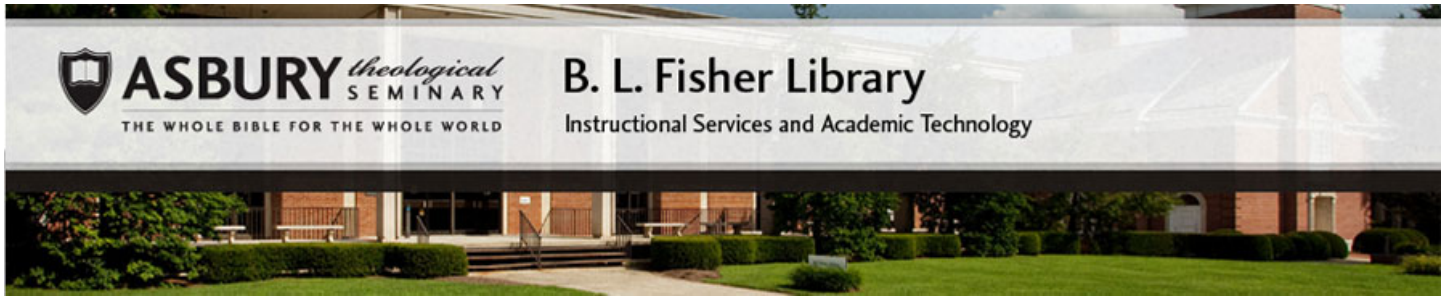

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A PANNENBERGIAN PROPOSAL FOR DOING RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY IN THE LIGHT OF ITS CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT IN THE THOUGHT OF KANT, HEGEL, AND KIERKEGAARD.

BY

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INTRODUCTION

Since the Enlightenment, religious epistemology has been the focus of much debate among the theologians and philosophers. Through most of church history, Scripture and dogma had been looked upon as the final sources of truth and revelation. With modern philosophy gradually establishing itself as autonomous from such authorities, it raised key questions concerning the traditional idea of revelation. To be sure, these questions have been raised throughout church history. Yet it has been in the past three centuries under the impact of modern thought that such an acute emphasis has been placed upon religious epistemology. With the eccelesiastical authority of the Church called into question and the supernatural inspiration of Scripture largely rejected, the traditional idea of revelation seemed to be precluded. How then could God be known? Could reason be trusted? Could one rely upon personal experience or ethics as a means of knowing God? These questions confronted the "enlightened person".

These critical concerns of enlightened thought brought about a reformation of religious epistemology. Kant, Hegel, and Kierkegaard were pivotal in the recasting of traditional thought. Their analyses of the issues and synthetic works are significant sources for contemporary thinking in religious epistemology.

Kant inaugurated a heightened espistemological consciousness in philosophical theology.[1] He divorced religious belief from pure reason, i.e., consciousness of morality and ethics, which are mere inferences

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[1]Carl E. Braaten, History and Hermeneutics, New Directions in Theology Today, Vol. II (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966), p. 12.

growing out of the practical use of pure reason. This effectively places theology beyond the reach of pure knowledge and roots it in the faculty of moral intiution. This is not to say that one cannot think about theology but that religious belief is rooted in one's moral awareness which is a given. Kant reasons that this a priori moral awareness exists within every person.

Separating knowledge from religious belief precludes the possibility of history serving as a means of revelation since history is deistically enclosed within the realm of the finite and excludes the realm of the infinite. Historical revelation necessitates a unity between knowledge and belief. Therefore Kantian epistemology creates a problem for philosophers and theologians who wish to set forth history as the arena of divine revelation.

Hegel reacted against Kant's separation of knowledge and faith. He asserts that all aspects of reality are open to rational inquiry including metaphysics. Consequently, Hegel brings faith into close association with knowledge. Based upon this unity of faith and knowledge he posits that God has revealed himself in history. If one is to have knowledge of God, then one must critically examine history. For Hegel, reason serves as the means of perceiving divine revelation. Knowledge is the road from the finite to the infinite.

Kierkegaard's epistemological stand is in some ways akin to Kantian thought in that both men assert that one cannot "leap outside the confines" of one's finite existence.[2] Kierkegaard declares, "I am only a poor existing human being, not competent to contemplate the eternal

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[2]Anthony C. Thiselton, The Two Horizons (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 27.

either eternally or theocentrically, but compelled to content myself with existing."[3] Unlike Kant, Kierkegaard does not rely upon a universal a priori moral consciousness. He views humanity as having little awareness of God unless God initiates revelation to an individual on a personal level.

Kierkegaard viewed Hegel's attempt to transcend the finite as a total failure. Admittedly, much of Kierkegaard's assault upon Hegel was based upon a caricature of Hegel. Yet Hegel did, from a logical point of view, fail to come to full appreciation of the difference between essence and existence.[4] Hegel's union of the finite with the infinite occurs only essentially but not existentially.

Kierkegaard greatly influences twentieth century religious epistemology especially through the writing of Martin Heidegger. The effect of his existentialist epistemology cripples the faculty of reason to apprehend revelation from the standpoint of critical history. In light of existentialist thought, historical events are, by definition, nonexistent. Existence is present, "the now". Thus, to speak in terms of past or future events is to speak of things beyond existence. To be sure, past events can affect the present. Past events can and should be studied. However, past events can never serve as the focus of revelation. For God to reveal himself in existence is to reveal himself

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[3]Søren Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, trans. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie. (Princeton: Princeton University, 1941), p. 190.

[4]Richard R. Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason, (New York: Schribner's Sons, 1957), p. 134.

in the present. Belief in God emerges only from the existential moment of the divine encounter. Historical knowledge is altogether irrelevant for Kierkegaard.

Instead of past events being identified with revelation, revelation becomes the source of interpreting Biblical events. This effectively divides history and faith. Every Biblical event, then, is split between the historical facts and its spiritual significance. The factual aspect of history does not exist, yet the spiritual aspect does because it contains truths which are significant for the present. Nevertheless, the spiritual side of history is always interpreted through the present religious experience based upon an existentialist idea of revelation.

Pannenberg addresses twentieth century existentialist epistemology. His approach to religious knowledge is similar to Hegel's approach in that he does not allow for an absolute separation of knowledge and faith as did Kant and Kierkegaard. Pannenberg stands in contrast to Hegel by maintaining that the absolute unity of knowledge and faith comes at the end of history. Hegel maintains that total unity of the two can be a present reality.

In contrast to modern existentialism as well as to Kant and Kierkegaard, Pannenberg proposes that the focus of divine revelation is history. He presupposes the idea of truth as a unity of event and significance. Therefore, Pannenberg does not permit any compartmentalizing of truth, e.g., religious truth as opposed to historical truth.

This thesis will review the basic epistemologies of Kant, Hegel, and Kierkegaard as they relate to the problem of revelation and history, noting particularly how they influenced each other. Then, the recent response to the problem of religious epistemology as it has been developed

in the synthetic work of Pannenberg will be examined. Particular attention will be given to analyzing the influence which Kant, Hegel, and Kierkegaard have had upon Pannenberg's theological development.

PART ONE

THREE PHILOSOPHICAL SOURCES FOR UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEMPORARY PROBLEM OF REVELATION AND KNOWLEDGE

CHAPTER ONE

KANT

Kant and Hume

In The Critique of Pure Reason Kant attempts to establish the validity of knowledge and the impossibility of traditional metaphysics. It will be seen that his epistemology of the phenomenal casts a pronounced shadow over metaphysics.

Kant's agenda for addressing the issue of epistemology was influenced by David Hume's empiricism. He writes: "I freely confess that it was the thought of David Hume which many years ago first interrupted my dogmatic slumbers and gave an entirely new direction to my inquiries in the field of speculative philosophy."[1] Hume's type of empiricism logically led him to skepticism.

Both Kant and Hume contend that the bases for observation is through our five senses. One is acted upon by external stimuli. Hume, however, maintains not only that sense stimuli are the source of all knowledge, but that all knowledge is reduced to sense impressions and nothing more. This idea has interesting consequences.

Take Hume's classic example of billiard balls. One can observe a billiard ball striking another billiard ball. Consequently the second

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[1]Immanuel Kant, Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), p. 44.

ball moves. The only valid observation one can make is one ball struck the second ball and the second ball moved. Did the first ball cause the second ball to move? This, according to Hume, one could not know as a matter of fact but only as a mere inference. At best one can say one billiard ball seems to have an effect on the second ball. There is no discernable power which produces effect. All one observes in the billiard balls moving are temporal sequences. Because of Hume's postulate that all knowledge must come via sense impressions, the law of cause and effect cannot be known as objective reality but only inferred, based upon the observation of temporal succession. The concept of cause and effect is therefore defined by means of the concept of temporal succession.[2] The implications of this view of reality on the sciences are enormous.

A second outgrowth of Humean empiricism is a skepticism of anything which is beyond sensory impressions. An object is the sum of its physical properties. But this in itself is problematic. Can one use the category of "property" in Humean empiricism? Logically no, because to speak of "property" is to speak of a "thing" which possesses the property. It is the existence of this "thing" which Hume doubts because all there is to reality so far as one can know is a series of impressions.

The end result of Hume's epistemology is a denial of knowledge and the collapse of those concepts one traditionally employs in order to speak about and to understand reality.[3] Oddly enough, if Humean

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[2]Justus Hartnack, Kant's Theory of Knowledge, trans. M. Homes Hartshorne (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1967), p. 8.

[3]Ibid., p. 10

empiricism is true, then there is no knowledge and if there is no knowledge wherein lies the validity of Hume's epistemology? "If there is knowledge, then Humean empiricism is false."[4]

Kant found himself with the task of answering Hume. In some measure the integrity of the sciences was at stake. Kant deals with the matter in his first critique. The key question is: "What and how much can understanding and reason know apart from all experience?"[5] The answer to this question lies in Kant's three types of judgment, analytic - a priori, synthetic - a posteriori, and synthetic - a priori. Kant and Hume agreed on the validity of the first two types of judgment. They also agreed that analytical judgment gave no knowledge of reality. They are only expressions for an analysis of the concept of subject.[6] Synthetic judgment deals with sense data. The category of synthetic - a priori judgment serves in Kantian thought as the hinge pin of his epistemology and this is the point at which Hume and Kant part ways.

Kant's a priori

Kant rejects the notion that all our concepts are derived from experience as Locke's theory holds. Nor does Kant maintain the notion of innate ideas. He believes there to be concepts and principles which the reason derives from within itself on the occasion of experience.[7] Thus, a child is not born with a sense of causality. But on the occasion of experience, its

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[4]Ibid.

[5]Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy, Vol. VI, Wolf to Kant (Westminster: Newman Press, 1964), p. 213.

[6]Hartnack, p. 12.

[7]Copleston, p. 212.

reason derives the concept from within itself. Its a priori-ness grows out of the fact that the concept is not derived from experience but is applied to and, in a sense, governs experience. Therefore, a priori concepts are grounded in the mind's own structure.[8] This concept or type of judgment is empty of all empirical content or material. There exists knowledge which does not arise out of experience but yet is synthetic. Kant writes: "That all our knowledge begins with experience there can be no doubt . . . but though all knowledge begins with experiences, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience."[9]

Before understanding the nature of synthetic a priori judgments, one must first understand what Kant means by analytical a priori and synthetical a posteriori judgments. Analytic judgments are those in which the predicate is contained, at least implicitly, in the concept of the subject. They are said to be "explicative judgments"[10] because the predicate does not add to the concept of the subject anything which is not already contained in it explicitly or implicitly. The veracity of analytical judgments depends upon the law of noncontradition.[11] Synthetic judgments affirm or deny of a subject, a predicate which is not contained in the concept of the subject. Kant calls them "ampliative" or "augmentative judgments"[12] because they add something to the concept of the subject.[13]

Kant describes two types of synthetical judgment as earlier noted, synthetic a posteriori and synthetic a priori. In all synthetic judgments

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[8]Ibid, p. 213. [9]Kant, p. 41. [10]Ibid., p. 48.

[11]Copleston, p. 219. [12]Kant, p. 48

[13]Copleston, p. 219.

a connection exists between the subject and predicate. With synthetic a posteriori judgments the predicate cannot be analytically deduced from the subject. Take the proposition, "All seminary students are tall." This is synthetic in that the predicate "tall" adds a quality to the subject "seminary students." It is a posteriori because only after one examines empirically all seminary students can one posit the stated proposition.

In defining a synthetic a priori, Kant considers this proposition. "Everything which happens has a cause."[14] For Kant the relationship of the predicate "having a cause" is not an explicative judgment; but at the same time it is a priori. It is characterized by necessity and strict universality which is a mark of a priori judgments. This proposition is not saying "cause and effect" is deduced empirically as if there were only a high probability of events having causes based upon experimentation. In Kant's mind the proposition is absolute. One knows in advance, a priori, that everything must have a cause.[15]

An important note is that in Kantian thought there can be no absolute certainty that effect "b" is a result of cause "a." The measure of certainty that "a" caused "b" must be determined empirically. But the idea that there exists a particular cause for "b" is absolute. At this point Kant epistemologically lays a firm foundation for the validity of the sciences. If Kant's hypothesis can be accepted, the problem of relating empirical elements and rational elements in knowledge will be solved. All knowledge beings with experience but does not

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[14]Kant, p. 50. [15]Copleston, p. 222.

arise out of experience.[16] If Kant is correct, then all knowledge contains elements that are not drawn from experience but supplied by the mind itself.[17] This is crucial to the Kantian system.

