntarist thought, something which he identifies as an important element in the later development of German tradition. It is this mystical tradition in which Berdyaev feels that he stands together with Schelling, von Baader, Angelus Silesius, and those philosophers whom he considers to have been influenced by this strain of thought (e.g., Kant, Fichte, Hegel and Schopenhauer.)

In particular, Berdyaev speaks of the influence that The Dark Nature of God had on him and its ability to communicate to him something which is beyond the categories of human speech, of good and evil, of being and non-being. He speaks of this uncreated freedom that Boehme has experienced, as lying deeper than within the nature of God. It is "a sort of primal dark abyss, and in its inmost depth occurs a theogonic process or that of divine genesis."(82) This divine genesis is a secondary process, for it succeeds the "primal source" and "fount of being" in which it is taking place. That Berdyaev envisages a secondary process is due to the fact that he conceives of freedom as outside

God. On this, Vallon has commented that "in spite of all Berdyaev's reservations and qualifications, the meonic freedom conveys much more the idea of 'somethingness' rather than 'nothingness'."<sup>(83)</sup> It is precisely that idea of "somethingness", defying description, that Berdyaev seems to suggest. "Outside" should here be interpreted as "beyond" or "anterior", a distinction that is not made by Boehme. The Theogony should not be thought of, either, as having a beginning; it is rooted in the ungrund, it is eternal. It is, however, the very fact of this movement at the primal source which implies the possibility of tragic destiny in the divine life. For here there is a pouring out, a dynamic, a passion, at the centre of which stands the Passion of God Himself and His Son. Thus, in this secondary process we should see the mysteries of creation and redemption. Creation is what Berdyaev calls the "anthropogonistic process" at the centre of which is the person of Christ, in which is brought about the perfection of the genesis of God in man and man in God. And at the centre of the world process stands the crucifixion, "because God <sup>had</sup> desired freedom and because the primal drama and mystery of the world are those of the relations between God and His other self, which He loves and by which He desires to be loved. And only freedom endows this love with any significance."<sup>(84)</sup> Berdyaev envisages different types of freedom in the world. There is the irrational freedom which he identifies with the uncreated meonic freedom. There is also "intelligent freedom" which he sees as something striven for, the freedom of Socrates and the Greeks and which leads to slavery; it tends to

become organized into a pattern which does, in fact, destroy the freedom of the individual spirit. But there is a third type of freedom, not imposed by an outside authority, namely, that of grace. It is in this divine moment of genesis, when the creation and redemption are revealed in eternity, that the Trinity is also revealed. Berdyaev quotes Boehme as saying that "the cause of the Trinity is the single unfathomable will."<sup>(85)</sup>

Having stated that it was his intention to re-examine the idea of creation, which he declared stood in need of "revision and deepening", he explores the idea further in the Destiny of Man. Here, Berdyaev suggests that there was a stage in this process of creation when, in a paradisaical state the world existed, and man existed, but in a state of ignorance or unconsciousness. Further to this Berdyaev states that Paradise is the unconscious wholeness of Nature. In connection with this, he cites Freud and his school, for whom the conflict of the conscious with the unconscious gives rise to neurosis and psychosis and is a product of civilization; Klagess, for whom the birth of consciousness is decadence and disease; Bergson, who contrasts instinct with intellect; Shestov, and the underlying idea in his struggle against the rational and the good; Dostoevsky, for whom suffering is the only cause of consciousness; Hegel and his "unhappy consciousness".<sup>(86)</sup>

In this state the irrational meonic freedom was temporarily obscured. At this stage, the Father only was present, "but He was not yet the Father, for the Son had not been revealed. God the Word was present but the Word was not

incarnate as man and had not made the sacrifice of love."(87)

It was only at the point of man's loss of Paradisal innocence and unconsciousness, at the awakening in him of the knowledge of good and evil, that creation is seen as coming about finally in time. This is the event of the Fall. This brings about man's final creation, the stirring in him of an irrational freedom, engendering both good and evil. Consequently, it revealed man's destiny to deification and the suffering of Christ. "Christ could not have appeared in the life of Paradise".(88)

Creation is accomplished in eternity and then in time. It is when the freedom which, in man, is the true reflection and the image of the Creator, becomes active that the movement in the world (i.e. a movement towards good or evil) begins. But this "ancient tale" is something which is beyond the boundary between time and eternity. It is an account, a myth of primordial history. This is a "frontier line idea" (89)

For beyond creation, beyond the revealing of freedom, of the movement or conflict between god and evil, beyond this divine mystery everything is inexpressible and so could not be known in human or personal terms. The movement of irrational freedom towards evil, the rebellion against the creativity of God, brings about the revelation of the Trinity, which is directed towards the world in which is revealed God's suffering. Vallon comments: "Creation is about man's response to God's call". Since that response was to be a free one, it had to be possible that man could respond in rebellion.(90)

That man is born from a nothing which is primeval uncreated

meonic freedom is a view which Berdyaev suggests is "less insulting" to man than the notion of createdness in traditional theology which suggests an impassable gulf between man and his Creator. But man, endowed with freedom, is called to play a part in the destiny of the world. This is played out in the activity of the three principles: "Providence, i.e. the super-cosmic God; freedom, i.e. the human spirit; and fate or destiny, i.e. Nature, the solidified, hardened outcome of the dark meonic freedom."(91)

The destiny of the world is man's own destiny. It is a two-fold movement: from God to man, that is, creating, longing for, yearning; and from man to God, that is, the work of creating the image of God in man, the image which is properly man's and for which he was made. For: "The image of man is defaced when the image of God is obliterated from the human soul."(92)

And this two-fold work must equally be the work of man and his freedom, since in freedom man was born. But the tragedy is that freedom not only affirms man's dignity and ability to create a new and better life, it also leads to evil and has a capacity for self-destruction. But, above all, goodness must be free, since "the servitude of the good is an evil thing and the freedom of evil can be the greater good than the good which is a result of compulsion."

"Freedom, therefore, is not a trifle to be lightly assumed; it is a difficulty and a burden which man ought to take upon himself."(93)

The burden is the part that man plays in the conflict between the elements of providence, freedom and fate. In this conflict, man is torn between the consent to creating the image of God within himself and rebellion against creating that image, rebellion against God. But such a rebellion is a denial of himself and a return to non-being, a refusal to answer the divine call. The way of creation and response has been shown to man by Christ, the God-man. For in the primal drama, when man was first awakened from unconsciousness, the Word became revealed and the life of the Trinity directed towards the world. This is the mystery of redemption. Berdyaev suggests that the "incarnation" of the Son was the emergence of the Trinity, to be fully revealed later on earth in the man Jesus Christ. In Him, "for the first time, in response to God's movement and longing, a perfect man is revealed to Him." We may compare with this; "the eternal face of man abides in the very heart of the Divine Trinity. The second Hypostasis of Divinity is Divine Humanity." (94) There is a congruity in Jesus as Son of man and Son of God.

It is because God requires a free response from man that suffering becomes a part of the life of the Godhead, and of the world. The suffering is not only that of Calvary; it is a destiny, a history of suffering, of the longing for the response of love, which is demonstrated most fully in the person of the crucified Son of God, Jesus Christ: "The tragedy of freedom is overcome by the tragedy of the Cross." (95)

Berdyayev insists that the cause of this tragedy, freedom, must be absolute. If it were not beyond the control of God, then the irrational evil and suffering of the world would be meaningless. In the discussion of the problem of evil we should be forced into the position of admitting that God is responsible for the creation (or for allowing the creation) of evil. Berdyayev regards this as suggesting that "God is playing a game with Himself."<sup>(96)</sup> For this reason, it becomes impossible to speak of the providence of God, in the way that it is usually understood.

#### v. Providence and Grace.

Berdyayev gives some reference to a notion of God's providence in his Destiny of Man as one of the three principles active in the world. In this context, however, it is seen over against the background of freedom and fate. That is to say, Berdyayev does not regard freedom and fate as countermanded by God's providence in the destiny of the world. But the notion of providence that is a part of traditional theological and metaphysical doctrine is, Berdyayev maintains, inconsistent when faced by the importance and disquieting nature of the problem of evil. The question of how divine providence is effective in the world is a question posed by reason. But this question is meaningless when confronted with the mystery and secret of love. There can be no rational system of world order, since this could not take into account the element of freedom. The theme of world history which reveals God's providence most fully is that of freely given love. This is the way of freedom and not necessity: "It endows history, however, with that terrible and disastrous character which compels



many to doubt the existence of Providence and to conclude that the whole of world history is a refutation of it."<sup>(97)</sup> It is probably true that our ideas of God turn more easily towards concepts of power, omnipotence, sovereignty &c. rather than the precarious and vulnerable idea of freely-given love. It is easier to think in terms of a cosmic world order and harmony than the interplay between irrational factors involving the divine life in their conflict. But Berdyaev rejects the notion of God as an autocratic Monarch who will establish the common world order at the cost of every individuality. Together with his mentor, Dostoevsky, Berdyaev chooses the idea of God as freely-given love, rather than one which would give a more static view which would fail to see God's striving: "The problem of theodicy is only solved on the existential plane where God reveals Himself as freedom, love and sacrifice, where He suffers for man and strives together with man against the falsity and wrong of the world."<sup>(98)</sup> Here and elsewhere Berdyaev shows some sympathy for Marcion in his attempt to come to terms with this problem. He refers us to the work by Harnack on Marcion. We should also at this point note that Berdyaev rejects the idea of God as Cause: "It is utterly wrong to apply the category of Causality to God and to the relation between God and the world. It is suitable only to relations that belong to the phenomenal world. God is not the cause of this world any more than He is Master and King. When people speak of God as the Creator of the world they are speaking of something immeasurably more mysterious than a causal relations. In relation to the world God is freedom and not necessity, not determination."<sup>(99)</sup>

Berdyayev's rejection of God as Pantokrator is consequent upon this understanding of God striving together with man. He insists that the management of the world is not simply a divine autocracy but something which requires human participation. It is Christ who shows the perfect form of this management, for in him the human and divine meet: "With Christ, God's autocracy ceases, for man as the Son of God is called to immediate participation in divine life. The management of the world becomes divine-human." (100)

The actual managing of the world is dependent on grace, but not on grace alone. Berdyayev again refers to a complex interaction of three principles of necessity, freedom and transfiguring grace. We may add here that in connection with **the** references above to these three principles of activity in the world, it is not made clear how Berdyayev intends these statements to relate to each other. One might identify providence with grace, and fate with necessity. O. F. Clarke, in his book Introduction to Berdyayev" comments as follows: "'I', 'Christ' and 'Freedom', the triad, which is the core of Berdyayev's philosophy, give us plurality and unity, movement, life, time and eternity, personality and community, a real world and yet a world whose meaning is beyond itself."<sup>(101)</sup> In taking part in this interaction, man becomes the instrument of grace. But this grace is not something external to him. It was first revealed in the God-man, Christ, as the revelation of the divine in man. What the theologians call grace, placing it alongside human freedom, is this action in man of divine freedom.<sup>(102)</sup> It is by grace that man shares in the creating of the world, for the creation is not a completed act. Grace, is, in fact, the third type of

freedom: "Grace proceeds not only from the divine nature of Christ, but also from the human and from his heavenly humanity. Here we see the third kind of freedom, namely that of man, in an active and illuminated state."<sup>(103)</sup>

Man is called to realize his role as creator and in this lies his response to God. This is the work of grace, as something which is God given, and yet which belongs inherently to man, without impairing his freedom: "It is the act of grace which realizes the communion between God and man and offers the solution to the divine drama. We must, therefore, note that the principle of Divine Grace is active in the history and destiny of both world and man, together with that of natural necessity. And without it neither this destiny nor mystery would be fulfilled."<sup>(104)</sup>

Berdyev shows some interest here in the paradox between freedom and grace which is reflected in the disputes between Augustine and Pelagius, the Jansenists and the Jesuits. He comments that Pelagius failed to understand that "human freedom as such is powerless to turn man to God, to conquer sin," and similarly that the Jansenists subsequently failed to see that "grace comes from God and not from man... it is not man's answer to God."<sup>(105)</sup> Elsewhere he comments "The mystery of God's operation in the world and in man usually finds expression in the doctrine of grace, and grace bears no resemblance to what we understand by necessity, power, authority and causality .... grace cannot be set in anti-thesis to freedom."<sup>(106)</sup>

CHAPTER 5. BERDYAEV'S PLACE IN BRITISH THEOLOGY.

In this second part of the thesis we have looked so far at Berdyaev's Doctrine of God. We have considered his understanding of man's ability to know God and the nature of man's apprehension of God's revelation of Himself. We saw that Berdyaev understood this process of revelation and apprehension as a concrete relationship, a relationship between persons. We also saw that Berdyaev was critical of what he regarded as the adoption by Christianity of an Aristotalian approach to our understand about God. Thus, we saw that Berdyaev, in looking for a different way of speaking about God, drew heavily upon the mystical tradition of both East and West, and we noted that he also pointed to the difficulties (Monism, Dualism, Pantheism) connected with this approach. In the last two sections of this chapter, we looked at how Berdyaev used freedom as the hallmark of truth; Berdyaev's Doctrine of Freedom we termed the coping stone of the structure of his thought because it enabled us finally to approach the boundary between time and eternity, the revelation of the life of the Divine Trinity and a true understanding of God's action in the world through His providence and grace.

We turn now to look at how some of these aspects of Berdyaev's thought can be located in the work of British theologians and philosophers of the period up to the end of the second World War. By a comparison with the state of theological debate in Britain at that time we shall attempt to show that Berdyaev's work was welcomed in this country because it considered questions already being asked, and offered a contribution from a different religious tradition. Drawing

on the outline we have just made of his doctrine of God we shall consider how Berdyaev is engaged in debate over the concept of God as Perfect Being and how there is set against this the alogical working of the world.

i. Perfect Being and the Alogical working of the World.

To summarize, then, we have attempted to outline Berdyaev's approach to the doctrine of God. In discussing the way in which our knowledge of God is normally conceived, Berdyaev is always concerned to move away from formulae that have been shaped by different traditions, from that of the Greeks to that of German Idealism. Berdyaev's interest is in seeing beyond the philosophical categories to the experience of God which they testify. It could well be said that his approach is an existential one, since he is trying to give expression, not to a concept derived 'a priori' but to a living relationship, to something that is. Thus, much of his understanding of our knowledge of God is explained in personal terms: it is a drama, a relationship lived out between man and God. It is of vital importance for Berdyaev that by "God" we do not imply a concept which is beyond that of a person; you cannot have a relationship with a concept. It might be argued in reply that here Berdyaev offers merely an extreme form of anthropomorphism. But that would be a misreading of his meaning. It is his contention that God is "human" while man is "inhuman". Mankind strives not to become something of its own making, but the likeness of its Creator. There is a basic similarity between God and man which in the first place makes man aware of the fact that he has something to which he aspires.

Three vital things about the way in which Berdyaev views this destiny must be remembered. The first is that it is achieved only through man's free response to God. The true image of humanity is only to be found in God, but man is free to create an image for himself, of himself. Berdyaev's reflections on the outcome of these man-made images form the basis of his comment on the development of Western Society, philosophy, theology, &c. The second point is that the perfect man, the true image of God, the only example of a freely-given and total response to God, is to be found in the God-man, Jesus Christ. Christ is the perfect humanity revealed in the Godhead; Christ offers the perfect response to God in the life of the Trinity. The third point is, that in order for man's response to be totally free, God is willing to suffer. The Cross is the revelation of God's movement towards man, God's call to man, which reveals not only the suffering of a love which fails to find a full response from the beloved, but which goes out to reach the beloved. God's movement to man identifies itself with man's suffering in order to be able to elicit from man a free response to that love.

Underlying this is Berdyaev's mystical intuition which, as we have seen, impels him to employ language which is symbolic or mythological. There is a finely drawn tension in his thought, through which he seeks to hold together the mystery of the transcendent Deity and the God who lives and suffers in the world, who is the ground of our being and known to every man, woman and child. The response to God takes man from time to beyond-time, from space to beyond-

space. Through this response, man discovers within his life an existence which is beyond time and space, which is "spirit", as Berdyaev terms it; we might say that it is metaphysical. But it is no less real for being that. Indeed, it is Berdyaev's contention that in discovering "the realm of spirit" man discovers God and the freedom to become fully a really human being.

In England, Berdyaev's work begins to appear in translation during the mid-thirties, though this is, in some cases, several years after its original composition and appearance in French. Just about all of his major works appeared in English: some of them were published after his death in 1947. The reaction to his work from leading theologians of the day was enthusiastic and it would seem that he was widely read.<sup>(1)</sup> Among those who reviewed his work and praised it were William Temple, W. R. Matthews, Evelyn Underhill and C. E. Raven.<sup>(2)</sup> While it might not be possible to justify the view that Berdyaev influenced the actual development of theology in this country, it would seem that his work contributed to a development that was already in progress. We shall, therefore, take some of Berdyaev's views that have been outlined above and investigate how they relate to theological debate in Britain at that time.

The first area of Berdyaev's thought which we might investigate in relation to contemporary thought is that of God as an Absolute. This theme we dealt with above in the sections entitled "Man's Knowledge and Apprehension of God." (4.i.) and "God: Person or Absolute?" (4.ii.)

The main thrust of Berdyaev's argument is that he rejects all concepts of God as an immobile absolute, as "actus purus", and with it the rationalist arguments for the existence of God, derived from Greek philosophy. For him, God cannot be self-sufficient, omnipotent, omniscient, &c., these ideas degrade the Majesty of God.

Perhaps the strongest defence of the position that he is challenging was at this time given by E. L. Mascall in his book, He Who Is, which sets out to maintain the Thomist approach to the doctrine of God. In Chapter 10 of the book ("Transcendence and Immanence") Mascall acknowledges that to Berdyaev "rational theology is anathema because it turns into an object of discussion a God who is already comprehended in the depths of the human spirit."<sup>(3)</sup>

On the basis that rational theology depends on the doctrine of analogy in order to make discussion of it possible, Mascall asserts that Berdyaev is involved in a self-defeating pursuit. Mascall's question is whether "the very way in which he is putting them (sc.theological problems) may not deprive him of the possibility of getting an answer."<sup>(4)</sup> The basic contradiction in Berdyaev's thought is, as far as Mascall is concerned, that having denied the use by rational theology of analogy, he then goes on to use a mode of thought which is symbolic. Mascall is able to sympathize with Berdyaev's attempt to "avoid that type of abstraction which substitutes bloodless categories for the full experience of life,<sup>(5)</sup> but maintains that he has not succeeded. We may choose to agree with Mascall. Certainly, it has been pointed out above that Berdyaev readily acknowledged the difficulty



that he encountered in conveying through language his basic experience of God.