The main objective of Critique of Pure Reason is to prove the validity of synthetic a priori judgments. The volume is subdivided into three sections, the "Transcendental Aesthetic," where Kant addresses synthetic judgments in mathematics, the "Transcendental Analytic," where synthetic a priori judgments are examined in physics and the "Transcendental Dialectic," where he deals with synthetic a priori judgments in metaphysics.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to critique Kant's proof for synthetic a priori judgments in a detailed and systematic fashion. But a brief overview of the various synthetic a priori categories existing within the mind is essential to this study.

Transcendental Aesthetic

In the "Transcendental Aesthetic," Kant explains how synthetic a priori judgments are made. The key to Kant's argumentation is his concept of space and time. In defining space Kant sets forth four points of analysis.

First, "Space is not an empirical concept derived from external experience."[18] In fact, space is a presupposition for being able to

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[16] Kant, p. 41.

[17] W. T. Jones, A History of Western Philosophy, 2nd rev. ed. Vol. VI, Kant and the Nineteenth Century, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975), p. 26.

[18] Hartnack, p. 18.

observe at all. Space cannot be the object of observation, but rather it is a necessary condition for the universally valid and necessary truth that things must be found in space.

Second, "Space is a necessary, a priori representation that underlies all outer intuitions."[19] One cannot imagine that there is no space. Kant is not talking about a psychological deficiency as though if one were another type of being one could imagine the absence of space. The problem is a logical one. The thought of spacelessness is logically absurd.

Third, "Space is not a discursive concept, but a pure (i.e., a priori) intuition."[20] In other words, space is not something one thinks quantitatively. One cannot think of two spaces side by side but, instead, one space split into fractions. Space is not constituted by portions of space. Space simply is space.

Fourth, "Space is not a concept but an a priori intuition."[21] A concept can have many instances. There are many instances of books but only one concept of book. In other words, a concept can be demonstrated by separate instances of that concept. Such is not the case with space. One cannot speak in terms of a particular instance of space. Space is not a concept but an intuition. Thus, in order to do geometry one must possess the intuition of space and, according to Kant, everyone has that intuition.

Kant sets forth four points of analysis concerning time. 1) Time is not an empirical concept. 2) Time is a necessary idea. 3) Time

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[19]Ibid. [20]Ibid., p. 19. [21]Ibid., p. 25.

is not a discursive concept but an a priori intuition. 4) Time is not formed by the additions of units of time, i.e., it is not a concept but intuition.[22] The argumentation of these four points of analysis runs parallel to Kant's treatment of space; therefore, this writer shall not expound upon it.

Transcendental Analytic

Kant's section, "Transcendental Analytic," is long and extremely complex, but an overview is needed. This writer shall briefly point out key concepts and categories expounded upon in his critique.

For Kant human knowledge arises out of two sources in the mind. The first is the faculty of receiving impressions. One's sense intuition provides one with data. Second, thinking is a source of knowledge, that is to say, one must understand cognitively that which one receives through senses.[23] Both are needed to have real knowledge. Kant writes:

> Without sensibility no object would be given to us, and without the understanding no object would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty; intuitions without concepts are blind . . . . These two powers or faculties cannot exchange their functions. The understanding is incapable of intuiting, and the senses are incapable of thinking. It is only from the united co-operation of the two that knowledge can arise."[24]

Kant was the first philosopher to formulate unambiguously the interaction of sense data and an a priori structural or relational faculty.[25] This distinction strikes a compromise between the empiricist and the rationalist. Knowledge, in Kant's thinking, is not an either/or

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[22]Ibid., p. 25ff. [23]Copleston, p. 247.

[24]Kant, p. 92. [25]Jones, p. 34.

proposition concerning subject and object. Instead, one has real interaction between subject (which supplies the concepts) and object (which is the source of sense data) resulting in knowledge.

An important faculty in Kant's thought is that of judgment. He writes:

> We can reduce all operations of the understanding to judgments, so that the understanding can be represented as the power of judging. For it is, according to what has been said above, a power of thinking.[26]

For Kant the power of thought and judging are the same. In judging, one unifies different representations to form one cognition by means of concept.[27] This is to say, concepts are the synthesizing elements in knowledge. Therefore, to judge is to synthesize, and the way one synthesizes can be categorized in one of twelve categories. Kant draws heavily from Aristotelian logic in enumerating types of judgment.[28] The following is a list of judgments and categories. "Judgments" have to do with understanding and "Categories" have to do with sensibility.

Judgments	Categories
I. Quantity	I. Quantity
(i) Universal	(i) Unity
(ii) Particular	(ii) Plurality
(iii) Singular	(iii) Totality
II. Quality	II. Quality
(iv) Affirmative	(iv) Reality
(v) Negative	(v) Negation
(vi) Infinite	(vi) Limitation
III. Relation	III. Relation
(vii) Categorical	(vii) Inherence and subsistence (substance and accident

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[26]Kant, p. 106. [27]Copleston, p. 249. [28]Jones, p. 35

(continued)

	(viii) Hypothetical	(viii) Casusality and dependence (cause and effect)
	(ix) Disjunctive	(ix) Community (reciptrocity between agent and patient)
IV.	Modality	IV. Modality
	(x) Problematic	(x) Possibility-impossibility
	(xi) Assertoric	(xi) Existence-non-existence
	(xii) Apodictic	(xii) Necessity-contingency[29]

For Kant, the twelve types of judgment (understanding) correspond to the twelve types of categories (sensibility). A brief explanation of misjudgments is in order.

The first type of judgment is "quantity". By necessity all judgments have quality. If, for example, the judgment is about aardvarks, the judgment will either be about all aardvarks, some aardvarks, or a particular aardvark. Thus, judgments of quantity are either universal, particular, or singular.[30]

All judgments must also have "quality". One can say this animal is an aardvark, which is an affirmative judgment, or one can say, this is not an aardvark, which is a negative judgment. According to Kant, one also can say this is a non-aardvark. He calls this an infinite judgment. Kant's reason for using of the term is this: In making the judgment that the animal in question is a non-aardvark, one has therewith placed that creature in the infinite domain or unlimited class of that which is not included under the concept "aardvark." This type of judgment is affirmative judgment, "This is an aardvark."[31]

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[29]Kant, p. 107. [30]Ibid., p. 113.

[31]Hartnack, p. 34.

A judgment must have a relation. Kant posits three types of relations: categorical, hypothetical, and disjunctive. Categorical judgment is a subject-predicate relation. "The sky is blue" is a categorical judgment. The predicate blue is a quality about the subject sky. In hypothetical judgments there is a relation between ground and consequence.[32] "If I do not study, I will fail my courses." Not studying will be the reason for failing the courses which is a consequence. Finally, a disjunctive judgment states that two or more judgments exclude each other and that all the judgments that comprise the disjunction exhaust all possibilities. If one says "she is a teacher or a ditch digger or a zoo keeper," the relation according to Kant's use of disjunction is such that she can be only one of the three possibilities. If one knows she is neither a teacher or ditch digger, then she is necessarily a zoo keeper.

Kant's fourth and final judgment is modality. Either a statement is possibly true, or it is true as a matter of fact, or it is necessarily true. The statement "I shall live beyond the age of 30," is a problematic judgment. The fact that Kant lived between the years 1724 and 1894 is a matter of fact or "assertoric". If one knew all of the factors in his birth on the twenty-second of April and knew for certain of his death on the twelfth of February then one could make, according to Kant, a necessary judgment, a judgment necessarily true. He calls this "apodictic."

Much more could be said about Kant's "Transcendental Analytic." It is a long and detailed treatment of phenomenalogical epistemology.

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[32] Ibid.

It is sufficient to say, however, that in positing his synthetic a priori categories and intuition, Kant feels that he has given science a firm epistemological foundation and adequate protection against Humean skepticism. As was mentioned earlier, Kant's attitude toward reason being applied to metaphysics is a natural and logical outgrowth of his arguments in "Transcendental Aesthetic" and "Analytic." In these two sections Kant meticulously delineates an epistemological scheme for the phenomenal level of reality. By their own design the Aethetic and Analytic cannot be applied to metaphysics. The reason for this is seen in Kant's attitude that his own epistemology is definitive. If Kantian epistemology is the absolute definitive word on knowledge, then reason can have nothing to say about metaphysics.[33]

Transcendental Dialectic

A key to understanding Kant's "Transcendental Dialectic" is his bifurcation of phenomenon and noumenon. In The Critique of Pure Reason, Kant repeatedly emphasizes that the categories are only applicable to that which exists in time and space. One may apply the categories empirically, but they have no transcendent applicability. In essence reality can be "known" only as far as one can come into first-hand intuitive contact with it and rationally apprehend and interpret what such intuitions yield.

The phenomenal world is a world of structured laws which can

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[33]Immanuel Kant, Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone, trans. Theodore M. Green and Hoyt Hudson, (London: Open Court Pub., 1934), p. xxxviii.

be apprehended by rationality. But Kant with this scheme limits phenomenon to science. Morality and religion do not fall within the bounds of phenomenon. Morality and religion are, in Kant's scheme, noumenal realities. In developing his idea of phenomenal reality Kant wishes to obviate Berkeleyan subjectivity; thus, he suggests the possibility of an ultimate or noumenal reality. This reality cannot be apprehended through sensuous intuition or grasped through reason.[34]

Speculative reason can never afford one knowledge of the nature of ultimate reality. In fact, not recognizing the limitations of reason does great violence to religion and morality. Kant states:

> When empiricism itself, as frequently happens, becomes dogmatic in its attitude towards ideas, and confidently denies whatever lies beyond the sphere of its intuitive knowledge, it betrays the same lack of modesty; and this is all the more reprehensible owing to the irreparable injury which is thereby caused to the practical interest of reason.[35]

Exactly what is noumenon? Kant defines it both positively and negatively.

> If by noumenon we understand a thing in so far as it is not the object of our sensuous intuition, thus abstracting from our mode of intuiting it, this is a noumenon in the negative sense of the term.[36]

The noumenon cannot be the object of sensuous intuition or any type of intuition. Stated positively Kant maintains:

> If we understand by it (the noumenon) an object of a non-sensuous intuition, we then assume a particular kind of intuition, namely intellectual intuition, which, however, is not ours and of which we cannot see even the possibility; and this would be a noumenon in the positive sense of the term.[37]

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[34]Ibid., p. xxxix.

[35]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p. 427.

[36]Ibid., p. 267.

[37]Ibid.

Thus, the noumenon is a reality but one lacks the faculties to apprehend it. Kant states: "What objects may be in themselves and apart from all this receptivity of our sensibility remains completely unknown to us."[38] Thus he bifurcates reality into two levels, phenomenon and noumenon.

To speak of religion in Kantian terms is to speak of morality. It is meaningless to talk of morality without presupposing a freedom of the will rooted in the noumenal realm. Yet, for Kant there is a type of religious faith which can give the same degree of certainty as any phenomenal knowledge. He expresses this in a published lecture given at the University of Konigsberg.

> Conviction is of two kinds, dogmatic and practical. The former has to be sought in mere concepts a priori, and has to be apodictic. But we have already seen that by the path of mere speculation we cannot convince ourselves with certainty of God's existence. At most the speculative interest of our reason compels us to assume such a being as a subjectively necessary hypothesis. But reason has no capacity sufficient to demonstrate it. Our need makes us wish for such a demonstration, but our reason cannot lay hold of it. It is true that I can argue from the existence of the world and from its accidental appearances to the existence of some supreme original being. Yet there still remains to us another kind of conviction, a practical one. It is a special field, which gives us far more satisfying prospects than dry speculation can ever yield. For if something presupposed on subjective grounds is only a hypothesis, a presupposition on objective grounds is a necessary postulate. These objective grounds are either theoretical (as in mathematics) or practical (as in morality). For moral imperatives, since they are grounded in the nature of our being as free and rational creatures, have as much evidence and certainty as mathematical propositions originating in the nature of things ever could have. Thus a necessary practical postulate is the same thing in regard to our practical interest as an axiom is in regard to our speculative interest.[39]

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[38] Ibid., p. 87.

[39] Immanuel Kant, Lectures On Philosophical Theology, trans. Allen W. Wood and Gertrude M. Clark. (London: Cornell Univ., 1978), p. 122.