We may at this point take note of the fact that Mascall goes on here to discuss the ideas of another representative of Eastern Orthodoxy, Fr. Alexis van der Mensbrugghe, and in particular the way in which he envisages a sophi<sup>o</sup>logy over against the Trinity. These ideas are explored in Fr. Mensbrugghe's book, From Dyad to Triad.<sup>(6)</sup> This is part of a development of sophiological thinking which is typical within the Russian tradition, and, as Mascall points out, flows from Vladimir Solovyov to Fr. Paul Florensky and Fr. Serge Bulgakov. As has been noted above, Berdyaev distances himself somewhat from Bulgakov's sophiology, though he is ready to acknowledge the influence that Solovyov had on his own life.<sup>(7)</sup>

However, Berdyaev was not alone in wishing to re-examine the language and concepts applied by theologians to God. Earlier in his book, Mascall had taken issue with W. R. Matthews on a similar subject. Mascall quotes from Matthews' book, God in Christian Thought and Experience, the criticism there levelled against the scholastics that they fail to combine Aristotelian metaphysics with the view of God which is consistent with Christian revelation. In reply to this, Mascall comments that Matthews' view of the personality of God "as fundamentally constituted by striving, while it would be congenial to voluntaristic philosophies such as those of Fichte, Schopenhauer and Hegel, has little to justify it."<sup>(8)</sup> We should remember here that Berdyaev considers Boehme, from whom he draws so

much of his concept of God, to be the first in the German tradition of voluntaristic thought.

Mascall states his side of the case quite clearly in Chapter 8 ("God and the World: 'analogia entis'"):

God - the self-existent, perfect, changeless Being, the Pure Act in whom all that supremely is is comprised - how could He not exist?

The self-existent cannot but be; but that He in whom nothing is lacking should confer existence on us - that is the wonder which may well stagger our minds. (9)

It is obvious, therefore, that we should find Mascall raising the objection to Matthews' view, "that it deprives God of the status of self-sufficiency which alone provides an explanation for the existence of the world and so makes Creation possible." (10) It is quite clear here that Matthews and Berdyaev are arguing along the same lines. Both wish to reject the immobile Deity of a rigid "scholasticism" in favour of a God who reveals Himself in movement towards mankind, the God who is revealed at the centre of the Gospels, not the God of Aristotelian philosophy. Suggesting that God "has been dissolved in Aristotelian intellectualism", Matthews maintains that we are presented with a God whose love is self-love; "God does not make move towards anything, but being in His nature self-sufficient, cannot love any object other than Himself.... God loves me only in so far as He finds me good." (11) Matthews contends that we cannot really believe in such a Deity "because he does not really sustain the Christian virtues." (12)

With this view, we may compare some of the quotations from Berdyaev given above. In direct opposition to Mascall, Berdyaev maintains that the notion of God as 'actus purus' makes the idea of creativity 'unintelligible'.<sup>(13)</sup> Like Matthews, he regards this idea of God as extraneous to the Christian tradition of both the Old and the New Testaments: "The static conception of God as 'actus purus' is a philosophical, Aristotelian, and not a biblical concept."<sup>(14)</sup> We can find support for this idea elsewhere among the British theologians of this period.

F. R. Tennant, in his most influential and conclusive work, Philosophical Theology, surveying the argument as it then stood for belief in the existence of God, comments that "any metaphysical theory or world-view whatsoever, can at best claim to be a reasonable belief ultimately grounded on the alogical possibility which is the guide of life and science, and verifiable only in the sense that it renders the known explicable. No a priori, rational, logically coercive, or deductive proof is possible."<sup>(15)</sup> It seems that here, the whole weight of his argument is thrown against the concept of discovering God through and in terms of a rational argument. On this basis a traditional (e.g. ontological) sort of argument for God's existence is found to be unsatisfactory, as Berdyaev had maintained. The rational argument is rejected in favour of one that takes into account man's experience of the Divine, God's movement towards man. God is known through relationship: "The cosmos is no logico-geometrical scheme, but an adventure of divine love."<sup>(16)</sup>

Concerning the question of God's relationship with something or someone beyond Himself, Tennant had, earlier in his book raised the question of whether God, as personality, could be perfect. His argument is that since personality requires for its development social relations and compeers, some notion of society, as opposed to the Supreme Individual, must attach to the concept of God. Tennant points out that this must lead to a development of the idea of the Trinity. For Berdyaev this also was clearly understood. This concept does, however, represent a move away from the sort of idealism that had, at an earlier period, led theologians to concentrate on the unity of the Godhead, often conceived in absolute terms. Matthews refers to this as a trend towards Absolute Idealism, among other things, in British and American universities at the turn of the century.<sup>(17)</sup> An early example in this trend of its incipient development towards a concept of God which would allow a change from the monistic interpretation may be found in G. H. Howison. He, in America, was developing the idea of man as free being "logically prior to Nature, conditioning Nature in a way God does not since God's conditioning of it can only be indirect and remote."<sup>(18)</sup> Given that man takes God as his "ruling Ideal" in conditioning Nature, he asserts that through this notion of freedom "we come to a pluralistic Idealism, instead of that of idealist monism that has for so long dominated philosophical theism."<sup>(19)</sup> It must be admitted that this view is far removed from the personal trinitarian concept of God envisaged by Berdyaev or hinted at by Tennant. It is, however, an indication of the development of plurality (one might with the concept of sobornost in mind

prefer to say "community") which was being attached to the Godhead in association with the notion of a divine-human relationship.

An important figure who was investigating the same area of thought in England at this time was Hastings Rashdall. In his essay, "Personality: Human and Divine", he writes that "the truth of the world is, then, neither monism, in the pantheising sense of the word, nor pluralism.... We may describe the whole collection of these beings as One Reality ....But after all, the Reality, whether eternally or only at one particular stage of its development, is a community of persons."<sup>(20)</sup> Rashdall guards against any pantheistic or monistic interpretation of this idea by describing how the content of the consciousness may be shared by another consciousness. This content may be common to many minds because "in speaking of it we have made abstraction of the uniqueness which belonged to the experience when it was living, present, conscious experience, not yet reduced to abstract universals by the analytic work of thought."<sup>(21)</sup> Once again we are here reminded of the idea of sobornost which featured in Berdyaev's thought; also the use and interpretation by Berdyaev of the term "objectification" accords with Rashdall's idea of a living reality reduced to "abstract universals". If we associate Rashdall's "monism" with Berdyaev's "objectification" we can see that both wish to reject this concept because it will end "(as historically it always does) either in the denial of all reality, permanence or personality to the individual souls and the reduction of all individuality to mere delusive appearance."<sup>(22)</sup>

It is the understanding of a divine-human relationship which Berdyaev maintains is the basis of God's revelation, which acts to prevent the formation of the conception of an exclusively Absolute God. God is not thought of in terms of a transcendent/immanent antithesis, but as one who enters into a relationship with the finite world. An important influence in the development of this understanding of the finite-infinite relationship was B. Bosenquet. In a way that might remind us of the language used by Berdyaev, he writes of this relationship, or movement in God, that "it is not imperfection in the Supreme Being, but an essential of His completeness, that His nature, summing up that of Reality, should go out into its other to seek the completion which in this case alone is absolutely found... Not, of course, that the Infinite Being can lose and regain its perfection but that the burden of the finite is inherently a part, or rather an instrument of the self-completion of the infinite."<sup>(23)</sup> There is a basic similarity of thought between Bosenquet and Berdyaev which, in conceiving the relationship between God and man, has some notion of movement: they speak of God's "longing for the loved one" (Berdyaev) and the divine need "to go out into its other" (Bosenquet). This idea of movement is expressed by Tennant in a passage quoted earlier about the perfection of the divine personality. He refers to this idea of movement or dynamism in the life of God as the realization of potential, or, rather, the non-realization of it. For it is on this basis that Tennant rejects the idea of God as perfect being, preferring to abstain from "attributing to God perfection in the sense of complete

acualization of all potentiality as inconstent with the idea of a living spirit, if not with the idea of a determinate being."<sup>(24)</sup>

A similar idea again can be found in W. R. Matthews. In 1944 he was writing that the modern thinking about God was moving away from the conceptions of an Absolute which had dominated theology and philosophy from the end of the last century. He attributes this, in part, to the influence of Bergson and his notion of creative evolution, the "life force". Reference is also made to the effect that A. N. Whitehead had on this development.<sup>(25)</sup> We might also mention that A. N. Whitehead's work has elsewhere been compared with that of Berdyaev.<sup>(26)</sup> To return to Matthews: he had made a similar point twenty years earlier. Then he had written, concerning the growth of a dynamic view of God, that "the religious man believes in a God who is alive, creative, doing something now, whereas philosophy and theology have often presented him with a God who can only be said to will or act or create in a highly metaphorical sense."<sup>(27)</sup> We are here back with the distinction that Berdyaev draws between religious experience and doctrine. This is what he refers to as the difference between the human idea of God and God in his essence. It is the latter which we discover in our own depths, which we know in spirit. The human idea of God is simply "objectification" (cf. above p.103) It is worth noting, perhaps, that the writers whom Matthews cites in this second, earlier, work are Bergson (again), William James, and the Italian Idealists, Croce and Gentile. Berdyaev similarly acknowledges some interest in the writing of the last of these.<sup>(28)</sup>

Among other philosophers and theologians who explore this idea of a dynamic or creative movement in the life of the Godhead we find that there is also an acknowledgment of the existence of an irrational element in the movement as it is associated with the life of the world. In commenting on Bergson, Matthews suggests that over against the familiar notion of the cosmic ordering of the universe by an omnipotent Absolute, Bergson "seemed as if he was substituting a blind tendency for a divine mind."<sup>(29)</sup> It is not perhaps an unreasonable step to suggest that the "blind tendency" that Matthews sees in Bergson can be located also in Berdyaev's thought. But we must be careful to distinguish one part of an idea from the intention of the whole. Berdyaev does not seem to suggest that the world is at the mercy of an irrational and erratic cosmic force; his conception is too personal to allow such an idea. However, we may detect in his ungrund theory, in the idea of a dark and irrational uncreated freedom, a view of the cosmos which must allow for something like this "blind tendency" which Matthews considers central to Bergson's theory.

That such an irrational principle exists in the world is not an especially original idea. However, we should note the support that Berdyaev would receive for the view that this irrational principle makes a rational theory above the existence of God untenable (cf. above. p. 121). We have already referred to the example of this that is to be found in the work of F.R. Tennant. He put forward the view that while no argument for the existence of God could be justified that was worked out from above, nevertheless, "certain empirically



reached conclusions admit of being turned to account for the construction of an argument for theism."<sup>(30)</sup> It is important to observe here that Tennant is not putting forward a conclusive and compelling argument for the existence of God: he is merely observing that the experience of the world around him does not rule out the possibility of the existence of God on scientific grounds.<sup>(31)</sup> He argues that both theism and metaphysics "can at best claim to be a reasonable belief ultimately grounded on the alogical probability which is the guide of life and of science."<sup>(32)</sup> If we compare this with the approach to the subject taken by Berdyaev, we can see that there is some similarity in the recognition of an "alogical probability" in the working of the world which rules out rational proofs. We should remember, too, the notion that Berdyaev has of knowledge; the spiritual sphere is, in his opinion, one that is the least susceptible of proof, yet it is also the one that is the "most real". It is the existence within man of the knowledge of God, of his own spiritual faculty, which renders the known explicable, according to Berdyaev.

The question of the "alogical" working of the world in relation to our belief in the existence of God is also raised by William Temple. He sees the idea as raising the question of the infinite love of the Creator, a question of theodicy. Temple asks whether we can say in the face of a world which is "as much selfish as it is loving", that the Cosmic Power is infinite love?<sup>(33)</sup> Temple sees two choices. One is that we accept that the world is run by an irrational and inexplicable element. On the other

hand, is it not better, he asks "to accept that element at its face value, at the risk of scepticism, than to indulge in speculation?" Indeed he hints that rebellion in the face of this element might be preferable to the imposition of a world harmony that over-rides it: "Were not scepticism itself, if that be involved, more rational than a hypothesis which flouts experience in the interest of an 'a priori' rationality?"<sup>(34)</sup> Surely, here we are thinking along the same lines as an Ivan Karamazov. It is, Berdyaev comments, in reaction to the imposition of a false rationality that atheism comes about.<sup>(35)</sup> When the fact of this disharmony, is acknowledged, as by both Temple and Berdyaev, then the consequence is that if we are still to conceive of anything like God at all we must envisage His participation in the irrational and inexplicable element in the world, in the suffering that is involved there. This Berdyaev maintained: so, too, does Temple. He says that we can only uphold the infinite love of the Cosmic Power "if the Supreme Power of the Universe has been plainly co-operant in its redemption work, carrying the Spirit that displayed it through the ultimate self-sacrific that He might see the travail of His soul and be satisfied."<sup>(36)</sup>

Finally, on this point, we might refer to the work of A.S. Pringle-Pattison which also follows the approach that we have been investigating. Reference is also made by him to the view of the world process taken by Bosanquet. Pringle-Pattison suggests that the theme from Bosanquet's Gifford Lectures<sup>(37)</sup> is that life is "a chapter of accidents". Further, though this may come as something of a shock to some people, he continues:

that common phrase correctly enough describes the aspect of contingency in detail which seems to belong to any finite world that is more than an illusion. The contingency is, in the deepest view, contributory to - or rather, an essential condition of - the perfection of the whole, but it wears the appearance of a foreign element in which, and in spite of which, the divine purpose is worked out; and it carries with it dangerous possibilities - extremities of wickedness and of suffering, which it would be hard indeed to justify, if we considered them as specific parts of a deliberate plan. (38)

It is the acknowledgment of the existence of this "foreign element" (which bears some similarity to Berdyaev's notion of the irrational element of uncreated freedom) over against the divine plan for the world, which might enable us to regard the world process as something like a "chapter of accidents", rather than a pre-determined and unalterable course. This element Berdyaev refers to as the freedom which is the source of many errors, blunders and insurmountable contradictions.

In respect of this, how does Pringle-Pattison view God? He comments that it is disheartening that the implications of the Incarnation are evaded, so that Father and Son are conceived as separate "centres of consciousness, the Father perpetuating the old monarchical idea and the

incarnation of the Son being limited to a single historical individual."<sup>(39)</sup> This, Pringle-Pattison continues, is still the "far-off, self-involved, abstractly perfect and eternally blessed God of pure monotheism" which has been inherited from Greek philosophy and which, together with Berdyaev, he rejects. For this conception removes God from man's experience and involvement in the "chapter of accidents" which goes to make up his life. It also abstracts the doctrine of the spirit which then, according to Pringle-Pattison, becomes not the ultimate expression of the unity and communion of God and man but a separate and distinct Being. Thus, the accidents of language have combined with the ingrained materialism of our ordinary thinking to make the doctrine of the Trinity a supra-rational mystery concerning the inner constitution of a transcendent Godhead, instead of the profoundest, and therefore most intelligible, attempt to express the indwelling of God in man."<sup>(40)</sup> The theme of the life of the Trinity, which Pringle-Pattison takes up here, has already been seen in Berdyaev's conception of God as the clearest demonstration of the fact that God is not an "absolute and immobile divinity". Pringle-Pattison's reaction against the rationalization of this idea similarly reflects an awareness that this is not a "far-off mystery but, God be thanked, the very texture of our human experience."<sup>(41)</sup>

So far, we have looked at the trend of theological thinking in Britain up to the end of the Second World War, taking the doctrine of God as the basis of a comparison with some of the ideas of Berdyaev on that subject. We have attempted to show that generally there was a move away from abstract

and rational ideas of God, and that this should be taken in conjunction with the acknowledgment of an alogical or irrational element in the world process which seemed to require that a loving God should be closely involved with the way in which that element worked itself out in the lives of those made in His image. We have suggested that this development finds a similar theme in Berdyaev's thought. In having suggested that Berdyaev's notion of meonic freedom can be identified with certain features of British thought of that time, we should not wish to imply that British theologians were already thinking in terms of something derived from the primordial abyss. It may well be that many would, then, as now, have wished to question very carefully Berdyaev's views on the origin of the 'ungrund' and his cosmogony. An important difference to be born in mind is that almost none of the British theologians and philosophers whose work we have considered writes from within the mystical tradition, as does Berdyaev. To this fact we might, in part, attribute the interest with which his work was received in this country, although at the time Evelyn Underhill and W.R. Inge, both of whom represent the Western mystical tradition, were widely read, as was Baron von Hügel.<sup>(42)</sup>

#### ii. The Relation between Creation and the Creator.

Having established the fact that some British theologians were asking serious questions about the language used in relation to the nature of God, questions arising from their experience of the world around them, we move now to look at how the relationship between God and the world was being considered at this time. We shall undertake this survey

by examining briefly the work of eight theologians and philosophers. For ease of comparison with Berdyaev's work we have divided them into four parts. The first of these are (a) Dr. Eric Mascall and Canon R. Hanson: the second pair are (b) F. R. Tennant and J. Ward: the third pair are from a slightly earlier period (c) Dr. Hastings Rashdall and A. S. Pringle-Pattison: the fourth pair are (d) Dr. W. Temple and Dr. W. C. Matthews.

(a) Mascall and Hanson.

Having given due consideration to the existence and impact of an irrational element in the world and, as a consequence, arguing against a concept of God which sees Him as remote and distant, Berdyaev also deals with the attributes traditionally associated with God. The first of these which we shall consider is that of the self-sufficiency of God. It follows that, if we maintain that God is not an immobile, transcendent Being, but one who identifies Himself and is known within the illogical and undetermined working of the world, then there must be something more that we can say about this relationship between God and the world. We may pose the question why God should wish to be involved in the working of the world. In this form, the question directs us to an answer that God is involved in the workings of the world because He is not a self-sufficient absolute, a perfect being. It is because, as Berdyaev would say, God longs for a response from his other, from the one that he has created. But this is certainly not the only view that is possible.

If we look again at the work by Mascall, quoted above, we can see that his approach, which we take to be that of traditional thomist position, is in some respects quite different. Mascall asserts that "a 'first cause' who is not self-sufficient explains nothing."<sup>(43)</sup> God's creation of the world is a matter solely of His will in an unconditioned act. We are unable to say why God wills the creation of the world because to postulate a motive for God's will is to limit His nature as absolute free will. So, while "it is possible to assign motives to these acts which our human wills perform, precisely because their freedom is limited.....In the case of God, whose will is supremely perfect and whose freedom is absolute, there is no reason whatever that we can assign. We shall indeed maintain, against the late medieval voluntarists, that God's will must act in accordance with His own moral nature."<sup>(44)</sup> Mascall cites as support for this view an essay by Prebendary Richard Hanson, entitled "Dogma in Medieval Scholasticism". Hanson sets out quite clearly the scholastic view, showing why it was believed that the imperfect order of things that we know must depend upon a perfect order which God is without shadow of change and as pure actuality. Acknowledging the dependence of such a view on "pagan sources" (e.g. Plato and Aristotle) Hanson points out that "the natural reason of man and the divine revelation concur in asserting the existence of this perfect being."<sup>(45)</sup>

It is on the relation between the imperfect and the perfect that we may wish to take issue with this view. Hanson explains the scholastic position as seeing that "the Creator possesses within Himself the perfection of all being", that is to say, God possesses in perfection all that exists in imperfection in the created order. Therefore, understandably, "there is no inner compulsion to create...Creation, so far from exhausting the essentially divine activity, makes no demands upon the essential activity at all."<sup>(46)</sup> We could, therefore, say on this basis that what Berdyaev terms "God's yearning" is completely satisfied by the life of the Trinity. Now, while we may agree with Hanson's point that God is not "comparable to some lonely Titan existing in splendid isolation", none the less, we cannot say, if we adopt Hanson's position, that the creation is in any way necessary to God. And this is the point of the scholastics' argument: the creation is simply a free act of God - the ultimate example of His love is that the world exists at all. At this point we might call to mind Berdyaev's comment that "if God is "actus purus", then the creation of the world, that is, creative activity in God, remains unintelligible."

The point of difference between these two positions is their approach to the presence of the irrational, illogical or foreign element in the world in relation to God. It is Berdyaev's assertion that God does not, in fact, leave an imperfect world to follow its own destiny, while remaining himself removed from its process. God Himself is involved



in the eternal creating of "an other", a creation from which He seeks response. This is the movement, the creativity or yearning in God which is eternal, not temporal. Here also the understanding of the role of Christ, the God-man, is important. Christ does not enter time and space as a concession on the part of the Godhead to restore a plan that had gone wrong; at the moment when the world is brought into being, when that irrational element becomes active, the suffering of God which is the mark of His identification with the world, is revealed in the perfect image of humanity, Christ. The perfect God suffers because creation is a part of him. God's relation with the world is one of going-out, of meeting, encountering, evoking a response to His love. In acknowledging the existence of man's freedom which enables him to rebel, to return to non-being, God stretches out beyond the activity of creating, to embrace the whole of the irrationality of freedom without thereby destroying it. We may be able to see here the meaning of O. C. Quick's comment that "as Berdyaev repeatedly insisted, the Biblical doctrine of sin is the most profound affirmation of the dignity of man."<sup>(47)</sup> For sin is that rebellion that God allows to free man and for the sake of which God Himself wills to suffer.

(b) Tennant and Ward.

We may set this in the context of the thinking in Britain at this period by taking up a reference which Mascall makes to the work by Tennant to which we have already given some consideration, Philosophical Theology.<sup>(48)</sup> However, instead of looking directly at Tennant's view, we might go further back to a work of some influence in this country, Professor James Ward's Gifford Lectures. The question as it was

debated at this time was in the form of whether or not God could exist or be conceived of without the world - an idea to be found in Hegel. Ward comments on this idea, comparing it with Hartmann's thinking. He says "whatever the reason or motive for creation may have been.... it seems 'absolutely inconceivable' as Hartmann put it, 'that a conscious God should wait for half an eternity content without a good that ought to be.'"<sup>(49)</sup> But Ward considers that this is a move towards an unacceptable pantheistic position. He considers that the notion that the world depends on God implies that if God ceases to be (should such a thing be conceived of) then the world also ceases to be. "Thus, God and the world are identified together in the manner of Spinoza, 'Deus sive Natura.'" But identify should imply distinction. However, the bare, and therefore meaningless, identity of God and the world simply leaves us with God only, as the acosmism of Spinoza or with the world only, as the 'polite atheism' of Schopenhauer."<sup>(50)</sup> The way out of this difficulty, Ward suggests, was the idea of the Absolute as "coming to self-consciousness in and through consciousness of the world."<sup>(51)</sup> And in a footnote reference he wonders whether Bergson's "élan vital" might not simply be a variant of this idea. We should at this point note that in the critique of German Idealism which Berdyaev offered in The Divine and the Human Berdyaev similarly dismisses the idea of the coming to self-consciousness of God.<sup>(52)</sup> Ward states his position as follows:

A plurality of beings primarily independent as regards their existence and yet always acting and reacting upon each other, an ontological plurality, that is yet somehow a cosmological

unity seems clearly to suggest some ground beyond itself. (53)

A God that was not a creator, a God whose creatures had no independence, would not Himself be really a God. Herein, theism differs from thorough-singularism or absolutism. (54)

If the Creation is to have any meaning it implies internal limitation. It is from the reality of the world that we start... If the reality of the world be admitted, then this reality stands over against the reality of God. God indeed has not been limited from without but He has limited Himself. (55)

At this point, Ward refers us to an appended discussion of the idea of creationism which is found in Dr. Howison's book, The Limits of Evolution, to which we have already referred. Ward's criticism of Howison is that he will not conceive of the Many as Expressions of the One. For Howison it is suggested, without a "pluralistic idealism" the only option is the "Oriental, Augustinian, monarch-theistic idea of Creation at a certain date by sheer 'fiat' and out of fathomless nothing." (56) Ward maintains, as does Tennant, whom we shall consider presently (57), that such a concept of Creation is untenable, if it is to be spoken of as "a change in nothing, whereby nothing becomes something." (58) Thus, Ward, from an emphasis on unity and Howison, from an emphasis on plurality, both agree that the notion of Creation which involves the concept of God as Pure Act ought to be rejected. Ward quotes Howison's comment that "creationism must logically exclude

the possibility of freedom. For the Creator cannot, of course, create except by exactly and precisely conceiving, otherwise His product would not differ from non-entity."<sup>(59)</sup> Now, this brings us very close to some of Berdyaev's ideas, which we shall look at one by one.

First, on the question of the Many and the One. Howison rejects the idea of the Many as expressions of the One, since that would deny any real self-determination to the Many and implies an "idealistic monism". Ward has spoken of a cosmological unity which, over against plurality, suggests itself. Berdyaev quite clearly rejects any idea of an "all inclusive unity, which.... is an abstract idea of God."<sup>(60)</sup> On the other hand, he does envisage a unity; one which pantheism hints at and which we suggested above (p. 52) should be identified with the Russian idea of 'sobornost'. Of this, Berdyaev says that "the final monism will be confirmed in the Kingdom of God: it is only to be revealed eschatologically."<sup>(61)</sup>

Next, that Creation comes as something out of nothing is an idea which it seems that Ward, Tennant and Howison all deny. We might relate this to Boehme's doctrine of the 'ungrund'. Now, while the language of "nothingness" is widely used here, the basic idea of "ex nihilo" is not present. Rather, the concept of "source" or "fount" is used.<sup>(62)</sup> It does not seem that Berdyaev intends that this should be read as implying that God Himself, together with the creation of the world, should be thought of as part of some cosmic evolutionary process. He quite specifically rejects this

idea of evolution, together with what Howison terms the "monarch-theistic" idea of Creation or ideas of God as Cause.<sup>(63)</sup> For Berdyaev God's creativity belongs to the apophatic realm of mystery, though it may be glimpsed in this world in the realm of spirit. This also was Ward's final word on the subject: "How God creates the world and thereby limits Himself we can never understand."<sup>(64)</sup>

The third point which we should wish to relate to Berdyaev's thought is that God's creatures are given some measure of independence from Him. This is, of course, the heart of Berdyaev's idea of freedom. But we can see that, like Ward, he does use this also as a rejection of a pantheistic monism. On this basis he also rejects any form of dualism. Berdyaev states that "God and man are not external to each other; neither are they identified."<sup>(65)</sup> This point can be taken, together with the last of the three quotations from Ward, on God's self-limitation. That self-limitation is what allows the reality of the world, in that it allows the world its freedom. God's self-limitation, we might say, repudiates the notion of pantheism, which is itself "a denial of the reality of the world and of man" according to Berdyaev.<sup>(66)</sup> This point links together the citation by both Berdyaev and Ward of the work of Nicolas von Hartmann. Ward quoted Hartmann as objecting to the idea that God should have existed at any period without creating, to which the reply is given that God is, beyond the temporal process, self-limiting, creative (cf. *above* p. 422).<sup>(67)</sup> Berdyaev cites Hartmann in support of the point made by Ward that, to justify the notion of God, the created order

must be allowed some measure of freedom (cf. above p.20n). In both cases the negative view is used to justify the argument being expounded.

For an assessment of the influence of Ward's views on thinking about God and the world in Britain at this time we might take note of the comment offered in Foundations, in the article entitled "God and the Absolute" by W. H. Moberly.<sup>(68)</sup> It is considered that "this school draws more from Lotze than from Hegel, lays special stress on will in its conception, both of human personality and of the Absolute Being, and defends individuality against the conception of an all-devouring Absolute."<sup>(69)</sup> The distinguished representatives of this school are given as Ward and Pringle-Pattison. Another indication of the influence of this trend on British thinking is given by C.C.J. Webb. He calls his readers attention to Tennant's Philosophical Theology, noting that Tennant is "in many respects a disciple of Ward."<sup>(70)</sup> Webb associates these men with a general "reaction against the immanentist tradition which the present century is witnessing."<sup>(71)</sup>

Having already given some consideration to the work of Tennant, we shall here briefly compare the similarities that we have noted in the work of Ward and Berdyaev with related ideas in Tennant's work. Three areas in particular might be compared: the rejection of monism, the concept of cause and creation; the mystery of creation.

On the first of these ideas, the rejection of monism, Tennant bases his argument on the assertion by theism that God is known by the creatures who are made in His image in a personal way, in a form that can be understood from the analogy of human personal relationships. To this extent, the "predilection for attributes such as infinitude, unconditionedness and metaphysical perfection" which is characteristic of the monist view "disallows the identification of its One with the God of theism, because personality, even as applied to God, must bespeak somewhat of limitation and relationship with what is other than Himself." (72)

Three points of similarity with Berdyaev's view of God can be noted here. One is the concern with the concept of a personal God. Another is the self-determination or freedom of that which is created, which thereby implies a limitation of God. And finally, the relational aspect of God's dealing with man, the longing for a response from "his other". The concept of limitation is one which Tennant has taken from Ward, as his reference to Realm of Ends demonstrates. (73)

Concerning the second of these ideas, the concept of cause and creation, two quotations from Tennant might be given to demonstrate his view. The first; applying the idea of cause to God is not accepted by Tennant since "causation, as commonly understood, relates to change within the already existent; in this sense it is inapplicable to creative activity." (74) Berdyaev also rejects the idea of God as cause and sets over against it the idea of grace. (cf. above pp. 132f). The second: Tennant comments that "God 'qua' God is Creator, and the Creator 'qua' Creator

is God; or 'God without the world is not God'."(75)

This amounts to saying that "when conceived apart from and prior to his world, God becomes a cosmologically useless idea."(76) On the basis that this envisages the creation of the world in eternity and not in time, Tennant's point accords well with the idea of creation which forms part of Berdyaev's 'ungrund' theory and his vision of the theogonic process.(77)

Finally, on the mystery of Creation, Tennant notes that ultimately it is not possible to apply 'deductive systems' to the doctrine of God and still come up with something which will account for the illogical and erratic workings of the world. Tennant comments: "the fact that they have taken mathematics or logic to be the paradigm of knowledge and philosophy precludes all possibility of the Deity or the Absolute which they affirm being a sufficient ground of our 'rough and tumble' world. The alogical essence of the world, on which mechanical description and logical concatenation are contingent, by which value is born and in which meaning is lodged, has been strained out or spurned."(78) We have already considered the presence of an "alogical" element in the world and how that relates to our understanding of God. It is this element which Berdyaev terms 'irrational Freedom'. It naturally follows that along with this element goes a certain degree of mystery; for this is something which we have not the tools of language to explain. Hence, at the very outset of our outline of Berdyaev's doctrine of God we noted that for him "mystery alone brings us to the depths."(79)



(c) Rashdall and Pringle-Pattison.

The subject of creation, of creativity in God, was one widely debated in England and Scotland in the early part of the century. Its relevance to the reception given to the publication of Berdyaev's work lies in the fact that it had already raised the questions which he discusses. In addition to the more particular topic of the self-sufficiency of God there is the whole question of the rejection of the current approach to theology. The immanentist approach which had been adopted and developed by the deists was being challenged by something which took account of the recent developments in philosophy. This sought to discover the working of the transcendent through the world processes. It was a new kind of immanentism. As an idealist mode of thought, its development took it, on one side (under the influence of Rashdall) towards the formation of a personal form of idealism. However, this idealist trend generally, which had sought to divinize the historical process, was dealt a fatal blow by the experience of the First World War. In the field of the philosophy of religion, commenting on the impact of this new approach to this subject, Scott Holland speaks of the innovative T. H. Green, whose "message was tough and tangled; and the Hegelian jargon was teeth-breaking and head-splitting; and his way of speculation was hard and grim to tread."<sup>(80)</sup> On this change in thinking and the development of a different concept of God, Berdyaev's thoughts are particularly relevant, since he himself had passed from a materialist philosophy of Marxism (though Berdyaev himself maintains that he never accepted that aspect of Marxism) against the back-

ground of Kantian Idealism, to a reconsideration of the Russian Orthodox tradition. Having already noted that the mystical tradition played an important part in the development of Orthodoxy, it is perhaps significant that an awareness of the contribution that mysticism could make to the development of our knowledge of God was rekindled in this country by W.R. Inge, through his Bampton Lectures for 1899, entitled Christian Mysticism.<sup>(81)</sup> Having included Boehme among those considered in his lectures, Inge had already acquainted theologians with an approach to the mystery of creation which would have been recognized in Berdyaev's development of it.

In order to demonstrate how widely this subject was discussed, we might take up the reference to T. H. Green and note the comments passed on his view "that the world is as necessary to God as God is to the world" as Rashdall saw it.<sup>(82)</sup> Rashdall focuses on the divine will (as Tennant was to do later).<sup>(83)</sup> He comments that "if a Universal Thinker be conceived of as willing at all, he must be conceived of as willing all the objects of his thought, i.e. the world."<sup>(84)</sup> To this extent he admits that "all genuine idealists" conceived of the world "as perpetually existing in some sense in the mind of God."<sup>(85)</sup> On the basis of this, the theogonic process envisaged by Berdyaev is at least a permissible theory. However, Rashdall is not prepared to accept the expression 'the world is necessary to God'.<sup>(86)</sup> But, as Pringle-Pattison points out in The Idea of God<sup>(87)</sup> Rashdall changes this attitude somewhat when, in the manner of Howison and Ward, he comments that "whatever limitation is implied in the

existence of other spirits is a self-limitation, not an arbitrary self-limitation but one which necessarily springs from the nature and character of God."<sup>(88)</sup> Berdyaev's contribution to this idea lies in his understand of God as freedom, the antithesis and negation of necessity. As such, no notion of external limitation could be imposed on God. Similarly, by sharing in this freedom, creation is not subject to necessity, that is, the necessity which would be implied by an absolute divine omnipotence, omniscience, &c. But by creating a free order God limits Himself by allowing rebellion into non-being and the rejection of His love. In terms of God yearning for a response from His other, as Berdyaev puts it, we might equate the idea of self-limitation with God making Himself vulnerable to rejection.

Two other contributions to this investigation might be taken from Pringle-Pattison. The first is his comment on the Augustinian idea of time created together with the world, "so that there could be no lapse of unoccupied time before the Creation, there being in eternity neither before nor after."<sup>(89)</sup> Now, we have noted Vallon's comment that in Berdyaev's work the idea of creation is equally expressed as a response; being created is responding to God's call of love. Berdyaev clearly envisages this call as a constitutive feature of the divine nature. So, under the influence of Bbehme, he speaks of the nothingness of the ungrund as the cause of an eternal beginning, a craving in the divine life. But the Creation becomes subject to time at the moment when irrational freedom stirs and man moves from unconsciousness to consciousness. But time, in the view taken by Berdyaev,

is identified with one of the effects of the Fall. At the moment when the Creation takes on object form, elements of which are time and space, good and evil, and suffering. On account of this, therefore, Berdyaev would reject Augustine's scheme of Creation, as does Pringle-Pattison. And the basis of the rejection is that "even if it (the world) had never existed at all, the self-existent being of God would have been in no way affected." (90) In the words of Pringle-Pattison, who in support of this offers a quotation from Ulrici, with which Berdyaev might well agree:

The creation of the world is certainly to be understood as the free act of God. But His freedom is nowise an arbitrary <sup>freedom</sup> ('Willkuhr')

which at its mere good pleasure might act so or otherwise, might act or refrain from acting .... In truth God is not first God and then Creator of the world . . . Hence, just as God does not become Creator of the world but is from eternity Creator of the world, so the world too, though not eternal of itself, exists from eternity as the creation (or act) of God. (91)

The second contribution from Pringle-Pattison is a reference to Coleridge and his view on the subject. Coleridge presents this as an illustration of the difference between the Christian view and that of Spinoza. The explanation of this difference is expressed by Pringle-Pattison in the form of an equation. Spinoza's position is represented as "(W - G = 0 and G-W = 0)" which amounts to saying that neither God nor the world can exist without the other. But according to Coleridge the

Christian position is "(W-G = 0 but G-W = G)"(92)

It is with the last of these that we should wish to take issue, as does Pringle-Pattison. He comments that "'spirits' cannot be regarded as things made, detached like products from their maker; they are more aptly described in the biblical phrase, as 'partakers of the divine nature' and admitted to the fellowship of a common life. But if so, there can be no ground for the supposition of a pre-existent Deity not yet crowned with the highest attribute of Goodness or self-revealing love."(93)

This brings us yet again back to Berdyaev's vision of the ungrund and the pre-existence of God's "other" which reveals the yearning of self-revealing love. But this should remind us, too, of Berdyaev's insistence that revelation is a divine-human activity (cf. above p. 100).