Thus, Kant delineates knowledge (pure reason) and faith (practical reason). He wishes to demonstrate that the method of phenomenal knowledge is unsuitable to religious belief or faith. It is inferior to religious faith. Kant continues in the same lecture cited above:

> Such a moral theology not only provides us with a convincing certainty of God's being, but it also has the great advantage that it leads us to religion, since it joins the thought of God firmly to our morality, and in this way it even makes better men of us.[40]

Kant precludes the possibility of stepping from phenomenal knowledge into noumenal religious belief with his Absurdum Practicum. Absurdum logicum is an absurdity in judgment. Absurdum Practicum occurs when it is shown that anyone who denies this or that would have to be, in Kant's words, "a scoundrel."[41] He lucidly states the error of making scientific knowledge tantamount to religious knowledge or moral belief.

> Our faith is not scientific knowledge, and thank heaven it is not! For God's wisdom is apparent in the very fact that we do not know that God exists, but should believe that God exists. For suppose we could attain to scientific knowledge of God's existence, through our experience or in some other way (even if the possibility of this knowledge cannot immediately be thought). And suppose further that we could really reach as much certainty through this knowledge as we do in intuition. Then in this case, all our morality would break down. In his every action, man would represent God to himself as a rewarder or avenger. This image would force itself involuntarily on his soul, and his hope for reward and fear of punishment would take the place of moral motives. Man would be virtuous out of sensuous impulses.[42]

Kant by this statement asserts not only two types of thought but the necessity of keeping the phenomenon and noumenon mutually exclusive, thus, separating knowledge of the phenomenal world and practical thought of religion and morality.

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[40]Ibid. [41]Ibid., p. 123. [42]Ibid.

A consequence of Kant's dichotomy between knowledge and faith is a divided "self". There is the empirical self and the noumenal self. The empirical self is subject to the determinative laws of the phenomenon. The noumenal self is free to make moral choices. Kant writes:

> The notion of causality as physical necessity, in opposition to the same notion as freedom, concerns only the existence of things so far as it is determinable in time, and, consequently, as phenomena, in opposition to their causality as things in themselves.[43]

Kant takes causality to be applicable only to the phenomenal world of which a person as a physical being is a part. Yet, Kant contends that a person is a moral creature thus necessitating freedom of will. He views these two truths as irreconcilable. "It is impossible to reconcile the necessity of causal relation with freedom: they are contradictory."[44] The resolution of this contradiction is to bifurcate religion and science, as well as to split a person into an empirical and metaphysical self.

This bifurcation marks most of Kant's critique of rationalistic metaphysics. He attempts to show the fallacy of applying phenomenal categories to the noumenon in three basic areas of rationalistic speculation: self, being-in-general, and God.

With regard to self, as mentioned earlier, there exist two distinct levels which are mutually exclusive. Kant writes in regard to rationalistic psychology that

> since the proposition "I think" (taken problematically) contains the form of each and every judgment of understanding and accompanies all categories as their vehicle, it is evident that the inferences from it admit only of a transcendental employment of the understanding. . . . We therefore propose to follow it, with a critical eye, through all the predicaments of pure psychology . . . .

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[43]Kant, Critique of Practical Reason, trans. T. K. Abbott. (Longmans Green, London, 1927), p. 188.

[44]Ibid.

> (1) In all judgment I am the determining subject of that relation which constitutes the judgment. That the "I", the "I" that thinks, can be regarded always as subject, as something which does not belong to thought as a mere predicate, must be granted. It is an apodeictic and indeed identical propisition; but it does not mean that I, as object, am for myself a self-subsistent being, or substance . . . .
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> (2) That the "I" of apperception, and therefore the "I" in every act of thought, is one, and cannot be resolved into a plurality of subjects, and consequently signifies a logically simple subject, is something already contained in the very concept of thought . . . . But this does not mean the thinking "I" is a simple substance . . . .
>
> The analysis, then, of the consciousness of myself in thought in general, yields nothing whatsoever towards the knowledge of myself as object. The logical exposition of thought in general has been mistaken for a metaphysical determination of the object . . . .
>
> The whole procedure of rational psychology is determined by a paralogism, which is exhibited in the following syllogism:
>
> That which cannot be thought otherwise than as subject does not exist otherwise than as subject, and is therefore substance.
>
> A thinking being, considered merely as such, cannot be thought otherwise than a subject. Therefore it exists also only as subject, that is, as substance.
>
> In the major premise we speak of a being that can be thought in general, in every relation, and therefore also as it may be given in intuition. But in the minor premise we speak of it only in so far as it regards itself, as subject, simply in relation to thought and the unity of consciousness, and not as likewise in relation to the intuition through which it is given as object to thought. Thus the conclusion is arrived at fallaciously.[45]

The fallacy to which Kant is calling attention is called "the fallacy of four terms."[46] A simple example of this is as follows:

major premise: All Greeks live in Kentucky.

minor premise: Kant is greek to me.

conclusion: Kant lives in Kentucky.

This syllogism contains not three but four terms: Greeks (persons), Kentucky, Kant, and greek (adjective). The error of this is that Greek is used in two different ways. So it is with Kant's example.

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[45]Ibid., pp. 370-1. [46]Jones, p. 52.

Self is used in two different ways, the self of the phenomenon and the noumenal self. Kant writes further:

> 'Thought' is taken in . . . two . . . totally different senses: in the major premise, as relating to an object as it may be given in intuition; in the minor premise, only as it consists in relation to self-consciousness. In this latter sense, no object whatsoever is being thought; all that is being represented is simply the relation to self as subject (as form of thought).[47]

As will be pointed out later, Hegel seeks a unity between the empirical and the transcendental realm. That is to say, when thought and being are wedded together, there can be no essential distinction between noumenon and the phenomenon.

A bifurcated self leads to the idea that the transcendental self (noumenon) is a self which cannot be experienced, because all experiences must come via time, space, and the categories earlier outlined. This has interesting consequences, as, for example, when this is made to bear upon the possibility of God revealing himself through the person of Jesus Christ. In fact, it effectively precludes that possibility. As will be seen later, Kierkegaard's epistemology runs parallel to Kant's, but at this point they are radically different.

One of the traditional topics of rationalistic metaphysics is knowing being-in-general. Kant posits four theses of rationalistic metaphysics and four antitheses and then shows that both the theses and antitheses can be proved. He concludes from this that one cannot know being-in-general. Following are the four theses and antitheses.

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[47]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p. 52.

Thesis	Antithesis
(1) The world has a beginning in time, and is also limited as regards space.	(1) The world has no beginning, and no limits in space; it is infinite as regards both time and space.
(2) Every composite substance in the world is made up of simple parts, and nothing anywhere exists save the simple or what is com posed of the simple.	(2) No composite thing in the world is made up of simple parts, and there nowhere exists in the world any-thing simple.
(3) Causality in accordance with laws of nature is not the only causality from which the appearances of the world can one and all be derived. To explain these appearances it is necessary to assume that there is also an other causality, that of freedom.	(3) There is no freedom; everything in the world takes place solely in accordance with laws of nature.
(4) There belongs to the world, either as its part or as its cause, a being that is absolutely neces sary.	(4) An absolutely necessary being nowhere exists in the world, nor does it exist outside the world as its cause.[48]

The position of the antithesis reflects an empirical-scientific point of view. In other words, it is restricted to only the "facts" as one experiences them. But the thesis position represents a wholly different aspect of reality. The cogency for the thesis position, Kant claims, gains support from

> a certain practical interest in which every right-thinking man, if he has understanding of what truly concerns him heartily shares. That the world has a beginning, that my thinking self is of simple and therefore indestructible nature, that it is free in its voluntary actions and raised above the compulsion of nature, and finally that all order in the things constituting the world is due to a primordial being, from which everything derives its unity and purposive connection--these are so many foundation stones of morals and religion. The antithesis robs use of all these supports, or at least appears to do so . . . .

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[48] Ibid., p. 397-421.

> If there is no primoridal being distinct from the world, if the world is without beginning and therefore without an Author, if our will is not free, and the soul is divisible and perishable like matter, moral ideas and principles lose all validity, and share in the fate of the transcendental ideas which served as their theoretical support.[49]

It must be emphasized that Kant firmly believes both thesis and antithesis to be true in every sense. Combined, the thesis and antithesis represent the whole of reality.[50] But the whole of reality cannot be experienced, only the antithesis or the phenomenal realm. Thus, Kant drives a firm wedge between the two parts of reality. This idea is dominant in Kant's critique of the traditional proofs of God's existence.

Proof of God's Existence

According to Kant, there are three major rationalistic proofs of God's existence. These are the ontological, the cosmological and the physico-theological proofs. In his Critique of Pure Reason, Kant attempts to demonstrate the invalidity of all three proofs. He starts with the ontological proof.

The general form of the ontological proof may be stated as follows:

> In the concept of a most perfect being existence is included. For if it were not, the concept would not be the concept of a most perfect being. Therefore, if such a being is possible, it necessarily exists. For existence is included in the full complement of its possibility. But the concept of a most perfect being is the concept of a possible being. Therefore, such a being necessarily exists.[51]

The idea of the Ens realissimum is the idea of an absolutely necessary being. If this being is possible, it exists. The idea of a merely

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[49] Ibid., pp. 424-25.

[50] Jones, p. 55.

[51] Copleston, p. 295.

possible necessary being is contradictory. Kant contends that it is not proper to talk about the idea of a merely possible "necessary being" being a contradiction. One may think that God does not exist at all. If this is the case, there is no contradiction since one has thought away God's existence. Kant states: "If you think away its existence, you think away the thing with all its predicates. How, then, can there be room for any contradiction?"[52]

Kant also contends that the argument from the idea of the Ens realissimum to its existence is worthless. Essentially, it is a tautology. If one introduces existence into the idea of being, then one can naturally conclude that it exists.[53] Kant's argument against the ontological proof is much more rigorous and detailed than this brief description. This is the most important argument because of Kant's strategy to link the other two arguments to the ontological proof making these dependent upon the supposed validity of the ontological argument.

Kant's idea of the cosmological argument for God's existence is based on Leibniz.

> If anything exists, an absolutely necessary being must also exist. Now, I at least exist. Therefore there also exists an absolutely necessary being. The minor premise contains an experience; the major premise reasons from an experience in general to the existence of a necessary being.[54]

Obviously Kant's point of criticism is on the inappropriateness of causality being applied to noumenal reality. One cannot use causality to transcend the world of sense-experience. Another point of criticism is that even if one could argue from causality one could say nothing

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[52]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, pp. 502-3.

[53]Copleston, p. 296.

[54]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p. 508.

more than there was a first cause. Nothing can be said concerning the attributes of the first cause.

The standard cosmological argument says more than that there is a first cause. According to Kant, the statements about the attributes of the first cause are based on the concept of Ens realissimum. "The necessary being is the Ens realissimum, the most real or perfect being,"[55] This, of course, makes the cosomological proof contingent upon the ontological proof.

The third argument is called the physico-theological proof. The essential elements of this proof runs as follows:

> First, we observe in the world manifest signs of purposeful arrangement; that is, of adaptation of means to ends. Secondly, this adaptation of means to ends is contingent, in the sense that it does not belong to the nature of things. Thirdly, there must exist, therefore, at least one cause of this adaptation, and this cause or these causes must be intelligent and free. Fourthly, the reciprocal relations existing between the different parts of the world, relations which produce an harmonious system analogous to a work of art, justify our inferring that there is one, and only one such cause.[56]

Kant's critique of the third proof is similar to the critique of the second proof. He states: "All laws regarding the transition from effects to causes . . . relate solely to possible experience . . . to the object of the sensible world."[57] This of course goes back to his separation of phenomenon and noumenon. From the physico-theological argument one could at best, according to Kant, argue for an "architect of the world"[58] but not necessarily a creator of the world. Kant also argues

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[55]Copleston, p. 298. [56]Ibid., p. 299.

[57]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, pp. 518-19.

[58]Ibid., p. 522.

that the physico-theological proof is dependent upon the cosmological proof in that it must appeal to causation in some fashion. Thus, the third proof is indirectly related to the first proof, the ontological argument.

In dismantling all the rationalistic proofs of God's existence, and silencing all metaphysic, Kant has cleared the way for his moral theology. A detailed treatment of Kant's moral theology is beyond the scope of this paper; but, in a word, he places all demonstration of God's existence upon human moral awareness which is rooted in the noumenal. Thus, God has nothing to do with the phenomenon. This is indicative of Kantian deism. This, in turn, bears greatly upon his idea of history as it relates to God.

Kant and History

Kant's view of history grows out of his epistemological model. Foundational to this view is his concept of time. Kant places the entity of time in the phenomenal realm. He presupposes a fundamental unity of the phenomenal. Thus, any event in this realm has an impact upon all other events. In the Kantian system, time is connected to substance. Without substance there would be no time. The only way one can perceive time is by relating it to objects of the external world. Temporal events are not cognizable without some type of permanent material frame of reference, i.e., the sun or moon. The combination of an objective existence of time and one's a priori concept of such a thing allows one to recognize and measure time.

It follows from this unitary system of temporal relations that everything which happens must happen in a single history, the history

of eternal (phenomenal) substance.[59] The unity Kant proposes to be indicative of phenomenal reality precludes any activity of God in that reality, i.e., historical divine revelation, because it is a closed system.

A major axiom of historical knowledge is that every historical event is situated somewhere in past time. This axiom cannot be empirically discovered in the course of inquiry, but it is an a priori condition of historical knowledge.[60] Certainly, historical knowledge is not purely a priori. One empirically observes temporal events. Historical knowledge arises out of the union of the a priori and experience. Out of this one sees Kant espousing a unity or correlation between temporal sequence and logical implication.[61] This is not original with Kant. Even Plato in the Timaeus maintains that time is a moving image of eternity. This is followed by most philosophers since that time in one form or another. To deny this is to preclude the possibility of historical knowledge altogether. "For it follows that we can never say about any event 'this must have happened'; the past can never appear as the conclusion of a logical inference."[62] One could never argue back from the present to the past. This ability to argue back from the present to the past is the underlying idea of historical method.

Kant's main work on history is an essay entitled "An Idea for a Universal History from the Cosmopolitan Point of View" published

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[59]Lewis White Beck, ed., Kant Studies Today (La Salle, Ill: Open Court, 1968), p. 167.

[60]R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (Oxford: Oxford Univ., 1956), p. 109.

[61]Ibid., p. 110.

[62]Ibid.

in 1784. Kant points out in his essay that although as noumena, human acts are determined by moral laws; yet, as phenomena, from the point of view of a spectator, they are determined according to natural laws as the effects of causes.[63] History is the narration of human action (view as phenomenon. In studying history one is able to discover laws which govern human action. Articulating these laws, is difficult, but Kant is convinced that they are there. The unifying element in history, aside from Kant's idea of time, is progress. Just as there is a plan in nature evidenced in its harmony, there is a plan for humankind which is detectable if one studies history carefully. This is not to be confused with God having any control over history. This plan is executed by humanity itself even though it is not aware of this.

To understand what Kant means by a plan, one has to look into his Critique of Judgment in which the concept of teleology in nature is expounded. The idea that nature has a plan is something which cannot be proven or disproven by scientific inquiry.[64] Nevertheless, operating with that presupposition gives understanding to the study of nature so Kant contends. This plan is rooted in the noumenal but is manifested in the phenomenal. Since one does not have access to the noumenal, one can only deal with the phenomenal manifestation of this plan.

When studying history, a parallel can be drawn from studying nature. Just as the scientist can talk of laws in nature, the historian can talk about laws in history.[65] These laws are not to be understood as causal but rather descriptive. It is not that some mind is steering history in a particular direction, but history does proceed as if this

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[63]Ibid., p. 93. [64]Ibid., p. 94. [65]Ibid., p. 95.

were the case.[66]

What one receives from studying history is an understanding of moral progress. This progress does not come about as a result of a calculated effort by humanity. In fact, Kant contends just the opposite. It is through humanity's evil, irrational, ambitious greed that progress comes about.[67] Because of these negative elements in humanity, peace is impossible. Yet humanity is continually overthrowing the power in office which is inevitably nonpeaceful, in an attempt to establish a peaceful society. Kant views humanity as being pulled in two directions, good and evil, rational and irrational. The plan of history is to make humanity rational and moral.[68] To be sure, Kant views humanity's history as being far more evil than in his own day; thus, real progress is being made.

In the actual study of history Kant presupposes that history can be treated as any other object in the phenomenon. He does not allow for the possibility of a subjective interpretation of historical facts. Furthermore, he makes little attempt to understand the reason behind the facts. He assumes history occured just as it is recorded. This was an assumption on Kant's part for which he was severely criticized by later philosophers.

Despite this shortcoming Kant makes marked contributions to a philosophy of history. He urges a combining of historical scholarship and philosophy. This amounts for Kant to integrating historal events and ethics.

Placing historical events in the light of ethical theory represents an enigmatic twist in Kant's epistemology. Historical facts, taken to be

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[66]Ibid. [67]Ibid., p. 100. [68]Ibid., p. 101.

purely objective and phenomenal, are combined with and interpreted in light of ethical theory which Kant bases in the noumenal realm. To be sure, Kant would contend that though morality is based in the noumenal, one can see the effect of morality in the phenomenal realm. In Kant's view of history, particularly in light of a "plan" which history follows (though not in any causal sense), one has interplay between the two aspects of reality, phenomenal and noumenal. As seen earlier in this paper, the splitting of the two is essential for his general espistemology and for his refutation of the traditional proofs of God's existence. Kant is determined to show that God in no way can be an object of the senses.[69] One can only be aware of the existence of such a being based upon an awareness of ethics (noumenon). This bifurcation of phenomenon and noumenon is essential, yet one sees the rigid parameters so evident in his general epistemology becoming blurred in his treatment of history in the light of ethical theory.

In the Kantian system history may inform one about morality or ethics. History itself, however, carries no inherent effectual power to alter the state of humanity.[70] History is an object among other objects to be studied and analyzed. History, in itself, has little to do with God or morality. It is pure fact with no inherent value. This is the distinction Kant ideally wants to make. In the actual working out of the combination of history and morality, whether Kant successfully maintains the distinction is, in this writer's mind, doubtful.

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[69]F. E. England, Kant's Conception of God (New York: Humanities, 1968), p. 200.

[70]Richard R. Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957, pp. 75-76.

Kant's two kinds of reality "model's" have far reaching implications in the study of religious epistemology. Essentially, two kinds of reality mean two sets of criteria of meaning and truth or even two types of truth. There is truth about facts, i.e., phenomenon and truth about values, i.e., noumenon.[71] Kant's construction of the phenomenon precludes the possibility of value entering that realm of reality. Values are firmly rooted in the noumenon. Fact cannot inform value nor value fact. This division of fact and value has had a profound effect upon religious epistemology which will be discussed later on in this paper.

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[71] Jones, p. 89.

CHAPTER TWO

HEGEL

Hegel and Kant

G. W. F. Hegel, born in 1770 in Stuttgart and trained at the University of Tubingen, was one of Germany's most prominant philosophers of his day. He still stands as an influential thinker. Hegel was a key figure, standing between Kant and Kierkegaard both chronologically and in terms of philosophical thought. Hegel's epistemology is an attempt to reinstate reason, which had been dethroned by Kant, to its proper place. This writer shall give a brief description of Hegel's criticism of Kant then deal with some other key contributions Hegel made to philosophy and theology.

Hegel's most explicit and comprehensive criticism of Kant appears in his rather long essay entitled Faith and Knowledge (1802-3). A major difficulty in reading Hegel's critique of Kant arises from the fact that Hegel uses terminology that is derived from Kant but uses it in ways that contrast sharply with Kant's own interpretation and usage.[1] Take, for example, the word "Idea". For Hegel, idea is a

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[1]F. W. F. Hegel, Faith and Knowledge, trans. Walter Cerf and H. S. Harris (Albany: State Univ. of New York, 1977), p. 17.

concept that directly involves existence. But this violates Kant's own definition of an "Idea of Reason". Kant writes in his first Critique:

> I understand by Idea a necessary concept of reason to which no congruent object can be given in sense-experience . . . the pure concept of reason transcendental Ideas. They are not arbitrarily invented: they are imposed by the very nature of Reason itself, and therefore stand in necessary relation to the whole employment of understanding. Finally, they are transcendent and overstep the limits of all experience; no object adequate to the transcendental Idea can ever be found within experience.[2]

Contrary to Kant's notion of reason being purely formal, Hegel weds reason and empirical concepts together. He maintains that if "the Ideas of Reason" are necessarily "objective (i.e., instantiated in experience) then all empirically instantiated concepts have a good claim to be regarded as ideas precisely because the synthesis of intuition and concept is a necessary condition of experience."[3]

Hegel is extremely critical of Kant's notion that reason has no actual content. Hegel writes:

> When the Kantian philosophy happens upon Ideas in its normal course, it deals with them as mere possibilities of thought and as transcendent concepts lacking all reality . . . the Kantian philosophy remains entirely within the antithesis. It makes the identity of the opposites into the absolute terminus of philosophy, the pure boundary which is nothing but the negation of philosophy."[4]

Hegel's point is that, in contrast to Kantianism, the task of true philosophy is to explore the infinite as well as the finite, God as well as humanity, and the main tool with which one must work is reason. Kant, according to Hegel, eviscerates philosophy by making metaphysics

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[2]Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's, 1961), p. 319.

[3]Hegel, pp. 17-18. [4]Ibid., p. 67.

beyond the reach of reason. For Hegel, reason must have ontological significance because of his concept of God as being "reason" and yet being subject as well. This will be discussed in greater detail later.

Hegel maintains that Kantian philosophy is idealism because for Kant neither intuition nor concept has any actual content. He viewed them both formally. Hegel writes: "Kantian philosophy has the merit of being idealism because it does show that neither the concept in isolation nor intuition in isolation is anything at all."[5] Of course Kant is well aware of this as he states: "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concept are blind."[6] But, for Hegel, this means that reason is empty and has no objective base. Thus reason is grounded in the subjective and finite realm. He writes: "Kantian Philosophy . . . turns just this empty concept into absolute reason, both theoretical and practical. In so doing, it falls back into absolute finitude and subjectivity, and the whole task and content of this philosophy is not the cognition of the absolute, but the cognition of this subjectivity."[7] This is too limiting for Hegel. He sees Kant as limiting philosophy by giving it far too little universality. Hegel raises the question: on what grounds does Kant base any philosophy? He cannot appeal to reason, because reason for Kant has no objective independent existence. Hegel levels the same accusation at Kant as Kant leveled at Hume. Hegel declares: "Kant reproaches Hume for thinking of this task of philosophy with far too little definiteness and universality. This is exactly what happened to Kant himself; and like Hume he stopped at the subjective and external meaning of this

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[5]Ibid., p. 68. [6]Kant, p. 93. [7]Hegel, p. 68.

question and believed he had established that rational cognition is impossible."[8]

Hegel also criticizes Kant's a priori categories. Hegel maintains there is only one a priori and that is reason. The a priori categories for Kant are nothing more than subjective divisions having no objective basis whatsoever. Any attempt to partition various categories within the subject is futile. Hegel contends that Kant has no basis to differentiate between an a priori and pure sensation because both are equally grounded in the subjective realm. Hegel interprets Kant as saying that the Ding an Sich is the ultimate source of sensation via appearance. Jacobi notes the same thing in his critique of Kant. He points out that without the Ding an Sich one cannot get into The Critique of Pure Reason and with the Ding an Sich one cannot stay in it.[9] His point is this; what is the cause of sensation in a person? The cause cannot be found in the objects of one's experience because according to Kant the possibility of knowledge of any object is rooted in the forms of one's sensibility and the forms of the intellect shape the sensuous material. Thus the Ding an Sich which is hidden behind the veil of appearances causes the sensation. But in making the Ding an Sich the cause of sensation Kant has contradicted himself. In his Critique Kant does not allow the application of any phenomenal categories to the noumenal, yet Kant, according to Jacobi and Hegel, seems to have done exactly this by applying causality to the Ding an Sich.[10]

By bifurcating phenomenon and noumenon Hegel feels that Kant's philosophy is nothing more than psychological idealism.[11] In terms of

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[8]Ibid., p. 69. [9]Ibid., p. xxvii. [10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid., p. 75.

epistemology, Kant has developed a philosophical system which is pure subjectivism. To be sure, Kant believes the objective exists, but one cannot know it by reason. Hegel goes to great lengths to develop a system which would correct this supposed error. It will be pointed out later that Kierkegaard's epistemology, which is a reaction to Hegel, runs very close at points with Kant's epistemology.

The Hegelian Middle

Having delimited the possible fields of inquiry for philosophy, Hegel in Phenomenology of the Spirit (Geistes) (1807) sets out to explore various subjects such as nature, anthropology, history of philosophy, God and religion. The philosopher's task is to penetrate all things, exploring inner realities. Hegel's goal in Phenomenology of the Spirit is to set forth a scientific system delineating the development of the spirit as reflected in nature and humanity. It is meant to be an epistemological ladder from sense-certainty to the philosophical point of view of his system.

In the preface to this work Hegel begins by stating his notion of a Systematic Science as the goal of all knowledge. Hegel seeks to lay out a single, coherent, developing system, in which every term is a notion divested of anything concrete or particular. He wants a system which shows each term developing out of a preceding term in a necessary fashion.[12]

The goal of this system, for Hegel, is truth. He writes: "The systematic development of truth in scientific form can alone be the shape

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[12]J. N. Findlay, Hegel: A Re-examination (New York: Oxford Univ., 1958), p. 84.

in which truth exists . . . . The inner necessity that knowledge should be science lies in its very nature; and the adequate and sufficient explanation for this lies simply and solely in the systematic exposition of philosophy itself."[13]

This system embraces all of history and nature. Hegel believed the time was ripe for a system to be articulated. The system includes individual experience, but it goes beyond it. Hegel wants to be completely comprehensive in his system. This is not a flight away from matter and particulars into a world of universals. Hegel is critical of any philosophy wishing to take such a path. He wants to remain firmly rooted in this world.[14]

A word often employed by Hegel and critical to understand him is Geist. Geist for Hegel is spirit not mind. Kaufmann points to three reasons as to why this is so. First, in most contexts of Hegel's writings mind for Geist makes no sense, only spirit does. "Even Baillie, though he entitled his translation The Phenomenology of Mind, had to use "spirit" again and again."[15] The second reason could be an extension of the first. Der heilige Geist is the Holy Spirit not the holy mind. Spirit connotes many things that mind does not in a Biblical sense. This is why Hegel claims that the concept of Geist was introduced

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[13]G. W. F. Hegel, The Phenominology of Mind, trans. J. B. Baillie, 2nd ed. (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1949), p. 70.