(d) Temple and Matthews.

From here we may go on to the discussion of this topic in William Temple's book Christus Veritas. Mascall enlists Temple as support for the traditional scholastic position which he was expounding at this time, and directs us to a passage from Nature, Man and God as evidence of this support.(94)

However, it might be maintained that Temple's discussion of the relation of God to the world in "Divine Love: The Blessed Trinity", the final chapter of Christus Veritas presents a slightly different view. The important feature of this discussion is the way that it presents the discussion of the relation between the divine nature and the divine will.(95)

It is to express the totality of intention in the latter that

classical theology maintains that the universe proceeds from the divine will and therefore, should it cease to exist, God would still be God. But there is a tension here. Surely, it would not be crude anthropomorphism to suggest that since God wills that the creation should exist, for the creation not to exist is a frustration of the divine will. And, therefore, whilst God might still be conceived as existing without the Creation, could we say then that this was the sort of God who had been revealed to us in the course of the history of the world? It seems that we speak of God as being absolute, in order to express our awe and wonder at our partial apprehension of what Otto calls the "Mysterium Tremendum." And yet, if we take seriously the idea that the Creation could cease to exist and thereby leave the Creator whose will had been spent in bringing it into existence unaffected, it would seem that, with something like false modesty, we are denying in ourselves and the world around us the significance and dignity bestowed by the very act of creation. It is to express something of this tension found in the classical understanding of the divine will and the divine nature that Temple goes on to say that we could not maintain, on this basis, that "creation is capricious".<sup>(96)</sup> Rather, because the nature of God is love "He is and must be self-communicating.... In this sense the universe is necessary to God."<sup>(97)</sup> Thus, we cannot conceive of a distinction between the divine will and the divine nature. We cannot imagine that the creation is brought about by the single "fiat" of the divine will without involving the whole nature of God in the act of loving and sustaining, of going out to seek the response of His creation. Temple would maintain that "God is active in the process Himself." <sup>(98)</sup>

In support of this argument, Temple points to human religious experience, as does Berdyaev. Both, in fact, acknowledge that such support clearly cannot be verifiable since, Temple says, "it is no more explicable to the irreligious man than colour is to the blind man... Consequently, in this department as in no other the validity of experience is challenged."<sup>(99)</sup> (cf. above p.107) One of the things emphasized by religious experience is, according to Temple, that "God genuinely cares what men do."<sup>(100)</sup>

From the human experience of encounter with God we can say that He is not known as a self-sufficient absolute; a notion of "divine apathy.... makes the act of creation irrational."<sup>(101)</sup>

This is almost exactly echoed by Berdyaev's comment, already quoted: "if God is 'actus purus', then the creation of the world, that is, creative activity in God, remains unintelligible."<sup>(102)</sup> Temple goes on to point out, as we have suggested above, that the reason why some people shrink from the idea of God's involvement in the world is probably "due to a radically false estimate of greatness and of the relative importance of things; if man is spiritual and the stars are not, then God is vastly more concerned about the selfishness of a child than the wreck of a solar system."<sup>(103)</sup>

Temple, in concluding the discussion of this idea, makes reference to the work of Traherne and his understanding of the Cross as the centre of eternity, representing God's eternal love which seeks for the free response of love to its own act of self-giving. This is the act in which "God put forth His power; but also God therein fulfilled Himself."<sup>(104)</sup>

The idea of the eternal significance of the Cross as revealing the suffering Christ in time is an important theme

in Berdyaev's work.(cf.above pp..112f)<sup>(105)</sup> Temple offers the following quotation from Traherne, with which we might suitably conclude our consideration of his thinking on this subject:

The living and Triune God was from all Eternity, and from all Eternity wanted like a God. He wanted the communication of His divine essence, and persons to enjoy it. He wanted Worlds, He wanted Spectators, He wanted Joys, He wanted Treasures. He wanted, yet He wanted not, for He had them.<sup>(106)</sup>

Finally, we should mention the consideration given to this subject by W. R. Matthews. His understanding of the relation between God and the universe has rather more emphasis on the personal nature of God than do some of the others which we have already considered. To begin with, however, Matthews comments on the question of the createdness of the universe. It is through this notion of a certain sort of dependence on God that the idea of pantheism is avoided. This relation of createdness is known to the human soul through the faculty which exists within for fellowship with God. It is through this fellowship that we discover that we are not "phases or aspects of the Absolute, but spirits with some limited but genuine freedom to seek God or to turn away from Him."<sup>(107)</sup> We can see that here again it is emphasized that some element of autonomy must attach to the created order to endow its relationship with God with any significance. This was the central theme of Berdyaev's understanding of the relationship between God and the world (cf.above p.121) and we have seen that it also featured in the thinking of



other writers (e.g. Howison) in the form of a self-limitation<sup>t</sup><sub>c</sub> by God.

Concerning the nature of God, Matthews asserts that God is creative and "every moment must thus be filled with the exercise of His creative power."<sup>(108)</sup> This raises the question, as we have already seen, of the necessity of the Creation for God. Two points give an indication of Matthews' approach to this. The first is that the Creation depends on God in an absolute sense. The second is that God depends on the Creation only to the extent that "it is a necessity of His nature to create."<sup>(109)</sup> Bearing in mind the comment by Vallon that "creation is about man's response to God's call" (cf. above p. 126) in Berdyaev's thinking, we can see that here Matthews is arguing along very similar lines. For we can equate the necessity to create with the necessity to love, i.e., to have a relationship with another. The latter is a mark of thinking about God in personal terms. Certainly, Berdyaev conceived of God in that way (cf. above pp. 108f); so also does Matthews: "it is certainly implied in our arguments that the being of God as personal is dependent upon the existence of the created order, and that we see no way of holding the personality of a Deity 'prior to Creation'."<sup>(110)</sup> In one of the chapters of his book, Signposts to God (the chapter entitled "God as Person") Matthews develops this personal understanding, drawing on his experience of broadcasting on the wireless and the response he had received on a popular level. He comments that a concept of God which went beyond the "universal mind" (i.e. which involved personal attributes) seemed childish to most people.<sup>(112)</sup> And yet the difficulty in

believing in God for most people was that it involved believing in a supernatural person. It seemed, from the letters which Matthews had received, that the difficulty in conceiving of a personal God originated in a fundamentalist approach to the bible which he terms "the terrible heritage of belief in a verbally infallible Book."<sup>(112)</sup> Matthews' reply is that "God is not so different from us that He is wholly beyond our apprehension, and not so remote that He cannot reveal Himself to our minds."<sup>(113)</sup> He is thus describing what Berdyaev would call the divine image in man, the revelation which is divine-human.<sup>(114)</sup>

Matthews pursues the topic of the human apprehension of God by use of the analogy of imagination. He notes to begin with that imagination ought not to be set in opposition to reason. In dealing with human imagination we must say that more than remembered experience is involved: "though they are rooted in previous experience, they are not mere re-arrangements of it: they are genuinely new."<sup>(115)</sup> In speaking by analogy, therefore, of the world as "the product of the imagination of God,"<sup>(116)</sup> Matthews is considering not only its dependence on God, as a creative idea is dependent upon the mind of the artist before it is executed, but also the extent of the autonomy of the work of art in its own development. We should say that "it has a character of its own."<sup>(117)</sup> To illustrate this point he asks whether Shakespeare could have "turned 'Macbeth' after the second act into a farce or transformed it into a harlequinade. Only by destroying the play and creating an entirely different one."<sup>(118)</sup> However, it will not do to pursue this analogy too far. For it suggests that the Creation

becomes subject to the necessity of following through a wholly impersonal idea; it is not permitted autonomy as such, for its character is determined by the idea. But we should agree that to use the "conception of Creation as a work of imagination.... may take us further into the mystery than any other guide."<sup>(119)</sup> Berdyaev also employs the idea of imagination in a similar way.

In his discussion of the idea of creativeness in its relation to ethics, Berdyaev clearly suggests that the likeness between God and man is to be seen in man's creative faculty; in this creativity he sees the introduction of something essentially new, as does Matthews when he insists that imagination is not simply the re-arrangement of previous experience.<sup>(120)</sup> Berdyaev maintains that Creation is not "a redistribution of force and energy, as evolution is"<sup>(121)</sup> Also, he recognises that imagination is of tremendous importance to the mystical<sup>o</sup> vision of Boehme,<sup>v</sup> as anyone who has read Boehme's work will agree.<sup>(122)</sup> It is over against this background that Berdyaev observes that "the world is created by God through imagination, through real images which arise in God in eternity and are both idea and real."<sup>(123)</sup> For his own part, Berdyaev's understanding of creative imagination is more than as simply analogous to God's relation to the world. To him it suggests the very image of God in man responding to its Creator. As such, it has a religious significance, for "creation may acquire a religious meaning and justification if, in the phenomenon of inspiration, man is responding to the divine call to co-operative with divine creation."<sup>(124)</sup> Through inspiration man may become aware of something within

him which is more than simply like the divine creativity; it is a participation in that very activity:

The very possibility of Creation presupposes the infusion of the spirit into man, and that we call inspiration. And this raises the action of creative forces above the world.<sup>(125)</sup>

We do, perhaps, approach something like an analogy to the divine necessity to create when this human creativity is understood as something which demands expression. Berdyaev maintains that "the creative act cannot be stifled within the Creator and find no outlet for itself."<sup>(126)</sup> We might read this in relation to either divine or human creativity.

The important difference, however, between Berdyaev's and Matthews' use of the idea of imagination is in the understanding of the end product. Matthews suggests that the imagination produces something which is almost autonomous. Berdyaev's view would permit this to be said of the divine creative imagination in respect of the world. He is less optimistic of human creativity. He regards the spiritual value as attaching simply to the inspiration, not to its form as product. He speaks of this as a conflict between the objective and subjective; it "consists in the maximum break through of the creative act, out of the closed circle of objectivisation.... in the irruption of the maximum of subjectivity into the objectified world."<sup>(127)</sup> He speaks of this as the tragedy of Creation and, here again, we can apply this notion of tragedy to both the divine and the human creativity:

There is the inner creative conception, the creative image arising out of darkness, the

primary creative intuition, springing from the depths of the unconscious. And then there is the realization of the creative conception.... In the inner creative act the spirit is aflame; the outer creative act, subject to norms and laws implies a certain cooling down... that is the tragedy of creativeness. (128)

Here, Berdyaev emphasizes the human aspect of creativity which is inevitably objectified, since man, though a free spirit, lives in an objectified world. It is, however, the response of free spirit from within the objectified world which constitutes man's response to the Creator and thereby infuses subjectivity into the objective, allowing the irruption of spirit into the material. The application of this to God is that He, as pure spirit, is capable of pure creation. However, in calling for a free response from man, God requires that man should transcend the objectivity of that world, which is the outcome of his own very freedom. Thus, by relieving the world of its objectified form, man is co-operating with God in creating the perfect, free world which is subject, not object. So he speaks of man who should be God in miniature ("microtheos") as the "dethroned king of nature" (129), since he has chosen instead to become subject to "the petrified parts of nature". (130) But if man is to make the true response his creative calling demands he "must give back spirit to the stones, reveal the living nature of stones, in order to free himself from their stony, oppressing power." (131)

iii. The Passible Trinity.

Finally, we come to consider the implications of the relationship between God and the world. We have seen throughout most of this chapter a tendency to reject static concepts of God among both theologians and philosophers. We have noted an attempt to locate the sources of our knowledge of God within the realm of normal living. Here we consider how Berdyaev's Russian background compares very closely with the concepts of the passible Trinity which some British theologians had put forward. We begin by turning again to the personal aspect of our knowledge of and relation with God. This is central to Berdyaev's thought.

A God who is not personal has no "existential centre"; as such He is unable to experience sorrow or joy. This idea Berdyaev referred to as a degradation of the majesty of God. This leads us on to consider an aspect of the doctrine of God which is common to both Berdyaev and many of the British theologians of the period on which we have concentrated. That aspect is the idea of the suffering of God. For Berdyaev the reasoning behind this idea flows from the central position of the doctrine of the Trinity in the understanding of God as a personal being. He speaks of God as a trinity of persons "just because they presuppose one another and imply mutual love and intercommunion."<sup>(137)</sup> It is from within this relation which is one of love and sacrifice that the tragic destiny of Christ is revealed on the Cross; for "the suffering of the Son is a measure of the suffering in the inner life of the Trinity."<sup>(138)</sup> This mystery is revealed as an element of the creation which, together with

redemption, has its source in the single fact of the dynamic, yearning love of God. However, to the figure of the suffering Christ we should pay special attention.

The idea of suffering is a constant theme of Berdyaev's work, as it is of the work of many Russian authors. O. F. Clarke, commenting on this as a national characteristic says that "Berdyaev, like so many Russians, forced to think of the meaning of suffering more poignantly than thinkers of nations whose history has been happier, saw that the link between suffering and freedom must be there in the very heart of the Godhead, in ~~the~~ interior life."<sup>d</sup>(139) Nadejda Gorodetzky confirms this observation in her book, The Humiliated Christ in Modern Russian Thought. Noting the difficulty of giving a general characterization of the religious nature of so complex and diverse a body as the Russian nation, Gorodetzky comments that "the figure of the humiliation of Christ, unconsciously felt and expressed in the accounts of some historical lives, in folk-lore and in secular literature, and finding its final expression in theology, is among the most constant features."<sup>d</sup>(140)

As an example of one who offers some expression of this theme, the work of Fr. Serge Bulgakov is suggested by Gorodetzky. He "represents a bridge between the literary-secular world and the theological world."<sup>d</sup>(141) Bulgakov presents a more systematic Christology than Berdyaev does and, in spite of the important differences between them, their thinking reflects the same tradition. Two quotations from Gorodetzky's account of Bulgakov's kenotic Christology will illustrate the similarity by pointing to an idea

which we have already seen in Berdyaev's thought, namely, the Creation and redemption envisaged as a single instance of the Father's revelation of His love, which achieves its final aim in eschatological fulfilment.<sup>(142)</sup> Gorodetzky notes that man's freedom allows what Bulgakov terms "a certain risk of unsuccess."<sup>(143)</sup> But the Father will wait for the creation to respond in love. Thus, the divine love has its kenosis in the act of creation, Gorodetzky continues:

This creative kenosis is shared by the Son also. As the 'word about the world' (Lamb.p.169), He is already sent into this world. Not only is he already perfectly obedient to the Father, but he comes down serving the self-revealing God and he becomes the content of this revelation. He gives himself to the Father and, emptying Himself, He gives what is His own to the world. The Son is, for S. N. Bulgakov, the Lamb offered already and offering himself in the act of creation; the other aspect emphasized is the beginning of divine sacrifice in that the Father not only condescends towards the creation but also sends His Son.

The necessity of this kenosis in the act of creation flows from what Gorodetzky calls "the impossibility that God should not love".<sup>(145)</sup> The Incarnation is thus an extension of His kenotic activity. The account of Bulgakov's theme is continued thus:

Now we face the Incarnation as a fact eternally foreseen by God (1 Pet.i.20). The Incarnation, says our author, cannot be a mere outcome of sin.



It actually did happen as the act of redemption; but before Adam existed; He is the first (Lamb.p.192). The coming of the Son is not only a providential act resulting from the fall of man, but an original good will of God which existed 'before the creation of the world as its basis and aim'. The Incarnation of the Son is not merely a means of redemption but its highest achievement; the last goal is 'to unite all the heavenly and the earthly world under one head, Christ.' Hence 'the soteriological task is included in the eschatological as a means into the aim; the redemption is the way to our glorification.' (Lamb p.193)<sup>(146)</sup>

In a footnote reference, Gorodetzky refers to the work by R. M. Relton<sup>(147)</sup> which expresses a similar view. In discussing the patristic debate on patripassianism, Relton comments that "once full weight is given to the revelation in Christ of God not only as possessing the ethical attribute of love, but as being in His very essence Love Himself, the 'a priori' theory of His impassibility fades into insignificance before the tremendous historical fact of Love Himself crucified, a revelation in time and space of an eternal truth."<sup>(148)</sup> Here we come back to the idea which we have identified as a feature of Russian thought, and have located in the thinking of Berdyaev and Bulgakov, namely, that the suffering Christ reveals from eternity the nature of God. Relton locates this idea also in the patristic debate. He points out that tertullian, in his debate with Praxeas, maintains that a God who is able to sympathise with us must be able to suffer with us; as Relton puts it, "if He is Love, He can suffer; this is

the very heart of the mystery of Calvary."<sup>(149)</sup> Relton further points out that the Cyrilline Christology of an impassible and immutable Logos arises from an unethical conception of God. This, he comments, is based too exclusively on a "Platonic rather than a Christian philosophy."<sup>(150)</sup> We have heard such a comment repeatedly from Berdyaev throughout the course of this investigation. We may, then point to the following conclusion of Dr. Relton on the place of this idea in modern theology. In the late symposium of his contributions to the study of Christian Doctrine in Britain, Dr. Relton comments that "fortunately the doctrine of the impassibility is not one by which we are bound today... .. On the contrary, modern theology can find a large place for the teaching of its exact opposite, in the exposition of the great central facts of the Incarnation and Atonement viewed 'sub specie aeternitatis.'" <sup>(151)</sup>

Two books which give a review of the debate about the passibility of God were published in Britain in the 1920's; the first in 1926, by J. K. Mozley,<sup>(152)</sup> the second in 1928, by B. R. Brasnett.<sup>(153)</sup> Brasnett offers a discussion of Relton's article on Patripassianism from which we have just quoted. He suggests two criticisms of the article, both of which we shall consider since they relate to similar ideas in Berdyaev's thought. The first criticism is concerned with Relton's view of time and eternity. Brasnett comments that:

we cannot follow him in his hasty flights from time to eternity and from eternity to time. He does not seem to have sufficiently considered the nature of eternity, nor decided whether he will regard it

simply as endless time or as something qualitatively distinct from time.... he seems to suggest that God's suffering for man's sin is as great a reality outside of time or space, and he speaks of the inward significance of the Calvary sacrifice as a spiritual, timeless truth, though apparently he regards it as possible for that sacrifice to be brought into relationship with us today as an eternal reality.