[14]Emil L. Fackenheim, The Religious Dimension in Hegel's Thought (Bloomington, INC: Indiana Univ., 1967), p. 14.

[15]Walter Kaufmann, Hegel: A Reinterpretation (Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame, 1978), p. 146.

by Christianity.[16] The third reason Kaufmann gives by raising the question: "Who has ever seen minds?" Many have claimed to have seen spirits but not minds. Hegel, a great lover of the poet Schiller, employs some of his poetry in his Phenomenology and uses Schiller's term Geist which in the context of his poetry is clearly spirit.[17]

What Hegel actually means by spirit is quite ambiguous. Fackenheim gives some helpful ideas. He points out that the fundamental affirmation in Hegel's thought is Reality is Spirit.[18] For Hegel, spirit, though opposed to matter, cannot be simply opposed to it. Spiritualism which denies matter would be as one-sided as materialism which asserts the opposite. The Hegelian spirit includes matter; spirit is free internal self-development. Matter is not free externality, brute givenness and chance. How can spirit include matter and yet be opposed to it?[19] This is indeed a difficult question and one which Hegel goes to great length to explain.

Briefly, Hegel asserts that the spirit has the power of overreaching. This spirit tolerates the other-than-spirit beside itself. This is to say both spirit and that which is other than spirit exists. Yet the spirit overcomes this side-by-sideness by absorbing the other-than-spirit. This does not collapse into a form of monism, because in the absorption it reconstitutes the other in its otherness even while absorbing it.[20] All of this seems quite contradictory or a mere semantics game. Yet, Hegel is firmly convinced that such a system can be articulated. The question arises, how does he propose to work through such an impressive agenda?

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[16]Ibid. [17]Ibid., pp. 147-48.

[18]Fackenheim, p. 19. [19]Ibid. [20]Ibid., p. 20.

Hegel is attempting to reconcile the universal and the particular, the in-itself and for-itself, the objective and subjective. The truth lies in the middle which is reason.[21] Hegel states:

> Its truth is what appears in the process of synthesis - where the extremes were seen to be absolutely held apart - as the middle term proclaiming to the unchangeable consciousness is no longer for it an extreme, but is one with it and reconciled to it. This mediating term is the unity directly aware of both, and relating them to one another; and the consciousness and thereby to itself, is the certainty and assurance of being truth.[22]

The truth for Hegel is the middle. There can be no doubt that this Hegelian middle is a place of great tension. This precarious middle position has given rise to different schools of thought which are based on Hegel's philosophy. Other philosophers who follow Hegel tended not to stay in the middle but rather to move to one of the extremes. Hegel, however, himself drives his stakes down in the absolute middle of the extremes. Hegel has suffered great misunderstanding at this point by the interpretation that the middle is an ongoing synthesis between a thesis and an antithesis. One will not find these categories employed by Hegel to describe his system at all.[23] As will be seen of the following quotation from Hegel, much of his triadic system cannot be made to fit a thesis-antithesis-synthesis matrix which is a linear progression as it was in Fichte's system. The following is perhaps one of the most important statements from Hegel for understanding his triadic view of reality.

> Everything rational shows itself to be a threefold union of syllogism, in that each of the members takes the place both of one of the extremes and the mediating middle.

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[21] Jean Hyppolite, Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Pehomenology of Spirit, trans. Samuel Cherniak and John Heckman (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ., 1974), p. 224.

[22] Hegel, Phenomenology, p. 272.

[23] Kaufmann, p. 161.

> This is especially the case with the three members of philosophical science, i.e., the logical Idea, Nature and Spirit. Here, first, Nature is the mediating member. Nature, that immediate Totality, unfolds itself into two extremes, the logical Idea and Spirit. But Spirit is Spirit only insofar as it is mediated by Nature. Secondly, Spirit-known by us as individual and active-is the middle, and Nature and the logical Idea are the extremes. For it is Spirit which recognized the Idea in Nature and raises Nature to its Essence. Thirdly, the logical Idea is itself the middle. It is the absolute Substance of both Spirit and Nature, that which is universal and all-penetrating. These are the three links of the absolute syllogism or union.[24]

The whole of reality can be broken down into three components, nature, spirit, and logical idea. The best analogy of the relationship among these three would not be a static thesis-antithesis-synthesis, but rather a trinitarian idea (though this analogy breaks down at points). All of the terms are extremes and, yet, all of the terms are mediators as well between the other two. Each of the three possibilities shall be treated in turn. This idea is developed in Hegel's Encyclopedia.

Fackenheim calls the first possible combination the Realistic Mediation.[25] Nature mediates between spirit and the logical idea. Nature is a self-existent whole. It is not a mere idea of nature nor a subjective experience. While it may mediate spirit and the logical idea, unfolding itself into these extremes, it still remains distinct from them. Thus spirit and the logical idea are not empty categories which are merely filled by nature. They exist in their own right.[26]

How then does nature mediate? "Finite spirit . . . is spirit only insofar as it is mediated by nature."[27] Therefore, the possibility of knowledge of spirit comes through nature. The two are wedded together with nature being the means by which finite spirit is known. However, in this

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[24]Fackenheim, p. 84. [25]Ibid., p. 85. [26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.

sense Hegel is not creating another dichotomy between the finite and the infinite spirit. The spirit is unity. In nature the infinite spirit immerses itself into finitude. Nature mediates the spirit; yet, by this mediation the spirit becomes finite. In this finite spirit one has a passage into the infinite spirit.

The other extreme which nature mediates is the logical idea. At this point Hegel embraces a Schellingian "'idealism of the infinite self,' for which nature is the finite self's pre-self, taken by that self as other-than self only because it is finite."[28] Hegel is critical though, of Schellingian's execution of this program in that he identified nature itself with nature as reproduced in thought.[29] Without any doubt nature is "shot through with contingency." Nature without contingency would not be nature at all. Contingency is a part of its essence.[30] Hegel's idealism did not wish to deny contingency but rather abstract from contingency. "Such an idealism reproduces in thought, not nature, but only the structure by which nature is maintained."[31] Hegel's point is that there is an underlying structure to nature. The structure can be re-enacted by thought. Yet this idea is not an empty category when it stands in relationship to nature. The absolute idea is immersed into nature maintaining nature as it is. Absolute idea has self-hood which is infinite and is the antecedent of finite self-hood of nature. However, neither the absolute idea nor nature swallow each other up. Each has their own selfhood as they stand in relationship to each other. Logical thought rises to infinity which <u>requires</u> the reality of finite nature in order to start the process of rising.[32]

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[28]Ibid., p. 87. [29]Ibid. [30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid. [32]Ibid.

Nature mediates the logical idea and, at the same time, mediates spirit. Both spirit and idea are immersed in nature while all three maintain their own identity as they stand in relation to each other. Even with Hegel's realistic mediation there is still a dualism between the actual world of nature and finite spirit, and the logical realm which maintains both.[33] Thus, if one is to have philosophical knowledge, one must leave the world of contingency and leap into logical thought. Indeed, this can be seen in Kant's four antinomies.[34] Hegel sets forth the second combination of the three categories at hand. The spirit mediates between the logical idea and nature.

Hegel clears the way for this mediation between the logical idea and nature by positing an epistemological model for the relationship between subject (self or the knower) and object (nature or the thing known). Nature is not a mere given object known by an equally fixed and purely passive subject.[35] Hegel dissolves all such fixities. By doing so he makes the psirit which is individual self also to be active, in that it mediates nature. To the knower, nature is immediate; yet, it is immediate by way of the spirit's mediation. In a word, the spirit mediates nature's immediacy.[36]

This mediation of nature by the spirit is a process which has existed in the history of humankind.[37] Nature has meant different things to civilizations at different times. According to Hegel, this mediation has been progressing to a point throughout all of history. And that point is to understand nature in philosophical thought.[38]

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[33]Ibid. [34]Kant, pp. 397-421. [35]Fackenheim, p. 91.

[36]Ibid. [37]Findlay, p. 85

[38]Hegel, Phenomenology, pp. 90-91.

Functionally speaking, spirit in finite existence is that dynamic between subject and object. This relationship between the two results in true knowledge. It must be kept in mind that neither subject nor object are static concepts, but rather, an active dynamic exists as they stand in relationship to each other. Hegel wishes to avoid dissipating nature into a system of subjective experiences. This would undercut nature's self-existence. Nor does Hegel wish to divorce what nature is from the varied ways in which it is humanly experienced.[39] Hegel strives to walk between the two. Logical thought is the product of subject interacting with object and, at the same instant, is the entity which makes a relationship between the two possible. Logical thought must stand in distinction from the whole logical realm. Thought is rooted in the spirit which enables a knower to know. The thing which can be known is nature and its inherent logical structure. The spirit stands between the two, mediating both in the mind of the knower.

One must understand that the relationship between nature and the logical realm is not one of two objects apprehended by a passive philosophical subject. There is no subject <u>per se</u> to apprehend.[40] Fackenheim states:

> Logical thought may see nature as maintained by the logical realm; but it is an acting as well as a seeing. And what is grasped by it is not a transcendent object, divorced from another object which depends on it. The logical realm becomes divorced from nature, only in and for the logical thought which abstracts it from nature, and even then it is no mere object.[41]

Hegel assert that taking any of the three categories at hand, in and of themselves, is mere abstraction and does violence to the structure of reality if this abstraction is taken as the reality itself. To

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[39]Fackenheim, p. 92. [40]Ibid., p. 93. [41]Ibid.

abstract from reality is necessary to articultate the structure of reality. But one must not confuse the thought with the thing thought about. Hegel wishes no dualism at this point; yet, there is some distinction between the two.[42]

Both nature and the logical realm are a manifestation of one spirit. The logical realm as it stands in relationship to the spirit is not an empty category. There is a unity in nature and logic and that unity is mediated by one spirit.[43] In this, one finds a tension in Hegel between the finite contingent nature and a finite spirit immersed in this nature, and an infinite logical realm which is abstracted from nature. Hegel attempts to manifest these two by one spirit. But he creates an existential tension which Hegel recognizes. Unifying these two is the main agenda for allo f Hegel's philosophy.[44] Hegel states:

> In thinking I lift myself up to the Absolute above all that is finite, and am infinite consciousness, while I am at the same time finite consciousness, and indeed am such in accordance with the whole empirical character. Both sides, as well as their relation, exist for me. Both sides seek each other, and both flee from each other.[45]

This is the human predicament; the thinking person is caught between the infinite and the finite. Yet existence is in the middle which is a synthesis of the two extremes. Hegel further claims:

> At one time, for example, I accentuate my empirical, finite consciousness, and place myself in opposition to infiniteness; at another I exclude myself from myself, condemn

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[42]G. W. F. Hegel, Hegel's Logic, trans. William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), pp. 34-35.

[43]Fackenheim, p. 93. [44]Ibid., p. 256.

[45]G. W. F. Hegel, Lectures of the Philosophy of Religion, Vol. I, trans. E. B. Speirs and J. Burdon Sanderson (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 63-64.

> myself and give the preponderance to the infinte consciousness. The middle term contains nothing else than the characterisitcs of both the extremes.[46]

Hegel has no intentions of leaving one in such existential tension. He is convinced that human existence is not confined to simple finiteness and that philosophical thought is not doomed to remain in logical abstraction.[47] For Hegel religion represents the solution to this tension.[48] This will be treated later. Another resolution is found in the relation between natural science and philosophy of nature.[49]

To regard material objects as simply passive is a grave mistake. It is the spirit which originally makes the differentiation possible[50]. As the spirit mediates between the two it partakes of both.

> It partakes of finiteness because the nature which <u>is</u> let be remains shot through with contingency and givenness. It partakes of infinity because what it lets be are not fragments of nature but is nature as a whole. Natural science, then is not a simply finite and passive apprehension of a simply given nature. It is an <u>arrested mediation</u>.[51]

Truth is found between scientific theory and the total spiritual existence from which it is abstracted. It must be emphasized that taking any of these categories in and of themselves is a mistake. The existence of all of them is seen by Hegel as depending upon each other. Whether this is to be understood as being truth only from a finite perspective allowing God an autonomous existence, or in an absolute fashion making God dependent upon the finite, is a debated issue. This will be treated later.

One finds in Hegel a paradoxical idea that spirit requires nature

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[46]Ibid., p. 64. [47]Fackenheim, p. 94.

[48]Hegel, <u>Philosophy of Rel</u>., p. 65. [49]Fackenheim, p. 94.

[50]Ibid. [51]Ibid.

as its presupposition, and nature requires spirit as its presupposition. These conditions serve as the ground work for a Hegelian mediation. "Only if the Spirit presupposes nature can nature be other-than-self, and the finite spirit which takes it as such, a reality."[52] And likewise when nature presupposes spirit can spirit rise to absoluteness. To have the spirit immersed into nature means that in some regard the infinite is made finite thus resulting in a type of death for the infinite. Hegel states:

> The life of spirit is not the kind which, shunning death, keeps itself pure from destruction. It is a life which endures death, and in death maintains its own being. It wins its truth only by finding itself in a state of absolute self-disruption.[53]

It is a movement of "overreaching" by the infinite spirit to the finite nature which enables the possibility of philosophical thought.[54] Thus, the unity is in the power of overreaching. The spirit is active in its unifying movement. Not only does spirit overreach nature but <u>all</u> of reality. It is this comprehensive overreaching which enables one in the finite to rise into the infinite. All is unified by the one absolute spirit.

Hegel sets forth a third mediation for which the logical idea is itself the middle. He gives this mediation in his <u>Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences</u>. But before one can understand the third mediation, which is by necessity implicit in the first two mediations, one must recognize the need for such a mediation. There is an inherent tension between the first two mediations just reviewed. First, the spirit must presuppose nature in order for finite spirit to have reality. However, nature must also presuppose spirit, if spirit is to be able to rise to absolute philosophic thought. Secondly, the logical realm

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[52]Ibid., p. 98. [53]Ibid., p. 98. [54]Findlay, p. 68.

must actually exist independent of one's thought if the nature maintained by it is to have self-existence. But the logical realm cannot be a transcendent object over and against a passive thinking subject. Thirdly, contingent nature must remain contingent, unless idea and spirit are to collapse into an empty identity. Futhermore, philosophical thought must be able to raise it to an essence above contingency unless thought remains merely finite or a flight from reality.[55]

The Hegelian middle contains all of these antithetical realities; yet, they cannot remain together unless the spirit has overreaching power to hold them together. This holding together is expressed through the power of philosophical thought which the spirit works by this overreaching.[56]

Fackenheim points out that assigning the spirit overreaching power necessitates that the idea also have this same power.[57] One must understand, as mentioned before, that the logical realm (idea) maintains nature. And nature is self-existent apart from spirit lest nature be an empty category. Logical thought is not to be confused with the logical realm. Logical thought can discern the idea in nature, but this act of discernment is a movement of thought. It is the idea which causes this movement. The idea is self-movement and the recognition of that (by thought) is the movement of the idea in a person. In light of this, it is evident that the idea as well as the spirit has overreaching power. If the idea only overreached thought, then philosophic thought when it turns toward nature must make a leap from infinite self-activity to finite acceptance of the given. After

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[55]Fackenheim, p. 100. [56]Ibid. [57]Ibid.

which case then, philosophic thought becomes natural science.[58] This places one essentially where Kant and Kierkegaard are epistemologically. Both of these philosophers deny the possibility of metaphysical knowledge.

Hegel wishes to obviate this epistemological question by allowing the idea of the power to overreach not just logical thought, but all of nature. Thus, when logic was applied no leap would be necessary.

Nature is in some measure the idea externalized; yet both have their own identity. With the idea overreaching into nature, it can raise nature to its essence. "For whereas nature is the externalized idea, philosophy of nature is the recognition of nature as the externalized idea."[59]

The idea not only overreaches nature but also the spirit. It plays a mediation role which is the third combination of the three categories at hand. This overreaching by the idea enables a person to recognize its presence in nature. If this were not so, then only fragmentary knowledge would be possible of nature. But the idea raises the spirit above finitude and returns to itself in infinity and, in doing so, conquers nature. Because of this activity by the idea, one can build a logical bridge from the finite to the infinite.

The relationship between spirit, idea, and nature is more complex than this brief account indicates. Hegel believed he had unified Kant's phenomenon and noumenon, thus clearing the way for religious knowledge which in its highest form was philosophic knowledge, entailing all reality.

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[58]Ibid., p. 102. [59]Ibid., p. 103.

Hegel's Logic

Hegel's Logic has suffered misunderstanding in the sense that he is caricatured as being a pure essentialist wishing to reduce Christianity to mere abstraction, cutting out all experience and passion. On the contrary, Hegel sought to include all of reality in his system.[60] His logic is not set over and against experience. This is seen from the previous discussion on Hegel's attempt to unify all reality, this including experience. Hegel writes in his introduction to Logic, "The rise of philosophy is due to these cravings of thought. Its point of departure is experience."[61]

Hegel never intended for this Logic to stand alone as the comprehensive statement of reality. It was meant to be a delineation of reality in abstract form. Logic is merely "shadows of reality." Unlike Kant, who assumes categories and critiques reason, Hegel, in Logic, critiques the categories.[62] He is in search of proper categories which can be employed in talking about reality. His categories are not about things as they are seen but, as Findlay points out, "Logic as the study of thought-determinations is at the same time a study of things as they are."[63] These categories in themselves are "dry abstractions" but taken in the context of the whole of reality they form reality's underlying logical structure. Hegel states in Logic:

> Considering education and the relation of the individual to Logic, I finally remark that this science, like grammar,

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[60]Hegel, Logic, p. 20. [61]Ibid., p. 16.

[62]Laurence W. Wood, "The Relation of Theology and History Studied in the Context of Epistemological Dualisms" (Ph. D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 1972), p. 80.

[63]Findlay, p. 152.

> appears in two different perspectives or values. It is one thing for those who first approach it and the sciences, and quite another for those who return to it from them. Whoever begins to study grammar, finds in its forms and laws dry abstractions, accidental rules, altogether a lot of isolated determinations which manifes merely the value and significance that lie in their immediate meaning; at first, knowledge recognizes nothing else in them. Whoever, on the other hand, masters a language, and at the same time knows other languages with which to compare it, will find that the spirit and culture of a people reveal themselves to him in the grammar of its language; the same rules and forms now have a full, living value. Through the grammar he can recognize the expression of the spirit, the Logic.[64]

Thus Hegel clearly intends Logic to be nothing more than the laws of logic which are found in existence.

Hegel sets forth in Logic three major categories: being, essence and notion. The first two categories deal with objective logic, e.g., number, measure, difference, appearance, substance, and cause. Being and essence have to do with grasping and organizing things and materials which are not thoughts, nor posited as in any way essentially related to thoughts. Findlay points out that the doctrine of the notion deals with the subjective as well as the objective.[65] "Thought" is its main category. The three categories shall be taken in order.

The basis for any awareness of reality is being. Being also serves as a basic category of God.[66] Being is an empty abstract devoid of substantial content.[67] Hegel describes being in three grades: quality, quantity and measure. He writes:

> Quality is, in the first place, the character identical with being: so identical that a thing ceases to be what it is, if it loses its quality. Quantity, on the contrary, is the character external to being, and does not affect the being at all . . . measure, the third grade of being, which is the unity of the first two, is a qualitative quantity.[68]

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[64] Kaufmann, p. 189.

[65] Findlay, p. 221.

[66] Hegel, Logic, p. 123.

[67] Kaufmann, p. 199.

[68] Hegel, Logic, p. 125.

Under each of these three categories there are three divisions which in turn have three subdivisions. To describe each of these would be involved and tedious. The theme common to all of these is that each represents a critique of categories Kant assumes to be a priori and closed to critiquing. This section of Logic "Doctrine of Being" deals with aspects of reality which are outwardly manifested.[69] Towards the end of Hegel's section of "Being" he searches for some underlying connection of reality because after explicating quality, quantity and measure there remains a sense of disunity. Hegel then discusses the "Doctrine of Essence" and posits essence as being the connecting element which holds being together. It must be noted that he does not construct a logical bridge to essence from being; but rather he makes a leap.[70] This is significant in light of Hegel's "Doctrine of the Notion" which will be treated later.

Essence, the second Hegelian category, deals with what is latent in reality. It looks beyond the external and penetrates what Kant would call the noumenon. While Kant dichotomizes essence and being, noumenon and phenomenon, Hegel does not. Hegel maintains that essence is Being "coming into mediation with itself through the negativity of itself."[72] Hegel writes further:

> The absolute is the essence. This is the same definition as the previous one that the Absolute is Being, in so far as Being likewise is simple self-relation. But it is at the same time higher, because Essence is Being that has gone into itself.[72]

A key term in understanding Hegel's use of Essence is "Reflection." Because Essence is what lies beyond the immediate, it can only be

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[69]Findlay, p. 220. [70]Ibid., pp. 181-182.

[71]Hegel, Logic, p. 162. [72]Ibid.

penetrated by "Reflection." Reflection also has to do with relationship and relativity. Something can be conceived reflectively when it is conceived as in relation to something else.[73] In other words to reflect on something necessitates the negative of that something. To reflect on "A" is also to be aware of "non-A".

Reflection for Hegel carries an impersonal and objective meaning as well as a personal and subjective meaning. One does not merely "think" various determinations for objects. The objects themselves point to other things and determinations with which their content is connected.[74]

As in Hegel's "Doctrine of Being," his "Doctrine of Essence" is divided into three divisions which in turn are divided into three sub-divisions. Each of these subdivisions is divided into three parts. To explicate each of these would be beyond the scope of this study. There is, however, one category which gives light to what he means by essence. This category is "identity."

While being presents itself in various forms of quantity, quality and measure, essence remains constant in this diversity of appearance. The fact that an essential element runs through a series of appearances implies that something identical is in all of them. This something is not an abstract sameness but something of real substance.[75] This noumenal identity is not something detached from appearance, but rather appearance is a manifestation of the identity in various ways.

It must be noted that both being and essence are over all abstract categories, but in the first two sections of his Logic which have just been discussed, Hegel developes them into refined categories. His pattern

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[73]Findlay, p. 184. [74]Ibid., p. 185. [75]Ibid., p. 189.

in these sections is to start out with broad abstract, empty categories and work towards more concrete substantial categories. A pattern of a similar sort is seen in the "Doctrine of the Notion"; yet there are significant differences. These shall be discussed next. The doctrine of the notion is divided into three parts:

> (1) The first is the doctrine of the subjective or formal notion. (2) The second is the doctrine of the notion invested with the character of immediacy, or of objectivity. (3) The third is the doctrine of the idea, the subject-object, the unity of notion and objectivity, the absolute truth.[76]

Findlay points out that in the doctrine of the notion there is total unity. In this third division of Logic, thought becomes self-conscious. One finds that this self-conscious thought permeates all of reality. Within the notion one does not find the tensions found in being or essence with their internal dialectics. The notion brings all of these together. It is through the notion that one can see how all existence fits together. This unifying element is the absolute idea. "The idea, as unity of the subjective and objective idea, is the notion of the idea."[77]

In the notion one has the unity of thought and being. Hegel points out that the task of modern philosophy is to reconcile thought and being.[78] But his reconciliation can never take place as long as God remains outside this world of existence.[79] Thus, for Hegel what is contained in thought actually is. He states: "Thought is the identity of subjective understanding and objective understood content: What

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[76]Hegel, Logic, p. 225. [77]Ibid., p. 292.

[78]Wood, p. 83. [79]Ibid.

is thought, is; what is, exist in and for thought."[80] Hegel unifies these two entities. In light of this it is no accident that Hegel leans strongly toward a form of the ontological proof of God's existence.[81]

Absolute knowledge is the point at which Hegel's discussion of the notion ends. The last section is entitled "The Absolute Idea." Indeed, this is the point to which one must progress in order to have religious certainty which is the uniting of the objective and the subjective. Hegel states:

> Because according to the process of knowledge, it is only when absolute knowledge has been reached that the separation of the Object of knowledge and subjective certainty is completely resolved, and truth equated to this certainty, and this certainty equated to truth.[82]

Hegel derives the term "idea" from Kant who in turn borrowed it from Plato. Kant maintains that the idea is closely related to reason; yet Hegel does not divorce reason from understanding as does Kant. Hegel does not agree with Kant that the idea is something far away and hidden from understanding. Hegel contends that the idea is not elusive. " . . . it is rather that which is mostly absolutely present."[83]

The absolute idea or the notion is not some <u>new</u> truth which has been created. It is simply the <u>whole</u> of truth. Thus, Hegel means for his system to be taken as a whole. To break it down and separate its components is to lose a part of the truth. The absolute idea and the system states what is already known but from a different perspective. It is, Hegel says, like the old man who utters "the same creed

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[80]G. W. F. Hegel, <u>Encyclopedia of Philosophy</u>, trans. Gustav Emil Mueller (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), p. 226.

[81]Lewis White Beck, ed., <u>Kant StudiesToday</u> (La Salle, Ill: Open Court, 1968), p. 424.

[82]Wood, p. 85.

[83]Findlay, p. 253.

as the child, but for whom it is pregnant with the whole meaning of a lifetime." The method is the only thing new.[84]

In concluding Logic, Hegel makes the point that the first two doctrines, being and essence, are unified in the notion. The notion is the absolute idea - God. One must not think that the notion stands as a third independent category over and against being and essence; but rather there is an inherent unity of them in the notion. One cannot find being without also finding essence and both are immersed in notion.