But how we who are in time are to have relations with a reality which is eternal, which in the context presumably means timeless, Dr. Relton does not explain. (154)

It may be instructive to apply this criticism to the way in which Berdyaev speaks of the Cross in relation to time and to eternity which, we have suggested, is similar to the approach adopted by Relton. Berdyaev's understanding follows from his vision of a cosmogony, derived from the mystical writing of Boehme. Although this vision is expressed in terms of myth and symbol and thus quite different in form from the exposition given by Relton, the central features are very similar. The boundary between time and eternity Berdyaev speaks of as a "frontier line idea". (155) It is here that the creation, envisaged as God's other, from which He looks for a response, is seen to emerge from a sub-conscious state, thereby asserting its freedom in its relation to God. So, it enters into time and space, the realm of good and evil, becoming the objectified world as we know it with all its pain and suffering. Now at this "frontier line" the life of the Godhead is revealed, becomes knowable as the personal life of the Trinity. But we must at this point

introduce the distinction between the economic Trinity and the immanent life of the Godhead.

Berdyayev points out that, although the Word was present in pre-temporal, pre-existent eternity, he was "not yet incarnate as man and had not made the sacrifice of love."<sup>(156)</sup> This "incarnation" is not the incarnation of Jesus Christ in the form of the child at Bethlehem; that is rather the revelation of the God-man in time and space who exists in eternity as the second person of the Trinity. This "incarnation" would seem to be the revealing of the humanity of the God-man in eternity in the life of the Trinity. It is thus that the crucifixion is spoken of as "the primal drama and mystery of the world and... of the relations between God and His other self," that "other self" being perfect humanity, the true image of God, the full and freely-given response from God's other.<sup>(157)</sup> It is because of the freedom which, in the created order is irrational, that God shares in its suffering. That is the mystery and the tragedy of the love of God in the act of Creation. Berdyayev makes it quite clear that this is a symbolic way of thinking, a myth about primordial history.

It might, therefore, be of some help to bear this in mind when considering the view put forward by Relton and Brasnett's criticism of it. There is a fine tension in our knowledge of God which is divine-human, which may speak of God in His essence, and yet in so doing must distort the intuitive, spiritual knowledge of that essence. Thus, we may employ symbolic language to express our knowledge of God as He reveals Himself to us. But we cannot take these symbols for the realities themselves. So, to say that God

suffers is a symbol of our knowledge of His love for us. It is a symbol which, in the drama of the relation played out between God and man, most appropriately expresses our experience of the totally self-giving, vulnerable and intense yearning that God has for the response of love from His creation. It is precisely through the understanding that this language is symbolic that we, in time, are able to know and speak of a reality that is eternal. It should perhaps be said in conclusion to every work of theology that "mystery, 'docta ignorantia' have a profound significance.... mystical negative theology alone brings us closer to the depths."(158)

On the second of Brasnett's criticisms we may comment briefly. He suggests that Kelton "makes no real effort to find any abiding truth in the dogma of the divine impassibility, that for so long held the field."(159) On the one hand it should be noted that we have seen, in the writing of Berdyaev and a number of other theologians, that there is a strong rejection of the concepts of God as Pure Act, self-sufficient etc. as the legacy of Greek philosophy, rather than the testimony of biblical revelation. Among these concepts we should number the idea of impassibility. If, then, we are to reject these concepts as the basis for our doctrine of God the fact that "for so long they held the field" is of no direct relevance to their usefulness. On the other hand, while rejecting the doctrine of the impassibility of God in its traditional form, one might well find that it attests to an aspect of the Christian revelation which we should wish to preserve. Now it is obvious that in speaking of the suffering of God we are speaking about the inner life of

the Trinity, a mystery known to us only through the economy of revelation. Berdyaev is very careful to point out that here we reach a boundary which is at the very brink of mystery; a "razor edge". Perhaps, then, we should find some significance in applying to our idea of the suffering of God the concept of the "coincidentia oppositorum" which Berdyaev seems to locate, as a feature of the experience of the mystics, at this point of the boundary between mystery and revelation. We should emphasize that Berdyaev insists that the coincidence of opposites is a mystical concept, not a rational or philosophical one. The example Berdyaev gives is that of the concept of God as immobile - an idea quite clearly rejected by him as a rational concept. However, when this is seen as one aspect of the two-fold "coincidentia oppositorum", we can then see how it fits into the vision of the mystic as the meeting of rest and motioning God. So Berdyaev quotes from St. Simon<sup>e</sup> the New Theologian: "Come, Thou, who remainest unmoved yet who ever dost direct Thyself towards us". This also would be the way in which we could speak of the impassibility of God. It is the meeting of the mystery of the Godhead which goes beyond our experience, with the revelation of the movement of God's self-sacrificing love towards us. We have already noted that Berdyaev speaks of a "frontier line idea" at which, once again, the meeting of the unknown, unfathomable mystery of the Godhead, and the revelation of the Trinity takes place.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION.

Considering the complexity and range of Berdyaev's thought, it is by no means easy to offer an assessment of his influence. Reference is still made to his work by present-day theologians<sup>(1)</sup> although the enthusiasm and possibly extravagant claims made for his work when it first appeared here have diminished.<sup>(2)</sup> Thus it seems that Berdyaev is acknowledged as having made some contribution to the development of theological thinking this century, even though that contribution cannot be directly identified in any particular area. A term often used to describe Berdyaev's work is "prophetic". So Eugene Porret comments in La Philosophie Chrétienne en Russie that Berdyaev had communicated the prophetic character of Russia's religious thought.<sup>(3)</sup> The reason for Berdyaev's success in England must have been that against the background of social unease (e.g. the economic difficulties of the Depression, the National Government, the rise of totalitarian governments on the Continent - in Germany, Italy, Spain, Russia) Berdyaev had a message which seemed to read the signs of the times. Europe was indeed passing through a period of social and economic upheaval. And although Berdyaev's prediction of what would emerge from this might now seem over-optimistic and unrealistic, he was essentially correct in his assessment of the areas to which modern European man must turn his attention. Berdyaev directs us to man considered in two ways; as an individual person, and as a social being. He pointed to the crisis in Western society as a crisis in the life of the individual. Man exploiting and exploited cannot be the basis of a stable community. But more

importantly, man who knows himself only in terms of material existence and relationships has lost sight of the destiny of his life and the source of his being human: God.

In an introduction to Mysterium Magnum Berdyaev wrote that "with Boehme there begins a new era in the history of Christian thought. His influence is considerable; it is not immediately apparent to you, but works like a serum."<sup>(4)</sup> We would suggest that precisely this assessment could be made of Berdyaev's own work. One cannot point to one particular theologian or trend of thought and say that it has been directly influenced by Berdyaev. However, he opened up areas for discussion which are still of interest to theologians today. We could suggest two such areas in particular. One is the way in which we speak about God, or, to borrow a phrase from a modern theologian, "metaphorical theology". The other is man considered both individually and in relation to society. We shall look briefly at the latter of these first.

The elaboration of a theology of man has been one of the most important developments of this century, and in the life of the Church has been given its most systematic expression in the Second Vatican Council. Berdyaev's work is too idiosyncratic for wholesale assimilation as catholic doctrine. J. L. Segundo, best known from his development of liberation theology, offers an interesting comment. He observes that a philosophy which in its entirety can be adapted by Christianity is rare or unique. (He is



thinking of Aquinas's use of Aristotle.) Thus, no rule of 'all or nothing' can be applied: "This is a condition of the progress of dogma."<sup>(5)</sup> This applies, in Segundo's opinion, to the work of Berdyaev: "Catholic theology in particular is able to profit from Berdyaev's thought on the condition, however, that she undertakes to rectify her own thought. We hope to have shown that it cannot be incorporated without more of a coherent Christian dogmatic and leaving aside the formulas used."<sup>(6)</sup>

The context in which it is most likely that Berdyaev made some contribution to the development of modern Catholic theology is his association with the Personalists in France. It should also be noted that personalism did not remain within the confines of Ésprit and its readers. In Catholicism and Crisis in Modern France William Bosworth notes that "the term has been taken from its original context and used to describe a much more general concept, accepted by virtually all Catholics. In this wide sense, personalism is the philosophy of individual self-development which prevents organizations, including those set up along corporatist lines, from impairing individual initiative."<sup>(7)</sup> It should also be remembered that not only was Mgr. Roncalli the Apostolic Nuncio in Paris from December 1944 to 1953, but also that such influential French theologians as Yves Congar and Jean Daniélou were members of Berdyaev's circle of friends.<sup>(8)</sup> The situation which faced the Council was the de-christianization of whole classes, powerful rival ideologies, the erosion of the Church's influence in society, and the passing away of

traditional social and moral structures. Michael Kelly suggests that the personalists prepared the ground for the Council by defining the terms which it used as a basis for its discussions, and leading to changes in the Church's outlook: "the efforts of Mounier and his associates can be clearly seen, in retrospect, to have been an important contribution towards making such a change possible on an ideological level."<sup>(9)</sup>

The development of the social teaching of the Roman Catholic Church reflects the interests of Mounier and the personalists. Pius XII gave what R. L. Cramp calls a unique emphasis to a concern shared by his predecessors: "His conviction that one of the greatest problems of the social order in modern times was the threat to the dignity of the individual within his social community."<sup>(10)</sup> Thus, in his Christmas Message of 1941, he proclaimed that the contact and relationship between men in their social life was "taking on a purely physical and mechanical character; "the rule of external compulsion, mere possession of power, over-ruled the norms of right and order, human associations and community life, which emanating from God, determine the natural and supernatural relationship that should prevail in the co-existence of law and love as applied to the individual and to society."<sup>(11)</sup>

It was during this period surrounding the Second World War that much of the groundwork on which the Second Vatican Council was founded was done. Parallel to Maritain's revision of Thomism, von Aretin comments that Guardini

was preparing "a complete new Catholic intellectual approach to the problem of man in the technological world of the twentieth century."<sup>(12)</sup> The French contribution is described as that not of a school but "the loosely connected efforts of like-minded friends." An example of this is the Unam Sanctam series of books produced by Congar, Daniélou, and de Lubac.<sup>(13)</sup> The implications of the new emphasis in the theology of these people pointed to various areas of the Church's life which would require greater consideration. Congar pointed to the ecumenical implications which were quite clearly taken up by the Council. The Dogmatic Constitution on The Church emphasizes the unity of all mankind as the context within which the Church operates: "Christ is the light of humanity" and it is from Him that unity flows. Each individual human being achieves that unity, therefore, within the Church, and so "all men are called to belong to the new People of God."<sup>(14)</sup> The question of ecumenism could not be ignored in the context of this emphasis on unity. Rauch maintains that Congar develops his ecumenical views as a result of his encounter with personalist circles of friends such as Mounier, Berdyaev, Maritain, &c. Mounier's

was a philosophy of openness and dialogue which was at once the consequence and the means of a profound ecumenism, an ecumenism witnessed in Mounier's association with the Davidées, Nicolas Berdyaev's meetings of Orthodox and Roman Catholics and Protestants at Clamart, Maritain's gatherings at Meudon, and within <sup>the</sup> Esprit movement itself. At the Rencontres Internationales de Genève in 1963, Mounier's friend Père Yves

Congar discussed the aim of that dialogue which is the underlying principle of ecumenism in essentially personalist terms. Men are so prone to possessiveness, Congar declared, that they tend to regard themselves as subjects and to treat others as objects. But other people are also subjects and 'they do not wish to be mere objects, not even objects of solicitude.' (15)

The clearest definition of personalist thinking in the documents of the Second Vatican Council is probably to be found in Gaudium et Spes, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. (16) Part 1 Chapter 1 is entitled "The Dignity of the Human Person" and on many points is similar to the thinking of the Personalists. In article 12 the tension between the greatness and baseness of the human being is noted, in answer to the fundamental question, "What is man?" This section is entitled "Man as the Image of God". In the Commentary on this document, Fr. Joseph Ratzinger notes that this theme "only receives the full meaning from the fact that in the New Testament the Adam-figure and the doctrine of man as the image of God are transferred to Christ as the definitive Adam. Consequently, this idea not only has its origin in the theology of creation, it becomes an eschatological theme, connected less with the origin than with the future of man." (17) This statement very clearly reflects the way in which Berdyaev had interpreted Solovyev's Lectures on Godmanhood. Solovyev had also seen the Incarnation of the divine Logos as the revelation through the second Adam of a new spiritual

humanity. Ratzinger also points out that the development of the theme of man as God's image selects from the patristic writing Augustine's view of the image of God as a "capacity for God, qualification to know and love God."<sup>(18)</sup> We have already noted that Marcel deals with this aspect of Augustine's thought, showing its close relation to personalist thinking. Marcel is in fact mentioned by Ratzinger in connection with Augustine's reflections on man's spiritual depths.

In this general area the Pensées of Pascal are also mentioned. They were a considerable influence on Mounier, as Kelly has pointed out.<sup>(19)</sup> Here, Berdyaev's insistence on man as a spiritual being and not just a bodily one should be borne in mind. The concept of man as microcosm, a concept which Berdyaev developed from Dostoevsky, underlies the thinking of this document. Ratzinger makes an interesting observation on the Council's consideration of Teilhard's interiorité; he writes that "when it is said that by his interiority man transcends the whole universe of things, it is impossible not to notice the close resemblance to Pascal's words: All bodies, the firmament, the stars, the earth and its kingdoms do not equal the least of the spirits; for the latter know all those things, whereas bodies know nothing."<sup>(20)</sup> This echoes, too, Dostoevsky's mystical vision of man's relation to the cosmos.<sup>(21)</sup>

Although it is not possible to develop here the point fully, it should be noted that Fr. Karl Rahner deals with the idea of man as spirit in the world in several of his essays. He deals with it under the heading of "Nature and Grace" and in some aspects his conclusions are not dissimilar to Berdyaev's. We noted that Berdayev envisaged grace as something which was not external to man but which had been revealed through Christ as the divine in man, although Berdyaev also speaks of it as proceeding from the human and from man's heavenly humanity.<sup>(22)</sup> Rahner similarly is critical of the average textbook concept of the relationship between nature and grace; "Ultimately," he writes, "This amounts to the reproach of 'extrinsecism': grace appears there as a mere superstructure, very fine in itself certainly, which is imposed upon nature by God's free decree."<sup>(23)</sup> Rahner speaks of this grace as a 'potency or congeniality for the eternal miracle of infinite Love which is freely given and received as an unexpected, unexacted gift; "For, as he now in fact is, he (man) is created for it; he is thought and called into being so that Love might bestow itself. To this extent this 'potency' is what is inmost and most authentic in him, the centre and root of what he is absolutely."<sup>(24)</sup>

Gaudium et Spes also takes up and develops the question of man's freedom. It states that "that which is truly freedom is an exceptional sign of the image of God in man."<sup>(25)</sup> But Ratzinger points out that this freedom is intended to relate to the psychological plane rather than the social or political; it is not intended as a programme for anarchy. However, defining man in these terms, it follows that

neither society nor any other power may violate this status; the Fathers of the Council intended "to affirm man as the free being who must himself decide to be himself and who may not be subjected either to external coercion or to the compulsion of instinct."<sup>(26)</sup> But Article 25 of this document, entitled "Person and Society: Interdependence" points to man's need of life in society; through it "man develops all his talents and becomes able to rise to his destiny."<sup>(27)</sup> The idea of man's destiny lying within the realm of his communal life, which is here put forward by the Council, is in many ways similar to the Russian concept of sobornost. For the community here envisaged is a spiritual one which is not determined by abstract or "objectified factors" such as class, nation, culture, &c. As Otto Semmelroth points out in his article in the Commentary, "consequently no other difference, racial, national, or individual can destroy this fundamental community of likeness to God."<sup>(28)</sup> It is also pointed out by the Council that man's destiny within the community of all humanity has not only a horizontal dimension but also a vertical one; human solidarity stems from the fact that all mankind is made in the image of God. From this the horizontal dimension is derived, i.e. that every human person shares a common status and destiny. But the vertical dimension itself has a communal character; for the God in whose image man is made is the Trinity, one God in three persons.<sup>(29)</sup> We have already noted that Berdyaev uses the doctrine of the Trinity in exactly this way, to imply personal and inter-personal existence, the surmounting of duality and division.<sup>(30)</sup> The balance between maintaining the rights of each human person and

personal striving to pass beyond egocentricity is to be derived from the image of the life of the Trinity, as Semmelroth points out: "Just as if the impenetrability of the mystery of the triune God were to be made perceptible to man, he discovers again and again how much the individual's own independence can endanger the community of all, and to what extent devotion to the community can endanger personal independence."<sup>(31)</sup>

Two other aspects of the way in which the Council deals with the nature of man will lead on to the second area for discussion opened up by Berdyaev's work, namely, the way in which we talk about God. One consequence noted by the Council of speaking about man as made in the image of God is that man is given dominion over the world. This theme emerges very strongly in Gaudium et Spes and is in many ways very similar to Berdyaev's notion of the divine creativity which in man exists as the mark of God's image.<sup>(32)</sup>

Ratzinger points out quite emphatically that to speak of man's vocation to creative dominion over the world is a consequence and not the content of being made in the image of God.<sup>(33)</sup> While a similar line is taken by Alfons Auer who writes on Article 34 of the Pastoral Constitution ("The Value of Human Activity"), he is more specific about the double vocation which God's plan assigns to man, to bring all things under his dominion, and to refer them to the Creator:

"Clearly the Council was not afraid to describe man as collaborating with God or as completing the work of the Creator might attribute too much independence and creative activity to man to the detriment of God's transcendence."<sup>(34)</sup>



The second aspect of the Council's deliberation concerns the idea of man and woman as the image of God. In Article 12 Gaudium et Spes notes that the "partnership of man and woman constitutes the first form of communion between person."<sup>(35)</sup> Ratzinger states in his commentary that while the idea that it is man and woman in relation which is the image of God " it is rejected as analogia entis. Gaudium et Spes does, however, bring the existence of humanity as man and woman into undefined connection with human likeness to God."<sup>(36)</sup> In connection with this, reference can be made not only to Berdyaev but also to Barth.