Hegel's Philosophy of Religion

The Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion were complied and published in 1832 one year after Hegel's death. They represent gathered works, printed and unprinted, mostly of class lectures. These compiled works represent the penacle of Hegel's mature thought.[85]

Hegel posits God as the origin of all things:

> God is the beginning of all things, and the end of all things. As all things proceed from this point, so all return back to it again. He is the centre which gives life and quickening to all things, and which animated and preserves in existence all the various forms of being.[86]

It can clearly be seen from this passage that Hegel is attempting to strike against any form of Deism. God is not some remote unknowable thing but is at the heart of creation.

Hegel has been greatly criticized on the grounds that he is a pantheist. It is this writer's opinion that he was not pantheist but

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[84]Ibid., p. 265.

[85]Hegel, Philosophy of Religion, Vol. I, p. vii.

[86]Ibid., p. 2.

rather a theist. Hegel says that the basis of religion is a person's relationship with God. He writes:

> In religion man places himself in a relation to this centre (God), in which all other relations concentrate themselves, and in so doing he rises up to the highest level of consciousness and to the region which is free from relation to what is other than itself.[87]

From this passage it is clear that while Hegel cited God as the source of life, humanity stands in distinction from God. Hegel seems to imply that there are two regions as a person rises from one to the other. The latter is a region where there is nothing but God, i.e., "free from relation to what is other than itself . . . ." This is not classical pantheism.

The task of religion is to examine and understand its own content. From this reflective approach one can derive certainty. "The ground of this . . . inward certitude is faith."[88] Hegel maintains that one cannot be satisfied with acquiescence of a creed. The believer must be critical of his/her own faith. "Hence the believer is led to realise that his faith is no longer immune to question and that strength of personal conviction alone is not enough to authenticate the trust of teaching familar from childhood."[89] Hegel states: "To believe in God is thus in its simplicity, something different from that where a man, with reflection and with the consciousness that something else stands opposed to his faith, says, 'I <u>believe</u> in God.'"[90]

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[87]Ibid.

[88]Bernard M. G. Reardon, <u>Hegel's Philosophy of Religion</u>, (London: Billing and Sons, 1977), p. 26.

[89]Ibid., p. 27.

[90]Hegel, <u>Philosophy of Religion</u>, Vol 1, p. 7.

Philosophy is the discipline in which one moves from innocence to a more mature basis for faith. In asserting this, Hegel is not saying that personal experience or feeling is irrelevant. He is asserting that one can and must articulate the object of one's feeling. "Hegel has no doubt that emotion plays a large part in it (religion); but the feelings are directed to an object or source that can be rationally conceived."[91] Hegel writes: "Religious feeling . . . contains in its content, in its very determinateness, not only the necessity but the reality of the opposition itself, and consequently contains reflection."[92]

In the actual carrying out the goal of examining rationality the content of religion (Christianity), one must employ a scientific methodology. This is done, as mentioned earlier, by philosophy. Philosophy's purpose is to take one beyond the finite physical into the realm of the metaphysical. The object of both philosophical and religious language is the same, the absolute or God. Religious language, however, is metaphorical, and philosophical language is exact and abstract. Religion addresses the imagination and emotions in its goal of intellectual appropriation of the absolute while philosophy and science profess a stern rationality.[93] Philosophy and science are akin in procedure while religion and philosophy are akin in their goal of knowing existence in its totality. Thus, Hegel wishes to employ scientific methodology in examining and articulating the content of faith and religion.

Hegel does not place one in the position of proving God exists, then believing in God or having knowledge of him as if subjective

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[91]Reardon, p. 32.

[92]Hegel, Philosophy of Religion, Vol. 1, p. 133

[93]Reardon, p. 33.

knowledge counts for nothing. One must remember that Hegel wishes to unite the subjective with the objective, not to dissolve the subjective into the objective. In regards to one's awareness of God, Hegel maintains: "For us who are already in possession of religion, what God is, is something we are familar with--a substantial truth which is present in our subjective consciousness."[94]

God is the only absolute, and all else is dependent upon him for existence. There is nothing outside of God which is self-sustaining. If read out of context, Hegel can sound like a pantheist.

> We find the conviction that God is indeed the absolute true, from which all proceeds, and into which all returns, upon which all is dependent, and beside which nothing has absolute true self-sustained existence.[95]

Here one could interpret Hegel as a pantheist. The answer to whether Hegel is a pantheist or a theist is found in the whole of what he is saying and not in a particular passage. In the passage just cited, is Hegel suggesting God is absorbed into all things to the point of no differentiation between him and his creation, or is Hegel polemizing the Deism which was popular in his day? This writer maintains the latter. This position can only be corroborated by looking further into Hegel's thinking. This is the task at hand.

Against Deism, Hegel posits that nothing has absolute independence from God. All being is borrowed from God. Therefore, God cannot be totally removed and isolated from that which he creates. Hegel states:

> the being of all these things is not independent, but is supported by, dependent on, something else, and has no true independence. If we attribute a being to particular things, it is only a borrowed being, only the semblance of a being, not the absolute self-sustained Being, which is God.[96]

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[94]Hegel, Philosophy of Religion, Vol. 1, p. 90.

[95]Ibid., pp. 90-91.

[96]Ibid., p. 92.

Hegel admits that taking his philosophy in the most abstract form could be held as Spinozism.[97] But Hegel sets himself apart from Spinoza by saying that thus far his (Hegel's) concern has been only with God and not the created order. He writes: "But at the beginning we have not as yet characteristics which are distinguished, as one and another; at the beginning we are only concerned with the One, not with the other."[98] To attempt to find God in the particulars, i.e., that which is created, is problematic. Clearly Hegel asserts "God is spirit." He cannot be found in his essence in finite substance in the sense of his total being. He writes: "God in His universailty, this universal, in which there is no limitations, no finiteness, no particularity, is the absolute self-subsisting being."[99]

Hegel defends himself against the charge that he is a Pantheist if by that term one means that God is the particulars and the particulars are God. Hegel wants to make the point that he is not a traditional Pantheist, yet, at the same time, wishes to maintain that the particulars do not and cannot exist apart from the universal, i.e., God.[100]

Hegel considers the history of religions as being a progression towards an ideal religion. The first stage of religion is a religion of nature. Most of the ancient mythological religions fall into the category. The second stage is the religion of spiritual individuality. Hegel places the religions of Judaism, Greece, and Roman in this category. The third and final category is the absolute religion - Christianity.

In the first section of "The Absolute Religion," Hegel deals with the meaning of revelation. For Hegel all religions of history represent partial expressions of God. Only in Christianity is the absolute spirit

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[97]Ibid. [98]Ibid., p. 93. [99]Ibid., p. 92.

[100]Ibid., pp. 96-97.

fully revealed. Revelation means that God reveals himself in the consciousness of humanity. Hegel becomes opaque at this point because revelation is not defined in any orthodox sense. Religion is humanity's consciousness of God and God's own consciousness of himself in humanity. God knows himself in a consciousness which is distinct from himself, because finite consciousness is also implicitly his own. "He distinguishes himself in order to be his own object, while remaining completely identical with himself in so doing."[101]

The absolute religion is revealed religion in that it comes to humankind as disclosed from without. By revelation the infinite and the finite are joined. God cannot be looked upon as pure object or a "wholly other." Instead, his indwelling is the subjective consciousness. According to Hegel, "The great advance which marks our time consists in recognition of subjectivity as an absolute moment."[102] One senses in such a statement the contempt Hegel had for eighteenth century rationalism. Reardon suggests Hegel had Schleiermacher in mind while writing the above passage. As stated earlier, though the objective and subject are joined, still each retains their own identity. In no way does the objective dissolve the subjective side of religion. "For Hegel the objectivity is itself within the subject, providing the content of his experience since 'what has no objectivity has no content.'"[103]

Though Hegel placed great emphasis upon a person's ability to reflect, think and understand God, i.e., the absolute spirit, religion is not a discovery by a person. Revelation is the spirit actively revealing

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[101]Reardon, p. 58.

[102]Hegel, Philosophy of Religion, Vol. 2, p. 331.

[103]Reardon, p. 130.

itself. He writes: "In the idea in its highest form religion is not a transaction of man, but is essentially the higher determination of the absolute idea itself."[104] The spirit reveals itself through the finite and historical and then through reflection in a deep spiritual sense.[105] In other words, revelation comes by way of objective finite reality and also by a subjective internal awareness. It must be kept in mind that for Hegel these two are joined. His point is that revelation comes through all levels of one's existence.

Hegel demonstrates a sensitivity to various cultures and religions concerning the type of revelation. Hegel posits that God does not have to be understood rationally before one can be in relationship with him. This understanding is not even required for Hegel; the spirit reveals itself in the manner which is relevant to that individual. Hegel contends that,

> The spiritual needs of man vary according to their culture and development; and so also does the requirement and assurance that we must believe on authority vary according to the different stages of development reached.[106]

Hegel's overall point in his philosophy is that it is possible to understand the inner logic of Christianity. This does not address the issue of personal experience that one may have with the spirit. Hegel is not espousing a cold, rational "head religion" at the expense of an experiential heart religion. He is maintaining that there is understandable rational content in Christianity for those who wish to venture in that direction. Hegel feels that this logical route is superior. It is most

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[104]Hegel, Philosophy of Religion, Vol. 1, p. 206.

[105]Reardon, p. 60.

[106]Hegel, Philosophy of Religion, Vol 2, p. 340.

unfortunate that those who followed Hegel often found offense not in Hegel but in a caricature of him. In the history of philosophy, this is a most regrettable thing.

One must remember that Hegel is attempting to address the issue of Deism prominent in his day. Kantian Deism bifurcates phenomenon and noumenon. Making these two realms of reality mutally exclusive insures a type of absolute transcendence. Hegelian thought does not attempt to dissolve these two realms into each other in a monistic fashion. Hegel sets forth a system which is fraught with ambiguity and tension. This writer feels that to accuse Hegel of having a God who is not transcendent of nature and to interpret him as a traditional pantheist is problematic.

A question which one could raise is does Hegel's God transcends humanity. To answer this question one would have to investigate Hegel's anthropology in light of humanity's relationship to nature. Based on Hegel's Logic the answer to this is ambigious; yet, if one studies his Philosophy of Religion, one would find that Hegel espouses very orthodox views concerning Christ's life, death and resurrection, and the transcendence of God. To collate Hegel's Logic and Philosophy of Religion is beyond the limits of this paper, but this would be an enlightening study.

Hegel's Idea of History

One of the most interesting and innovative components of Hegel's system is his idea of history. The historical movement began in the late eighteenth century with Herder (1874) and culminated with Hegel in

his lectures on the philosophy of history delivered in 1822-3.[107] Hegel proposed that history is not merely the amassing of facts but rather an understanding of the thoughts and motivation behind the events.[108] This approach epistemologically opens up the possibility for history to be a mode of revelation for the spirit.

Growing out of this approach to history is the idea that nature has no history. Only humanity has a history. History for Hegel must be rational. This is not to say that the events themselves have to be rational. In light of the atrocities of history, such an approach would be naive. Hegel maintains, though, that underneath the enigmatic turns and twists of history lies a rational base which directs humanity towards freedom.[109] This is Hegel's own answer to the question he raises.

> But even regarding History as the slaughter-bench at which the happiness of peoples, the wisdom of states, and the virtue of individuals have been victimized - the question necessarily arises: to what final aim these enormous sacrifices have been offered?[110]

Collingwood sets forth five main points to Hegel's idea of history.[111] First, Hegel does not approach history through nature. As just pointed out, nature has no history. The pattern of nature is cyclical, whereas the pattern of history is linear. It progresses to a point. Second, Hegel insists that true history is a history of thought. There is no such

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[107] R. G. Collinwood, The Idea of History, (London: Oxford Univ. 1956), p. 113.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Ronald Nash, Ideas of History, (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1969), pp. 86-87.

[110] Karl Löwith, Meaning in History, (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago, 1949), p. 53.

[111] Collingwood, pp. 114-120.

thing as a history of pure event. For Hegel one does not have access to event. It is through thought that events are ascertained. It is the historian's task to discover why events occurred. Third, the force behind history is reason. Everything that happens, happens as a result of the will of humanity. And behind the "will" is "thought." Hegel accounts for the seemingly irrational aspects of historical events by maintaining that the actions of humanity are a mixture of passion and reason. It must be clearly understood, though, that reason governs passion and uses it to achieve its end. This is what Hegel calls the "cunning of reason." Reason tricks passion into the position of its agent. One gets the impression that Hegel uses reason in the sense of a unified personality which stands apart from particular individuals. At this point Hegel becomes ambigious. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Hegel contends that humanity and God are separate; yet, God immerses himself as the infinite spirit into humanity in its finite spirit. Almost paradoxically, the goal of history is humanity's freedom; yet, it is God who controls the flow of history towards that goal. Again, Hegel maintains an extremely close unity of God and humanity. Fourth, history is a logical process. Thus, historical knowledge is a combination of empirical and the a priori, the unity of objective and subjective. Taking history as purely empirical means that one is limited in studying only events. One cannot posit any reason connecting events. For Hegel the a priori is logic, i.e., reason serving as the foundation for historical flow. History in Hegel's mind

> consists of actions and actions have an inside and an outside; on the outside they are mere events, related in space and time but not otherwise; on the inside they are thoughts bound to each other by logical connexions.[112]

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[112]Ibid., p. 118.