In the Church Dogmatics III/4 Barth points to man's creation and vocation to existence in encounter with his fellow man. Just as both Semmelroth and Berdyaev had based this on God's trinitarian nature, so Barth observes that "nor can God who is no Deus Solitarius but Deus Triunus be mirrored in a homo solitarius."<sup>(37)</sup> But Barth develops this further, considering man's being as either male or female, for man never exists as such, but always as the human male or female, and so "by the divine likeness of man in Gen 1.27f there is understood the fact that God created them male and female, corresponding to the fact that God Himself exists in relationship and not in isolation."<sup>(38)</sup> Berdyaev offers a different view of the same idea. In the Meaning of the Creative Act he maintains that human differentiation into male and female cannot wipe out the androgynous character in man: "In truth neither man nor woman is the image and likeness of God but only the androgyne....The differentiation into male and female is a result of the cosmic fall of Adam.

Created in the image and likeness of God, the androgyne man falls apart, separates himself <sup>from</sup> the natural female element, is alienated from the cosmos and falls slave to the power of feminine nature."<sup>(39)</sup> It must be admitted that this mystical doctrine of man seems strangely out of place in modern thinking. Berdyaev himself acknowledges that it is derived from Boehme. Barth is totally dismissive of the idea. He suggests that God is either completely absent or He is its materially insignificant framework. But in either case "it is impossible to criticise a myth. It is enough to see through it as such."<sup>(40)</sup>

These considerations of man, both in the male/female relation as the image of God, and also as creator in relation to the environment, seem to be very similar to the issues being raised by Feminist Theologians. It is not possible here to develop this fully, but we can point to some of the similarities. The first fundamental point is that the way in which mankind understands ~~himself~~ <sup>itself</sup> to be made in the image of God will affect the way in which we speak about God. Thus, if God's image is both male and female, our language about God ought to contain both male and female elements in the symbols, myths and metaphors which we employ. In Sexism and God-talk Rosemary Radford Reuther comments on the significance of the identification of Christ as an androgynous figure. Her reading of this is that the femaleness represents the instinctual and bodily side of man; "the separation of the female out of the side of Adam represents the disintegration of the original whole, the revolt of the lower against the higher

side of man."<sup>(41)</sup> But this is not the way Berdyaev reads Boehme's view of androgyne. Berdyaev made the distinction in the feminine principle between woman and the Virgin; "The fall of the androgyne meant the loss of the Virgin Sophia and the appearance of the woman, Eve."<sup>(42)</sup> Thus, some significance must be attached to the fact that Christ is born of a virgin and represents the restored androgynous Adam: "Eschatological feminism affirmed the restored equality of man and woman in Christ by referring to an original transcendent anthropology that existed before the fall into the finite condition characterized by sexual dimorphism."<sup>(43)</sup> If the destiny of mankind is to be seen in this way, it may affect our language about God. Reuther notes that some feminist theologians believe that an androgynous view of God resolves the problem of an exclusively male image.<sup>(44)</sup> The principle of the relation between the language we use to express self-knowledge and our knowledge of God is maintained by Professor Sally McFague: "Feminist theologians are saying that religious language is not only religious but also human, not only about God but also about us."<sup>(45)</sup>

Here we must move to the question of symbol and its relation to reality. From a feminist point of view, Professor McFague raises the question of whether or not human language does still convey a symbolic relation between this world and a metaphysical reality beyond it, or whether "many of us no longer believe in a symbolic, sacramental universe in which the part stands for the

whole, the things of this world 'figure' another world, and all that is connected by a web of being."<sup>(46)</sup> This view may seem to rule out Berdyaev's religious world-view which depends largely on this kind of symbolic relationship. But there is another point made by Professor McFague which suggests a closer similarity to Berdyaev. Suggesting that the future of religious language might be metaphorical, she writes, "one critical difference between symbol and metaphorical statements is that the latter always contains the whisper, 'it is and it is not'."<sup>(47)</sup> Berdyaev also points to the danger of a realist way of thinking. The consequence of the disappearance of an earlier symbolic outlook is, in Professor McFague's opinion, what forms the basis of feminist theologians' rejection of traditional religious language which speaks, for example, of God as "Father". But like Professor McFague's "and it is not", Berdyaev's appreciation of an apophatic knowledge of God offers this balance in his use of symbolism. For "symbolism is justified by the fact that God is both knowable and unknowable."<sup>(48)</sup>

The second point is that feminist theology has a pronounced emphasis on the human care of and relation to the earth. We noted above<sup>(49)</sup> the similarity between the development of the idea of interiorité and the notion of man as a microcosm, a similarity between aspects of Dostoevsky and Russian Orthodoxy, and de Chardin and modern Catholic spirituality. In a survey of the work of Christian feminists, Sara Maitland notes that de Chardin comes nearest to pantheistic nature mysticism and that "he was listed as the second most

influential theological writer in Fran Ferder's study of Roman Catholic women who believe that they have vocations to the priesthood."<sup>(50)</sup> A strong spiritual affinity with the earth, which Berdyaev noted as a trait of Dostoevsky's work, emerges in feminist theology. Women are here revealing a forgotten dimension of mankind's creativity in relation to his natural surroundings. In an interesting article entitled "Parables and Women's Experience" Nicola Slee points to the contribution which feminist analysis can make to a restructuring of ideas about human reality and experience in both its male and female dimensions. Underlying the gospel parables of growth she sees a "secret yet strong rhythm of the natural world" which strikes "resonant chords in women hearers, whose lives and bodies share uniquely in creation's rhythm, the cycle of labour and birth and growth, the mysterious, hidden action of generation and regeneration."<sup>(51)</sup> In The Meaning of the Creative Act, Berdyaev illustrates this human intuition of the spiritual forces within the material world with a story from S. Simon the New Theologian. In the story, after Adam was driven out of Paradise, the moon and stars refused to give light, the waters did not flow, the animals began to despise man, who would have perished had not God ordained that all created things should become mortal, looking forward to the time when man would become renewed, and the whole creation be liberated, which was the work of nature and of the cosmos and set in motion by the incarnate logos. The story evokes Romans, 8.18-25. Berdyaev himself comments: "man's fate depends upon the fate of nature and of the cosmos, and he cannot separate himself from this."<sup>(52)</sup>

It is this sort of understanding of the relationship between us, between the spiritual and the material, which is being developed by feminist Christians. An enclosed contemplative, Sr. Mainrad Craighead OSB, who writes on our union with creation, observes that "prayer is the direction and renewal of the whole person... and this involves our bodies. Our bodies are channels to receive and give out this divine energy."<sup>(53)</sup> To some this may seem a novel and startling way of looking at things. But we would suggest that it is an aspect of Christian spirituality which has a long tradition. From the pantheistic mysticism of Boehme to the Naturphilosophie of Schelling, to the Romantics, Dostoevsky and the Slavophiles, and to Berdyaev, there flows a stream of ideas. As early as 1936 the personalists of Esprit were advocating a programme of inquiry similar to that followed by modern feminist theologians. With reference to a special edition (June 1936) of Esprit which was entitled "La Femme aussi est une personne", Mounier writes: "How these resources (of feminine being) are to be drawn upon without imprisoning woman in her functions; how to unite her with the world and the world with her; what new values and what new conditions this project calls for - these are questions and tasks inescapable for everyone who gives its full meaning to the affirmation that woman, also, is a person."<sup>(54)</sup>

What conclusions would one make in a final assessment of Berdyaev's work? To begin with, one would point to his contribution to the religious consciousness of the period in which he lived. Initially this means Russia in the years leading up to the Revolution. But later it also

covers the rise of Nazi Germany and the outbreak of the Second World War as the background to life in the West. During the <sup>twenty-four</sup> years of Berdyaev's life in France, European society experienced perhaps the most dramatic changes it has ever known. His commentary on this, from the position of an outsider who had lived through similarly apocal<sup>y</sup>ptic upheavals, was at the time seen as prophetic and inspired. Now, thirty or forty years later, his writing looks clearly dated, a symptom of his age rather than determinative of its future. But the times through which Berdyaev lived were the raw material of his thoughts and reflections. Here an important principle emerges. Berdyaev's philosophy and theology are grounded in his own experience. He seems to conform to the requirement of Orthodox spiritual writers that the mind must enter the heart as the faithful Christian comes within the presence of God. So, for Berdyaev, theology is not simply an intellectual discipline; it is also the matter of a Christian's life of prayer. This is a principle we should do well not to forget, and it is one of which we have recently been reminded by Andrew Louth in his essay on the nature of theology, Discerning the Mystery. He writes of a division in theology between thought about God and the movement of the heart towards God, "a division which is particularly damaging in theology, for it threatens in a fundamental way the whole fabric of theology in both its spiritual and intellectual aspects."<sup>(55)</sup> There is also in this principle an aspect which Berdyaev develops and is another useful contribution; the holding together of opposites in tension. We should not lose sight of the

theme of coincidentia oppositorum It may be this which leads to a feature of Berdyaev's style which should be taken into account; a certain amount of his work overstates the position he is outlining. In addition, there is a tendency in Berdyaev's thought to interpret revelation solely in terms of his own philosophy. This is a point interestingly made by Segundo by means of a comparison between Berdyaev and Bultmann.<sup>(56)</sup> This need not, however, be a reason for dismissing his work. It does mean that Berdyaev's work requires careful consideration. An example of such consideration is to be found in Professor Macquarrie's assessment of Berdyaev's assertion that man contains the solution to the whole riddle of the universe: "that may be over-confident", Macquarrie writes, "and carries the idea of man as microcosm to an extreme length.... There may well be mysteries to which humanity offers no clue." Macquarrie's own verdict is that "man does bring to light something of the creative forces at work in the world, and to that extent man is indeed a microcosm, a becoming that bears a stamp of being."<sup>(57)</sup>

We would return again to the idea of Berdyaev's thought acting like a serum within the general corpus of European thought. He pointed to broad truths about man in relation to the world, about the whole of humanity, and about God which remain topics for theological, philosophical and scientific investigation today. Berdyaev's was a spirit which animated others, even though they might subsequently have followed other paths.

As a conclusion and assessment of this consideration of



Berdyaev's work and influence, we offer the following quotation:

I realise that to some people the religious nature of his (Berdyaev's) philosophy may seem to belong to a past age, but I believe that as a philosopher, prophet and visionary Berdyaev speaks to all who are turned towards the light, hoping to respond to their tragic destiny and through their creative freedom to play their part in the transfiguration of the cosmos.... In his autobiography he had written that the contents of his books implied a new consciousness of the Eighth Day which prepares for the coming of a New Heaven and a New Earth..... Berdyaev symbolizes the Man of the Eighth Day. (58)

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 1

1. DR ix.
2. *ibid.*
3. *ibid* 1.
4. *ibid* 139.
5. Donald Lowrie, Rebellious Prophet: A Life of Nicolas Berdyaev (London: Gollancz, 1960) p. 17.
6. Tamara Klépinine, Bibliographie des Oeuvres de Nicolas Berdyaev (Paris: Institute d'Études Slaves, 1978).
7. *ibid* 11.
8. DR 2.
9. ~~*ibid*~~ 24.
10. *ibid* 6.
11. *ibid* 8.
12. *ibid* 17
13. Lowrie, *op.cit.*, p.20.
14. DR 21.
15. Lowrie *op.cit.*, p.23.
16. *ibid* 24.
17. DR 18.
18. *ibid* 8.
19. *ibid* 11; cf 3,5.
20. *ibid* 37.
21. *ibid* 12.
22. *ibid* 5.
23. *ibid* 317; cf 225.
24. For the strength of Berdyaev's feeling on this subject, the quotation in J.Gaïth, Nicolas Berdiaeff: Philosophe de la liberté (Beyrouth: Dar El-Marchreq Editeurs, 1968) p.22 : "Your true character has been revealed as the spirit of nothingness; you have swiftly been transformed into oppressors. You began by being oppressors of the spirit and you have become the persecutors of all spiritual life. You have accepted the opportunity to become 'persécuteurs materialistes', and used it to create a dire tyranny. Nor need you revolutionaries think that you are the 'new men' because you have spawned a 'new man'. . . Your whole outlook is negative, its temper, its envy, the revenge you carry out against the old life, and your enslavement of the past. You are the reflex action triggered by the ancient evil."

25. Thomas Masaryk, The Spirit of Russia. 2 Vols. (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1955) Vol 2 p.527; cf. DR 108.
26. Nicolas Zernov, The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century (London: D.L.T. 1963) p.16.
27. Nicolas Lossky, History of Russian Philosophy (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1952) p.171.
28. *ibid.* p.9.
29. Zernov, *op.cit.* p.13n.
30. DR 31; cf.33.
31. *ibid.* 46.
32. *ibid.* 83.
33. *ibid.* 120.
34. *ibid.* 111.
35. RI 222f.
36. DR 78.
37. *ibid.* 79.
38. *ibid.* 79, cf.91.
39. *ibid.* 117.
40. Lowrie, *op.cit.* p.41.
41. DR 120.
42. Lowrie, *op.cit.* p.45.
43. DR 125.
44. *ibid.* 126.
45. *ibid.* 120 cf. Lowrie *op.cit.* p.46.
46. Klépinine, *op.cit.* p.46.
47. *ibid.* 25.
48. DR 123.
49. *ibid.* 132.
50. *ibid.* 129 cf. 131.
51. *ibid.* 130.
52. *ibid.* 132.
53. *ibid.* 128.
54. RR 14.
55. Lowrie, *op.cit.* p.67.
56. Michael Vallon, Nicholas Berdyaev: An Apostle of Freedom, (London: The Vision Press, 1960) n.67.
57. DR 132.
58. Lossky, *op.cit.* p.192.
59. Quoted from The Unfading Light (Moscow 1917). Lossky, *op.cit.* p.194.
60. DR 133.

61. Masaryk op cit. p.352.
62. Klépinine, op.cit. p.77.
63. Lowrie, op.cit. p.68.
64. ibid. 84.
65. RI 219.
66. DR 145.
67. Lowrie, op.cit. p.79.
68. ibid 93.
69. DR 150.
70. ibid 161.
71. ibid. 142.
72. ibid. 162.
73. Quoted from Dimitry Merezhkovsky. Zernov, op.cit.95f.
74. ibid. 95.
75. DR 174.
76. RI 227.
77. ibid 157 cf. Zernov, op.cit. 97.
78. P. B. Anderson, People, Church and State in Modern Russia (London: SCM., 1944) p.144.
79. RI 227.
80. Lowrie, op.cit. p.96.
81. Zernov, ~~op.cit.~~ p.151 of Lowrie p.111.
82. DR 163.
83. A Bulgakov Anthology (ed. E. J. Pain & N.Zernov London: S.P.C.K.1976) p.xiii.
84. DR 174.
85. DR 211.
86. ibid 196.
87. Lossky op.cit. p.173.
88. Quoted by Zernov, op.cit. p.111.
89. C. S. Calian: The Significance of Eschatology in the Thought of Nicolas Berdyaev (Leiden: E.J.Brill 1965) p.20.
90. Zernov op.cit. 118.
91. C. S. Calian, "The Significance of Eschatology in the Thought of Nicolas Berdyaev" (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1965).
92. Masaryk op.cit. p.487 (vol.2).
93. Lowrie, op.cit. p.131.
94. From I. Hessen, In Two Centuries (in Russian: Berlin 1937) quoted Zernov R.R.R. op.cit. p.129.
95. DR 166.
96. ibid. 165,187.
97. ibid. 200f.
98. ibid. 199.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 2

1. RI 175.
2. V. V. Zenkovsky. A History of Russian Philosophy. (New York, Columbia University Press, 1953) Vol 2 : 48c
3. RI 175.
4. Zernov. op.cit.p. 296.
5. N. Zernov. Three Russian Prophets (London: S.C.M., 1944) p.135.
6. H. Dahm, Vladimir Solovyev and Max Scheler: Attempt at a Comparative Interpretation. (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1975) p.183.
7. Peter Zouboff, <sup>quoted</sup> in the introduction to A Solovyev Anthology. (London: S.C.M., 1950) p.17.
8. cf. S. L. Frank's introduction to A Solovyev Anthology (London: S.C.M., 1950) p.17.
9. Zernov, Prophets op. cit., p.123.
10. Solovyev, Lectures on Godmanhood, op. cit. p.185.
11. ibid.
12. ibid 158.
13. ibid 192.
14. SR 72f.
15. A Solovyev Anthology, p.29.
16. Calian, op. cit. p.28: cf.RI 206f.
17. ibid 121.
18. H. Dahm, op. cit. p.212.
19. DM 160f.
20. J. Gaïth, Nicolas Berdiaeff. op.cit.,p.20.
21. Eugene Porret, La Philosophie Chrétienne en Russie. (Neuchâtel: Editions de la Baconnière, 1944) p.78.
22. "Premier Étude sur Jacob Boehme". Mysterium Magnum. (Paris: Aubier, 1945) p.21.
23. Masaryk, op. cit., vol. 2, p.226.
24. cf. abov p.11 : DR 99.
25. SR 145.
26. Porret, La Philosophie, op. cit., p.115.
27. FS 72,73.
28. ibid 120.
29. W. R. Inge, Christian Mysticism. (London: Methuen, 1899) p.279.

30. H. Brinton, The Mystic Will (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1931) p.46.
31. Quoted by C. J. Barker, Pre-Requisites for the Study of Jacob Boehme. (London: J. M. Watkins, 1920) p.25.
32. R. Otto, The Idea of the Holy (2nd Edition, London: O.U.P., 1950) p.106.
33. DR 79: cf. 183.
34. Evelyn Underhill, The Mystics of the Church (London: James Clarke, 1925) p.220.
35. A.K.Walker, William Law (London: S.P.C.K., 1973) p.99.
36. Zernov, Russian Religious Renaissance op.cit., p.109.
37. e.g. J. L. Segundo, Berdiaeff: Une reflexion Chrétienne sur la personne. (Paris: Aubier, 1963) p.13.
38. Oleg A. Maslenikov, The Frenzied Poets: Andrey Biely and the Russian Symbolists. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952) p.14.
39. RI 229.
40. ibid 40.
41. ibid 45.
42. Masaryk, op. cit., vol. 1, p.246.
43. Lossky, op. cit. p. 27.
44. Quoted by Lossky, ibid p.26.
45. A Bulgakov Anthology op.cit. p.126.
46. RI 164.
47. A. S. Khomiakov, The Church is One. (London: Fellowship of S.Alban and S.Sergius, 1968) p.19.
48. A Bulgakov Anthology p.128.
49. Introduction to The Church is One op. cit. p.13.
50. W. J. Birkbeck, (ed.) Russia and the English Church. (London: Rivington, 1895). The correspondence arose from a translation made by Palmer, a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, of Khomiakov's poem 'To My Children', written on the death of his two eldest children in 1839. The essay on the Church was written towards the end of this correspondence which covers the years 1844-1854.
51. Zernov, Three Russian Prophets op. cit. p.146.
52. D. Lowrie. Christian Existentialism: A Berdyaev Anthology. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1965) p.272f.
53. Vallon, op. cit. p. 22.
54. Porret, op. cit. p.9.
55. Segundo, op. cit. p. 19f.

56. K. Mochulsky, Dostoevsky: His life and Work. (Princeton University Press, 1967) p.19.
57. In The Journal of an Author (1873) quoted by Mochulsky, op. cit., p.118 ibid 142.
58. ibid 142.
59. Mochulsky, op.cit.p.650.
60. F. Dostoevsky. The Brothers Karamazov translated by David Magarshack (Penguin, 1958) vol.2, p.898.
61. Zernov, Three Russian Prophets p.94.
62. D. 224.
63. ibid 227.
64. Quoted by Mochulsky, op. cit. p.649.
65. V. Rozanov, Dostoevsky and the Legend of the Grand Inquisitor (New York: Cornell University Press, 1972) p.18.
66. D.39.
67. ibid. 155.
68. Zernov Three Russian Prophets op. cit. p.94.
69. Dostoevsky, op. cit. p. 369 (vol. 1.).
70. Mochulsky, op. cit. p.650.
71. D 62.
72. Dostoevsky, op. cit. vol 1 p.298.
73. ibid 378.
74. S.R.Sutherland, Atheism and the Rejection of God (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977) p.114.
75. D 378.
76. Dostoevsky. op. cit. vol. 1. p.370.
77. D 160: cf. Berdyaev's interest in the Jews reflected in Christianity and Anti-Semitism. (Aldington, Kent 1952) translated by Alan Spears and Victor Kanter. This may have been given impetus by Berdyaev's close friendship with Shestov, who was a Jew: cf. DR 111.
78. Quoted by Zernov, Russian Prophets op. cit. p.110.
79. Dostoevsky, op. cit. vol. 2 p. 898f.
80. V.Ivanov, Freedom and the Tragic Life (London: Harvill Press, 1952) p.28.
81. A. Boyce Gibson, The Religion of Dostoevsky. (London: S.C.M. 1973) p.187.
82. Dostoevsky, op. cit. vol. 1. p.356.
83. Quoted by Zernov, Three Russian Prophets op.cit.p.100.
84. Dostoevsky, op. cit. vol. 1 p.350.
85. D 63.

86. H. J. Blackham, Six Existentialist Philosophers  
(London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952) p.30.
87. Quoted Blackham, op.cit.,p.31.
88. A.Camus, The Rebel (Penguin, 1971) p.51.
89. Blackham, op. cit. p.41.
90. W. Kaufman, Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist,  
Antichrist. (Princeton: Princeton University Press,  
1974 ) 4th Edition p. 101.
91. DM 152f.
92. D 92.



FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 3

1. EOT 134.
2. DR 222.
3. Julius Hecker, Moscow Dialogues: Discussions on Russian Philosophy. (London: Chapman & Hall, 1933) p.xi.
4. *ibid.* pp. 147, 148.
5. *ibid.*, p.151.
6. DR 239.
7. *ibid.* 240.
8. DR 249.
9. Vallon *op.cit.* p.123.
10. EOT 80.
11. *ibid.* 249: cf.244.
12. M. M. Davy, Nicolas Berdyaev: Man of the Eighth Day. (London: Bles, 1967) p.21.
13. DR 273.
14. DR 268 .
15. EOT and CCW, translated by Donald Attwater, were published in London by Sheed and Ward in 1933: these were followed by D in 1934. From 1935, with the publication of FS, Geoffrey Bles took over most of the publiciation of Berdyaev's work in English.
16. G. L. Kline. "Changing attitudes towards the Individual" in C. F. Black, The Transformation of Russian Society (Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1961) p.194.
17. DR 261.
18. *ibid.* 262.
19. Helen Iswolsky, Light Before Dusk: A Russian Catholic in France 1923 - 1941. (New York: Longmans, 1942) p.86.
20. *cf.* below p.97.
21. DR 262: *cf.* Iswolsky *op. cit.* 86.
22. *ibid.* 274.
23. *ibid.*
24. Michael Kelly, Pioneer of the Catholic Revival: The ideas and Influence of Emmanuel Mounier. (London: Sheed and Ward, 1979)  
Michael Kelly writes of Péguy that "his conversion to Catholicism infused his social and political commitments with a mystical dimension which tended to subordinate reason to moral intuition". p.22.
25. R. Maritain, We have been Friends Together. (New York: Longmans, 1943) p.94.

26. J. Maritain, Introduction to Pilgrim of the Absolute (ed. R. Maritain, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1947) p.21f.
27. Ra<sup>u</sup>ch's information comes from Mounier's published correspondence in the fourth volume of Oeuvres de Mounier (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1961-1963); cf. R. William Rauch Jr., Politics and Belief in Contemporary France: Emmanuel Mounier and Christian Democracy. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972) p.108.
28. *ibid* 108.
29. E. Mounier, A Personalist Manifesto. (New York: Longman's 1938) p.1.
30. E. Mounier, Personalism. (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1952) p.18.
31. E. Mounier, Manifesto, p.78.
32. MCA 57f.
33. Mounier. Personalism op.cit. p.35.
34. *ibid*. 77f.
35. E. Mounier, Personalism p. 65.
36. G. Marcel. Problematic Man. (New York: Herder & Herder, 1967) p.94.
37. E. Mounier, Existentialist Philosophies: An Introduction. (London: Rockliff, 1948) p.8.
38. E. Mounier, Manifesto. p. 69.
39. Mounier, Existentialist Philosophies, p.50: cf Marcel ref.
40. *ibid* 17.
41. Mounier, Manifesto, p.82.
42. *ibid* 88.
43. Mounier, Personalism p. 58.
44. MCA 70f.
45. Mounier, Personalism. op.cit.p.12.
46. Quoted from Mounier's Entretiens (Oct.1932) by J.Hellman. Emmanuel Mounier and the New Catholic Left 1930-1950. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981) p.59f.
47. *ibid*. 5; cf.261.
48. Richard L. Cramp, The Papal Ideology & Social Reform. A Study in Historical Development 1875 - 1967. (London: E. F. Brill, 1969) p.39.
49. Kelly, op.cit.28.
50. Hellman, op.cit.5.
51. *ibid* 49.
52. Maritain/Mounier 1929-1939 correspondence ed. Jacques Petit (Desclée de Brouwer: Edition du Seuil, 1973). p.49.

53. Kelly, op.cit. 34.
54. Rauch, op.cit. 89: it is worth noting that the French edition of Berdyaev's book was published under the title Un Nouveau Moyen Age (Paris: Plon, 1927), the first chapter of which is entitled "La Fin de la Renaissance".
55. R.Pierce, Contemporary French Political Thought (London: O.U.P. 1966) p.50.
56. J. Maritain, True Humanism (London: Bles, 1938) p.44.
57. Lettre à Nicolas Berdiaeff 13 Nov.1939. Ouvres de Mounier. iv 646 quoted by Rauch op.cit.p.207.
58. I. Lepp. A Christian Philosophy of Existence. (Dublin: Gill, 1965). pp.115,116.
59. Hellman, op.cit. 101.
60. Kelly, op.cit. 36.
61. Maritain/Mounier 1929-1939 3 Aout, 1932 (No.27). p.50: cf. True Humanism p.28f.
62. DR 271.
63. Maritain/Mounier 1929-1939 p.77.
64. Quoted by Petit, Maritain/Mounier 1929-1939 p.181.
65. Kelly, op.cit. 43: cf. Iswolsky, op.cit.115.
66. ibid 18.
67. Rauch op.cit 310.
68. Iswolsky, op.cit. 105: cf. DR 257: J. Maritain, True Humanism 62.
69. After his initial contribution to the first edition, Esprit also published the following articles by Berdyaev: "Le Christianisme et le monde moderne" (Esprit Mars 1933 No.6 pp.933-941); "La Russie Sovietique et la guerre mondiale" (Esprit 1940 No.88 pp.120-128); "Le sens de l'acte créature" (Esprit 1948 No.8 pp.179-194: La transformation du marxisme en Russie" (Esprit Aout 1948 No.8 pp.195-206).
70. DR 275.
71. J. B. Coats, The Crisis of the Human Person: Some Personalist Interpretations. (London: Longmans, 1949) p.10.
72. J. MacMurray, The Form of the Personal Vol.1 "The Self as Agent" (London: Faber, 1957) p.29.
73. ibid 31.
74. Albert H. Nephew, "The Personal Universe" p.101 in T. E. Wren (ed.) The Personal Universe (Atlantic Highlands N.J.: Humanities Press, 1975).
75. J. McMurray, Religion, Art and Science. A Study of the Reflective Activities of Man. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1961) p.58.
76. Nephew, op.cit. p.101.

77. *ibid*, H.D.Lewis, "The Elusive Self and Practice" p.68.
78. DR 267.
79. V.A.Demant, God, Man and Society: An Introduction to Christian Sociology. (London: S.C.M. 1933) 18
80. V.A. Demant, The Religious Prospect (London: Friedrich Muller, 1939) p.44.
81. *ibid* 226.
82. Christendom Vo. 1 No. 1 March 1931 p.28.
83. A. L. Lilley, review of DM in Christendom Vol. VII No.27 September 1937 p. 230.
84. P. S. Richards. Belief in Man (London: S.P.C.C. 1932) p.108.
85. E.L.Mascall "Christian Humanism" in Christendom Vol.VIII No. 3 June 1938 p.131.
86. DR 318.
87. *ibid* 322.
88. Klépinine, *op.cit.*, p.21.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 4

1. DM 33.
2. SC 35.
3. cf. The discussion of this theme in E.L.Mascall  
He Who Is. (London: Longmans, 1943) p.57f.
4. MH 44: FS 189.
5. DH 3.
6. TR 46.
7. FS 197.
8. DH.47. There is much evidence of Augustine's  
influence on Berdyaev, e.g. DM.64; DR 80,93,303 &c.
9. eg. DM.43; DH 185; TR 55 &c.
10. TR.55.
11. DH.32.
12. DH.33.
13. BE.193.
14. SF.82.
15. FS.10.
16. DH.3.
17. SR.4.
18. *ibid.*5.
19. SS 47.
20. *ibid.* 67.
21. BE. 59.
22. *ibid.* 66.
23. *ibid.* 73.
24. SS.59.
25. BE.63.
26. *ibid.*
27. BE 77.
28. *ibid.* 69, 39; cf.SS'40.
29. SS 64.
30. DM.72.
31. BE 120.
32. DM.72.
33. SF.90.
34. *ibid.* 91.
35. SC.38.
36. cf. V.Lossky, The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church.  
(London: James Clarke, 1957) p.44.

37. DM 57.  
 38. MCA 134.  
 39. DM 57.  
 40. TR 46.  
 41. MH 46.  
 42. MH 47, 4; FS 193.  
 43. SF 51.  
 44. FS 193.  
 45. *ibid.* Laberthonnière was associated with Blondel and the Modernist movement in French Catholic circles at the turn of the century. He suffered the same fate as many who were then exploring new areas, falling under the ban and condemned by Pius XI in the 1907 encyclical "Pascendi". Laberthonnière's collected works began to appear in France from 1935 (Oeuvres, Paris; Vrin, 1955). The essay to which Berdyaev refers ("Le réalisme chrétien et l'idéalisme grec") was published in Paris in 1904. There has been some recent interest in France in the much neglected writing of this philosopher. Claud Tresmontant edited his correspondence with Blondel (Correspondence Philosophique Paris: Le Seuil, 1961). An account of Père Laberthonnière's early development and thinking is presented by M. T. Perrin in La Jeunesse de Laberthonnière (Paris, 1980) (GHE); he has also edited the correspondence for this period (1905-1916): Laberthonnière et ses amis (Beauchesne, 1975).
46. DM 28.  
 47. MH 49-50; SF 49.  
 48. TR 52.  
 49. DM 38; cf. note p.12.  
 50. MH.48.  
 51. FS 192.  
 52. *ibid.*  
 53. DH 7.  
 54. MH 48.  
 55. FS 193.  
 56. SR 139.  
 57. FS xix.

58. *ibid* xviii; cf. DM 35.
59. BE 101.
60. *ibid* 110.
61. FS 83.
62. *ibid* 85.
63. SR 130.
64. SR 137.
65. DM 33.
66. MH.52.
67. TR.64.
68. *ibid* 66; cf. SC 40.
69. FS 62; BE 101.
70. SR 136.
71. SF 89.
72. SC 42.
73. MH.46.
74. *ibid* 53.
75. DM. 45.
76. *ibid* 34.
77. eg. E. L. Allen. Freedom in God: A Guide to the Thought of Nicolas Berdyaev (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1950); E. Lampert, Nicolas Berdyaev<sup>and the New Middle Ages</sup> (London: James Clarke, 1945); M. Spinka, Nicolas Berdyaev: Captive of Freedom. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press 1950). M. Vallon, An Apostle of Freedom: The Life and Teachings of Nicolas Berdyaev (London: Vision Press, 1960).
78. DM 39.
79. eg. SR 144; DH 27. On Angelus Silesius cf. FS 194. On von Baader cf. MH 55. For a different consideration of Eckhart's notion of 'Gott' and 'Gottheit' see E. L. Mascall *op.cit.* p.136.
80. SR 144.
81. *ibid* 145 (his italics).
82. MH 55.
83. Vallon. *op.cit.* p.299.
84. MH.58.
85. SR.144. cf. TR 61.
86. DM 50,51. (1st ed.)

87. ibid 49.
88. ibid.
89. TR 61, SR 115.
90. DH 44, Vallon op.cit.p.326.
91. ibid 42; BE 210.
92. FS 196.
93. FS 247; BE 216.
94. MH57; FS207. We may also compare Berdyaev's comments on Eckhart; SC38; and on Bulgakov TR61. The latter is cited by Berdyaev as admitting that "man expressed consent to his creation". This is another way of referring to the idea of an anthropogonistic process. "The pre-existence of souls is an absolute metaphysical truth." MCA 129.
95. BM 42.
96. TR 61, DM 32.
97. MH 59.
98. SF 89.
99. TR 66; SR 114 SC 39.
100. MCA 137.
101. O.F.Clark's Introduction to Berdyaev (London: Bles, 1950) p.178.
102. Compare J.Oman, Grace and Personality (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925) p.43. Grace is not an external operation but it must "call forth a response from within". Otherwise it becomes a mechanical abstraction.
103. FS 139.
104. MH 60.
105. DM 35.
106. BE 152; J. Lucas Freedom and Grace (London: S.P.C.K.1976) Chapter 1.



FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 5

1. This view is supported by Roger Lloyd. In relation to the breadth of Berdyaev's influence, he comments that "Nicolas Berdyaev was one of these exiles, and all his greatest work was done in Paris. He became one of the unofficial theological tutors of every church in Christendom, a man whose books one had to read because of the immense distinction of his mind and the depth of his learning. Writing in exile he had a far wider range of influence than would ever have been his had he not suffered the deep pain of exile from his beloved Russia." The Church of England in the Twentieth Century (London: Longmans, 1950) Vol. 2 p.277. And in relation to the Anglican Church specifically, he says that "in theology, too, we Anglicans have learned almost as much from writers like Berdyaev, Maritain and Niebuhr as from our own Hoskyns and Quick." (ibid p.314) cf. also D.L. Edwards Religion and Change (London: Hodder & Stoughton 1969).
2. References from the cover of Freedom and the Spirit.
3. E.L.Mascall, He Who Is (London: Longmans, 1943)p.135.
4. ibid. p.137.
5. ibid.
6. A.van de Mensbrugge, From Dyad to Triad (London: Faith Press, 1935).
7. For a further discussion on sophiology, Mascall refers us to an article by Dom Theodore Wesseling in Eastern Churches Quarterly Jan.-Oct.1937.
8. ibid. p.107n.
9. ibid. p.95.
10. W. R. Matthews, God in Christian Thought and Experience. (London: Nisbet, 1930) p.107.
11. ibid. p.227.
12. ibid. p.228.
13. FS.193.
14. DM.37.
15. F. R. Tennant, Philosophical Theology.(C.U.P.1930)Vol. 2. p.249.
16. ibid. p.259.
17. W. R. Matthews, "The Christian Faith" in The Christian

- Belief in God (London: Eyre & Spottiswode, 1944)  
2nd edition, p.54.
18. G. H. Howison, The Limits of Evolution (New York: Macmillan 1905), p.325.
  19. *ibid* p.326.
  20. H. Rashdall, "Personality: Human and Divine" in Personal Idealism ed. Henry Sturt (London: Macmillan, 1902) p.391.
  21. *ibid* p.239.
  22. *ibid* p.242.
  23. B. Bosanquet, The Principle of Individuality and Value (London: Macmillan, 1912) pp.243-244.
  24. Tennant, *op.cit.* vol.2 p.169.
  25. Matthews, "Christian Faith" *op.cit.*p.54.
  26. cf. I. Leclerc, The Relevance of Whitehead (London: George Allen & Unwin 1961) p.368: "As one thinks of the alternatives in Christian theology, Whitehead's doctrine here seems to me most at home in spirit if not in detail in certain strands of modern Russian theology and in Berdyaev's thought, in which the action of God is seen in the divine humility on the Cross."
  27. W. R. Matthews, The Gospel and the Modern Mind (London: Macmillan, 1925) p.111.
  28. cf. FS 7n "Some very interesting ideas on the subject of the distinction between spirit and nature may be found in the writings of the Italian philosopher Gentile (see his book Spirit, Pure Action) But one is too conscious of the influence upon him of Fichte's idealism" cf.SR.p.28. Berdyaev comments that Gentile is "more concerned with the foundations of a philosophical system on the basis of an active spirit than with the immediate problem of spirit".
  29. Matthews, "Christian Faith" *op.cit.* p.54. It should, however, be noted that Matthews does say that Bergson's later book, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion (London: Macmillan 1935) mitigates this impression.
  30. Tennant, Theology, *op.cit.* vol.2, p.249.
  31. It might be suggested that Tennant is a forerunner of the "God of the gaps" theory. In fact, it might

reasonably be maintained that his position is more in keeping with the position that science is in today, bound to take into account a certain random and inexplicable element in the ordering of the universe. He comments that "if discontinuity be said to be involved in transition from known facts and generalization to their invisible explanation-ground, it must be borne in mind that discontinuity essentially similar lurks in all inductive knowledge and in all causal explanation, and that therefore there is at any rate no discontinuity between theistic belief and scientific knowledge."

ibid Vol 2 p.250.

32. ibid Vol 2 p.249.

33. W.Temple, Mens Creatrix (London: Macmillan, 1916) p.291.

34. ibid.

35. cf. FS 62 "In the process of its development naturalist metaphysics led to a dualistic theism which, by rejecting the symbolic tie uniting the divine to the natural world, produced first of all an 'atheism' with regard to the world itself and then an 'atheism' in respect of God Himself."

36. ibid p.292 cf. Christus Veritas (London: Macmillan, 1924) "If he changes it must be something other than perfection. . . . But it is characteristic of Purpose that, while constant in itself, it prompts diversity of actions according to the circumstances in which the purpose is from time to time to be fulfilled. If, then, there is any element of indeterminism in human conduct, we shall expect to find a perpetual adaptation of the divine creativity to meet the varied circumstances created by man's free conduct." p.99.

37. cf. B. Bosanquet, The Value and Destiny of the Individual (London: Macmillan, 1913) This book contains the second series of Bosanquet's Gifford Lectures, delivered in 1912. The first appear under the title The Principle of Individuality and Value (op.cit.). It is in the second series that he speaks

of the life of the self-transcending creature which is now satisfaction and now obstruction, emphasizing that "the chapter of accidents is necessary. It belongs to finiteness. It is just the appearance of externality, by which in its degree, the finite self makes its contribution to the Absolute." p.225.

38. A. S. Pringle-Pattison, The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy (O.U.P., 1920) p.416.
39. *ibid.* p.409.
40. *ibid.* p.410.
41. *ibid.* p.417.
42. e.g. W. B. Inge, Christian Mysticism (London: Methuen, 1899) on the reception of Inge's Bampton Lectures of Lloyd, *op.cit.*, Vol.1 pp.113-114; E. Underhill, Mysticism (London: Methuen, 1911).
43. Mascall, *op.cit.* p.96.
44. *ibid.* p.103.
45. R. Hanson, "Dogma in Medieval Scholasticism" in Dogma in History and Thought ed. W. R. Matthews (London: Nisbet, 1929) p.103. Hanson does not take quite the textbook line of Mascall, giving rather more weight to the criticisms of this view offered by Kant. Although he does acknowledge that this depends on whether or not one accepts the Kantian theory of knowledge, he does comment that the demand that the human reason as now constituted is competent to measure all existence is "preposterous". p.104.
46. *ibid.* p.104.
47. O. C. Quick. The Gospel of the New World (London: Nisbet, 1944) p.24.
48. cf. above p.141
49. J. Ward, The Realm of Ends (C.U.P. 1912) p.233.
50. *ibid.* p.237.
51. *ibid.* p.238.
52. cf. above p.101.
53. Ward, *op.cit.* p.241.
54. *ibid.* p.241.
55. *ibid.* p.43.
56. Howison, *op.cit.* p.456.
57. cf. Tennant *op.cit.* Vol.2 p.128; below p.162.

58. Ward, Op.cit. p.233.
59. Howison, op.cit. p.397 Ward comments on the agreement between Howison and himself that "all that is intelligible on the subject in his own valuable book is really reconciliable with this" op.cit. p.460.
60. SS 90.
61. SC 42.
62. We should also note the idea of newness which Berdyaev associates with evolution: "If in the course of evolution something new makes its appearance, this means that everything was not determined, everything was not fixed and settled by the preceding series. In creative newness there is always an element of the miraculous." BE . 161.
63. cf. SR .114; TR .56; SC .39; It is also of interest that Berdyaev comments as follows on Le sens commun by the neo-thomist Garrigou-Lagrange: He "lays particular stress upon the idea that there is something more in immovability than there is in motion, for there is in immovability that which in movement only becomes.... It is possible to adopt a point of view which differs in principle from the Aristotelian and scholastic position. It is possible to take the view that there is more in potency than in act, more in movement than in immovability and that there are greater riches in freedom than in being." BE p.157.
64. Ward, op.cit. p.245.
65. BE .101.
66. SR p.136.
67. *ibid.* p.243.
68. Streeter (ed.) Foundations (London: Macmillan 1912) p.480.
69. *ibid.* p.480.
70. C.C.J. Webb, Religious Thought in England from 1850 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933) p.159.
71. *ibid.* p.159.
72. Tennant, op.cit. Vol.2 p.166.
73. *ibid* p.176.
74. *ibid* p.128.
75. *ibid.* p.128.

76. *ibid* p.168.
77. cf. Pringle-Pattison, *op.cit.* p.308. It is of interest to compare the comment made here that Origen viewed an eternal creation as the expression of divine nature, not of will or cause: "The doctrine of an eternal creation, which, as the continual product of the changeless divine will becomes an expression of the divine nature rather than the outcome of in the sense of choice." cf. Berdyaev on Origen: TR p.56.
78. Tennant, *op.cit.* Vol.2. p.151. As a "happy" illustration of his meaning Tennant offers in a footnote the following engaging quotation from Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice: "I should like balls infinitely better,' she replied, 'if they were carried on in a different manner; but there is something insufferably tedious in the usual process of such a meeting. It would surely be more rational if conversation instead of dancing were the order of the day.' 'Much more rational, my dear Caroline, I dare say, but it would not be near so much like a ball.'"
79. cf.above p.99.
80. H. Scott Holland, "The Life and Work of J. R. Illingworth (London: Wells Gardner, 1916).
81. Inge, *op.cit.*
82. Rashdall, "The Ultimate Basis of Theism" in Contentio Veritatis (London: Murray, 1916) p.33.
83. Tennant, *op.cit.* Vol.2 p.127.
84. Rashdall, "Theism" *op.cit.* p.32.
85. *ibid.* p.33.
86. *ibid.* p.33.
87. Pringle-Pattison, *op.cit.* p.387n.
88. Rashdall "Theism" *op.cit.* p.37.
89. Pringle-Pattison, *op.cit.* p.303.
90. *ibid.* p.304.
91. *ibid.* p.305.
92. *ibid.* p.315.
93. *ibid.* p.315.
94. Mascall, *op. cit.* p.97.

95. Compare Tennant, op.cit. Vol.2 p.127: "an antithesis between two abstractions, nature and will, is set up; and the creation of the world is regarded as the outcome of the former of them alone" with Mensbrugge op.cit.p.69: "there is a marked tendency among Western divines today to explain the problem of creation by linking it to God's Will instead of to God's Nature.... But the real question is not whether the limitation is self-willed or a law of God's Nature (although it certainly is self-willed, or better, 'wanted'). Will and Nature are not only inseparable but identical, as Will is of the Nature of Mind or Spirit" and Matthews, God op.cit.p.208: "though it may be a necessity of God's nature that He should create something, what He creates is the result of a free act."
96. W. Temple, Christus Veritas (London: Macmillan,1924) p.274.
97. *ibid.* p.275.
98. *ibid.* p.94.
99. *ibid.*
100. *ibid.* p.96.
101. *ibid.*
102. *ibid.* "A parallel difficulty besets the characteristically Greek conceptions of God: cf. the God of Aristotle, who, just because His knowledge is perfect, is wholly unaware of the very existence of this imperfect world!" Compare Tennant, op.cit. Vol.2 p.169.
103. Temple Christus: op.cit.p.98.
104. *ibid.* p.280.
105. In The Mystics of the Church, (London: James Clarke,1925) Evelyn Underhill comments that the translation of Boehme's works into English, begun in 1644, was completed in 1661. A reaction similar to that brought about by the publication of his work in Germany can be seen in this country. One expression of that reaction was the emergence of the mystical poets, among whom Evelyn Underhill numbers Traherne, together with Vaughan and Herbert.

106. Temple, Christus, op.cit.p.274.
107. Matthews, God, op.cit.p.203.
108. *ibid* p.206.
109. *ibid*.
110. *ibid*.
111. W.R.Matthews, Signposts to God (London: S.C.M., 1936) p.70.
112. *ibid* p.71.
113. *ibid* p.75.
114. In this section of the book (entitled "Some Further Answers to Questions") on the question of the relation of God to the world, Matthews refers his readers to Berdyaev's Destiny of Man.
115. Matthews, God, op.cit.p.213.
116. *ibid* p.214.
117. *ibid*.
118. *ibid* p.215.
119. *ibid* p.212.
120. In connection with the moral aspect of creativeness, Berdyaev says of imagination that "a man devoid of imagination is incapable of creative moral activity and of building up a better life." DM 183.
121. DM 163.
122. In connection with this Berdyaev refers us to Boehme's Mysterium Magnum and De Signatura Rerum. He also points out that A.Koyré emphasizes the role of imagination in his book La Philosophie de Jacob Boehme (Paris: Vrin, 1929) cf.DM 184.
123. *ibid*; cf.97.
124. FS 231.
125. BE 184.
126. SF 127.
127. *ibid* 128.
128. DM 97,98.
129. MCA 71.
130. *ibid*.
131. *ibid* 72.
132. Matthews refers (God op.cit.,p.213) to a two part work by E.D.Fawcett, The World as Imagination (London: Macmillan, 1916). In the brief preface Fawcett, commenting on what he sees as the false ideas about



the individual, the state, and the systems which rule the world, he offers his book as an experiment because "a reconstruction of philosophical, religious, ethical, etc. beliefs, in the interests of ourselves and of our successors, will be imperative." It will be remembered that Berdyaev and his friends Bulgakov et al, emerged from a similar background in Russia and, having passed through a phase of idealism, spent the rest of their lives in an 'experiment' which, in the case of Berdyaev, covers those areas suggested by Fawcett. A brief survey of the scope and approach of Fawcett on this subject may be obtained by reading the glossary, pp. 605-623.

133. Matthews, *ibid* p.230.
134. *ibid* p.230.
135. *ibid* p.231.
136. *ibid* p.228.
137. DM 74.
138. FS 192.
139. O.F.Clarke, Introduction to Berdyaev (London: Bles, 1950) p.180.
140. N.Gorodetzky, The Humiliated Christ in Russian History (London; S.P.C.K.,1938) p.viii Commenting further on this aspect as a modern feature of Russian thought, Gorodetzky quotes from an article by Berdyaev entitled "The Russian Religious Thought of the Nineteenth Century" which appeared in Sovremenija Zapissky (Contemporary Annals) in Paris in 1930. In this article Berdyaev maintains that "Russian thought became original and creative only in the nineteenth century," at which time it "was wounded by the theme of Christianity." (cf. Gorodetzky, pp.x,xi) cf. other works by Berdyaev which cover this subject: The Russian Idea, Dostoevsky, Leontiev.
141. Gorodetzky, *op.cit.*,p.156
142. on this point cf. above p.121 A full account of Berdyaev's treatment of this theme of eschatology is offered by C.S.Calian, The Significance of Eschatology in the Thought of Nicolas Berdyaev (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1965).

143. Gorodetzky, op.cit.,p.164 The idea of the "risk" involved in creation is a not uncommon one. Matthews quoted with approval the following from Tennant's Philosophical Theology op.cit.,vol 2 p.259: "The creation has involved what may be called risk, and, as we have argued, redemptive suffering is an element in the divine experience." (Quoted in God op.cit.,p.267) cf. H.U.von Balthasar, Elucidations (London: S.P.C.K., 1975) pp.51,52; J.Macquarrie, Principles of Christian Theology (London: S.C.M., 1977) p.254.
144. Gorodetzky, op.cit.,p.164.
145. ibid p.165.
146. ibid.
147. R.M.Relton, "Patripassianism" in Studies in Christian Doctrine (London: Macmillan, 1960).
148. ibid p.58.
149. ibid p.57.
150. ibid p.59.
151. ibid p.79.
152. J.K.Mozley, The Impassibility of God (Cambridge University Press, 1926).
153. B.R.Brasnett, The Suffering of the Impassible God (London: S.P.C.K., 1928).
154. ibid pp.153,154.
155. TR 61.
156. DM 47.
157. MH 58.
158. DM 33.
159. Brasnett, op.cit.,p.155.
160. FS 193.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 6

1. e.g. J.Macquarrie, In Search of Humanity (London: S.C.M., 1983) pp.5,13,21,&c; A.Louth, Discerning the Mystery (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983) pp.59,60  
It is acknowledged that reference has been made here only to the influence of Berdyaev's work in Europe. Much more could be said of the interest in America of such theologians as Whitehead, Tillich, Niebuhr, Brunner et al. in Berdyaev's thought. There is much evidence for American interest in the Personalist movement also. The American Maritain Association sponsors a number of Conferences and publishes a newsletter; the Jacques Maritain Center at Notre Dame, Indiana, publishes a Journal entitled Catholicism in Crisis.
2. e.g. Christendom Vol.V No.18 (June 1935) 140.
3. E.Porret, La philosophie chrétienne en russie (Neuchatel: Éditions de la Baconnière, 1944) p.166.
4. "Premier étude sur Jacob Boehme" in J.Boehme, Mysterium Magnum (Paris: Aubier, 1945) p.25.
5. J.L.Segundo, Berdiaeff: Une réflexion chrétienne sur la personne (Paris: Aubier, 1963) p.410n.
6. *ibid.*
7. W.Bosworth, Catholicism and Crisis in Modern France: French Catholic Groups at the Threshold of the Fifth Republic (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962) p.314.
8. K.O.von Aretin, The Papacy and the Modern World (London: George Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1970) p.231; Z.Aradi, John XXIII: Pope of the Council (London: Burns & Oates, 1961) p.144 Peter Hebblethwaite has been working on this subject; his book is to be published soon.
9. M.Kelly, Pioneer of the Catholic Revival: The Ideas and Influence of Emmanuel Mounier (London: Sheed & Ward, 1979) p.173.
10. R.L.Cramp, The Papal Ideology of Social Reform: A Study in Historical Development 1878-1967 (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1969) p.41.
11. A.Fremantle (Ed.) The Social Teachings of the Church (New York: The New American Library, 1963) p.140f.

12. von Aretin, op.cit.,p.235 It is interesting to note that Guardini had some knowledge of the Russian background from which Berdyaev came. He had explored this in a work on Dostoevsky. Unfortunately this is not available in english.
13. ibid 239.
14. A.Flannery (Ed.) "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church" ("Lumen Gentium") in Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1975) p.350; cf.p.364.
15. E.W.Rauch Jr., Politics and Belief in Contemporary France: Emmanuel Mounier and Christian Democracy 1932-1950 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972) p.312.
16. Flannery, op.cit., "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" ("Gaudium et Spes") p.904.
17. J.Ratzinger, "The Dignity of the Human Person" in H.Vorgrimler (Ed.) Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II (London: Burns & Oates, 1969) Vol.V p.121.
18. ibid.
19. Kelly, op.cit., p.9.
20. Ratzinger, op.cit., p.128.
21. cf. above, p.62.
22. cf. above, p.133f.
23. K.Rahner, Theological Investigations (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961) Vol.I p.298.
24. ibid 311; cf. Vol.IV pp.165-188.
25. Flannery, op.cit., "Gaudium et Spes" p.917.
26. Ratzinger, op.cit., p.139.
27. Flannery, op.cit., "Gaudium et Spes" p.926.
28. ~~O.Semmelroth~~, "The Community of Mankind" in H.Vorgrimler (Ed.) Commentary op.cit., p.166.
28. Flannery, op.cit., "Gaudium et Spes" p.925.
29. cf. above, p.110.
30. Semmelroth, op.cit., p.167.
31. cf. above, p.134.
32. Ratzinger, op.cit., p.121.
33. A.Auer, "Man's Activity Throughout the World" in H.Vorgrimler (Ed.) Commentary op.cit., p.188 Contrasted with this is the view of Karl Barth who sees man's

- existence as being worked out within the limitations of a freedom which acts as the framework for the command of God. cf. Church Dogmatics (Edinburgh: T & T Clarke, 1961) Vol III.4 p.595f.
35. Flannery, op.cit., "Gaudium et Spes" p.913.
  36. Ratzinger, op.cit., p.122.
  37. Barth, op.cit., p.117.
  38. ibid.
  39. MCA 184; cf. DM 79.
  40. Barth, op.cit., p.160.
  41. R.Radford Reuther, Sexism and God-Talk: Towards a Feminist Theology (London: S.C.M., 1983) p.96.  
cf. S.Maitland, A Map of the New Country: Women and Christianity (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983):  
"As descendents of Eve we claim an imaginative closeness to God, a personal interest in God's salvation. Eve, on the other hand, and her daughters by implication, summon up a much closer and more sinister connection - as well as being stupid, easily swayed and generally second-class. The idea she too was made in God's image is carefully obscured." p.166.
  42. MCA 186.
  43. Reuther, op.cit., p.100.
  44. ibid 60.
  45. S.McFague, Metaphorical Theology (London: S.C.M., 1983) p.10.
  46. ibid.
  47. ibid 13.
  48. FS 83,65.
  49. cf. above p.192.
  50. S.Maitland, op.cit., p.182.
  51. N.Slee, "Parables and Women's Experience" in Modern Churchman New Series Vol.XXVI No 2 (1984) p.27.
  52. MCA 72.
  53. Quoted in S.Maitland, op.cit., p.178.
  54. E.Mounier, Personalism (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952) p.109.
  55. Louth, op.cit., p.2.
  56. Segundo, op.cit., p.384; cf. L.Malevez, Le Message chrétienne et le myth. La théologie de Rudolph Bultmann

(Paris: Desclée Museum Lessianum, 1954); R. Marle,  
Bultmann et l'interprétation du nouveau testament  
(Paris: Aubier, 1956).

57. Macquarrie, op.cit., pp.255,256.

58. M-M. Davy, Nicolas Berdyaev: Man of the Eighth Day  
(London: Bles, 1967) pp.133,134.

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