Hegel does not split the inside and the outside. There is a unity between the two. Event must have an ascertainable meaning and that meaning is ascertained through logic. Fifth, Hegel's doctrine of history maintains that history ends not in the future, but in the present. Justifying this claim, Hegel says that future events are not objects of knowledge but of hopes and fears. History must end in the present because nothing else has happened.[113]

In Hegel's Philosophy of History the history of all humanity flows together for one purpose, freedom. This is despite the fact that the particular individuals may be totally unaware of the part they play in universal history.

> Spirit uses and works through the totality of blind drives, passions, and interests of men. Spirit progresses as men are moved by their desires.[114] Thus, the passions of men are the mainspring of history.

The life of Christ is a key event in the movement of history. All of world history had been working toward the birth of Christianity which, as was already discussed, is the absolute religion. Thus, for Hegel, the history of the world is essentially divided by the life of Christ.[115] Christianity provides the religious framework for the absolute spirit to have total self-reflection. That is, in Christ God freely know Himself, hence the significance of the Trinity.

This raises the question of the Christ of Hegel's Philosophy of Religion and the Christ of history. To be sure Hegel views Christ as being the symbol of divine-human unity. Hegel answers Lessing's quandary concerning "the ugly broad ditch" he (Lessing) cannot cross. (Lessing will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter).[116]

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[113]Ibid., pp. 119-120.

[114]Nash, p. 87.

115Lowith, p. 57.

[116]See pages 81-84.

For Hegel, Christ and the cult, which is the life of the Christian Church, represent that bridge between "the necessary truths of reason" and "contingent truths of history." Though Christ is an historical figure who is past in any ordinary physical sense, his Church represents him not just symbolically but also in his present reality in Christian community. Fackenheim points out that for Hegel,

> The past divine incursion becomes present reality only if it lives in the present community, as well as being the past object of its present representation. The redemptive event of Christian faith, then, is only begun by its occurence in the historical past. It completes itself in its perpetual recurrence in the community which lives by its believing acceptance.[117]

Christ started the Christian cult and is its historical foundation; the Holy Spirit lives in the community and is an historical extention of the historical Christ as it is lives through the Church.[118]

This bridge has its existence apart from Hegel's abstract philosophy. Thus, he does not supply an answer to Lessing's question which did not already exist. What Hegel does in his Logic is to articulate in abstract language the unity between necessary truths of reason and contingent truths of history.[119]

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[117]Fackenheim, p. 146.

[118]Hegel, Philosophy of Religion, Vol. 3, p. 100ff.

[119]Fackenheim, p. 144.

CHAPTER THREE

KIERKEGAARD

Kierkegaard and Hegel

Much of Kierkegaard's philosophy was written in reaction to the philosophical system of Hegel. To facilitate an understanding of Kierkegaard it is necessary to outline briefly some key philosophical components popular in Kierkegaard's day.

The center of attention in the nineteenth century was the distinction between thought and being. As was pointed out earlier, Kant makes this same distinction with phenomenon (thought) and noumenon (being). Kierkegaard lauds Kant for making the thought-being distinction and, at the same time, denounces Hegel for his attempted unity of the two. Kierkegaard records in his journal:

> If one attempts to characterize the confusion of modern philosophy in brief, in a single word, particularly since the time that, to use a cliche, it forsook Kant's honest course and, if I may put it so, squandered the proverbial hundred talers in order to become theocentric, I know of no better word to describe it than dishonest.[1]

Kierkegaard praises Kant for his refutation of the ontological proof of God's existence propounded by Anselm of Canterbury. He argues from the concept of a highest being to the reality of such a being.

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[1]Herman Diem, Kierkegaard: An Introduction, trans. David Green (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1966), p. 72.

Kant attacks the notion that thought bears upon or has being or can rightly claim such a proposition. In Kant's refutation of this idea, he demonstrates that conceptually there is no difference between a hundred possible talers and a hundred real talers but that the difference is in regard to their reality.[2]

For this line of reasoning Kierkegaard called Kant's reasoning an "honest course." Hegel reacted against Kant's dualism of thought/being or phenomenon/noumenon. Hegel maintains that there is reality or being in thought and Kierkegaard calls this "dishonest." Hegel attempts to bridge the distinction between Kant's noumenon and phenomenon by seeking reality within the ego itself.[3]

Hegel presupposes that in the act of thinking, what is thought and thought itself are equivalent in the dialectical moment. This dialectical moment is most comprehensively defined as the synthesis of being and essence in the absolute idea as Hegel describes it in his Logic. This synthetic moment (the absolute idea) is not simply a matter of the human ego knowing reality, but also, in the fullest sense, one's self-knowing is God's act of self-knowing. One knows reality because God knows it in and through human minds.

For Hegel this synthetic moment is not a state, but a process or an event. And in this event God is at work. "What is thought is not a state; thought is a living process of becoming. The reality of our thinking is a component of the reality of God."[4] Because reality (God) is brought to one by the thought process, revelation is free from random accidents of history. This is what Kierkegaard means when he uses the term "theocentric."

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[2]Ibid. [3]Ibid., p. 73. [4]Ibid., p. 74.

The question naturally arises: What is the object of pure thought? The question cannot be answered with the normal subject-object schema, in which the thinking individual confronts an object of which an image must be formed. The object is the act of thinking through which one comprehends reality by creating it intellectually. This reality is not only the reality of self but of all of history.

One of the major objections of Kierkegaard to Hegel's schema is that Hegel's logic or the idea of pure thought is static. It does not possess the idea of a real becoming. As was noted earlier, Hegel maintains that thought involved "becoming." Kierkegaard, though, maintains that Hegel disregards the limits of logic and smuggles the notion of becoming into it.[5] Kierkegaard argues: "In logic, no movement becomes; logic and everything logical can merely be; and just this impotence of what is logical is the transition of logic to become, where existence and reality appear."[6] In Kierkegaard's mind it is totally illegitimate to unify thought and being. Pure thinking does not possess the category of metaphysical reality in its concepts. It is an abstraction from reality. Thus, as far as Kierkegaard is concerned, Hegel's entire system is built on an error, i.e., thought possesses being.[7]

Kierkegaard's existential dialectic is articulated as a polemic against Hegel's system of thought and being. Both start at the same point, which is the ego reflecting upon self. However, they take different courses when it became necessary to define ego more closely and distinguish the subject and object of knowledge within the identity of the ego. Hegel's emphasis in inquiry is upon reality in general, whereas

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[5]Ibid., p. 75. [6]Ibid., p. 76. [7]Ibid.

Kierkegaard inquires about self or the individual's personal existence. Kierkegaard writes: "For all knowledge of reality is (mere) possibility; the only reality an existing individual does more than know about is his own being, and this reality constitutes his absolute concern."[8]

A marked disparity occurs between Kierkegaard and Hegel at this point. Kierkegaard does not allow thought to go beyond existence. When examining self, there is no pure thought for Kierkegaard. The thinker cannot leave the realm of his own existence. Therefore, the object of thought is the subject. The weight of Kierkegaard's message is upon a growing awareness of the existing self. When one starts, not with thought but with existence, one is dealing with true "becoming." Kierkegaard's existential dialectic is focused on the ego's increasing awareness of itself as an existing ego, an awareness that provides the ego with its reality.[9]

Existence for Kierkegaard is a binding force essentially finite, yet human beings are aware of an infinite dimension. Out of this tension of the finite and infinite comes passion which in turn creates the unity. Kierkegaard states: "Only in rare moments can the particular individual as he exists experience a unity of finite and infinite, a unity that transcends existence. This is the moment of passion.[10]

Kierkegaardian Dialectic

The essence of personhood is one's sense of value and ethics. There is nothing more existential than the way in which one lives. Within the tension of the ideal and the real there is a type of double

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[8]Ibid. [9]Ibid., p. 77. [10]Ibid.

reflection as one thinks of one's self. In the first stage of reflection the thinker finds a universal principle; in the second stage, a particular application of this principle to the individual's life is discovered.[11] This last stage of reflection makes way for action, for ethical reform. The weight of emphasis is upon the subject and his/her responsibility. Thus, "a consciousness of this double reflection and its essential character will transform all ethical and ethio-religious communication into a maieutic art."[12]

In contrast to this, Kierkegaard sees objective thought as failing to apprehend the necessity of application of the ideal. Objectivity tends to reduce the role of the individual and of individual responsibility. For Kierkegaard the individual is everything and what is outside one's self is accidental and vanishing. This will be seen when "truth as subjectivity" is dealt with later in this paper.

Value judgment is a major emphasis in the existential dialectic. With Kierkegaard's emphasis on subject, it could be no different since human existence is essentially a search and quest for the ideal.[13] This dialectic is anything but static. It entails endless movements within three chief spheres of value: aesthetic, ethical, and religious. "The normal life-movement for an existing individual is from the aesthetic, through the ethical, to the religious."[14] Therefore, a person is always in process, always becoming, for becoming is the essence of being. The individual is always aware of the tension but is at the same time moving towards the ideal.

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[11]David F. Swenson, Something About Kierkegaard, ed. Lillian M. Swenson (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub., 1946), p. 114.

[12]Ibid., p. 115. [13]Ibid., p. 110 [14]Ibid., p. 117.

This is by no means the natural flow of things. The process of becoming in Kierkegaard's sense is not something automatic. In describing the human situation he utilizes Christian categories to describe humanity's predicament. This is by no means an arbitrary choice. Kierkegaard views Christianity as the answer for humanity. The significant work in which he appropriates Christian categories is Philosophical Fragments, even though he never uses the term "Christian" in it. Articulating schematically the content of this work is difficult. For good reason the work is entitled Fragments. Kierkegaard relies on an indirect method of communication which makes logical analysis form a formidable task. This was done as a protest against the Hegelian system which purports to lay the doctrine of God out in a lucid, logical fashion. With this in mind, this section shall touch some of the key ideas in Fragments to give the reader a feel for Kierkegaard's way of writing theology.

Fragments

As has been stated earlier, Kierkegaard's Fragments is a protest against Hegel's "system." An understanding of the way in which Kierkegaard revamps the Hegelian view of sin is important. This is directly related to the earlier discussion of value judgments and ethics. In Kierkegaard's mind there can be no real and meaningful definition of sin. Hegel raises his system to a realm of abstraction where, as far as Kierkegaard is concerned, self-existence and reality can never appear. Kierkegaard's main concern however, is how one is transformed from non-being to being. "The problem of transition from non-being to

being is the problem of sin."[15] Hegel defines sin negatively as being in a state of weakness or deprivation of spirit. The problem of sin for Hegel is that sin must be seen as the transitory aspect of the dialectical process. Thus, sin is something negative that comes about when a thinker seeks to hold fast to one aspect of the dialectical process, making movement of the dialectical process impossible.[16]

Kierkegaard takes quite a different approach to sin. He does not view sin negatively as does Hegel. Sin is more than mere deficiency, it possesses positiveness. The problem of sin arises when self takes responsibility for self in its natural state. The ego wishes to move from a present state to an ideal state. At this point Kierkegaard runs headlong into Hegel, for the question arises: how does one dispose of that which has no being in order that that which has being may appear?[17] Hegel, because he works in pure abstraction, does not incur this problem. But, for Kierkegaard this is a clear logical impasse, and the task of moving from non-being to being is beyond the realm of human possibility. Thus, this is the problem of sin. Humanity cannot overcome sin. Sin is a positive force which holds humanity back from authentic existence. Somehow the power of sin must be broken in order that the real self may take on self-existence. Ultimately the answer to the problem is forgiveness of sins.[18]

Kierkegaard refuses to delineate a system of "doctrine" of sin simply because sin is rooted in existence. It has real significance. He is careful not to commit the same error as Hegel which was believing that theology could be articulated exhaustively in an abstract logical system. By avoiding any hint of such procedure Kierkegaard forcefully

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[15]Diem, p. 82. [16]Ibid. [17]Ibid. [18]Ibid., p. 83.

makes it clear that existence does not lend itself to being defined by a logical system. Consequently, the forgiveness of sins is not a "doctrine" but rather a process or living dynamic which takes place between God and person.

In Kierkegaard's The Concept of Dread, he makes the point that sin is not a thing to be studied as if one could ever hope to understand it. In addressing the question under what branch of knowledge sin should be studied, the answer is none. After treating the possibility of studying sin under psychology, aesthetics, ethics, metaphysics, or dogmatics, he concludes that, "Sin does not properly belong in any science."[19]

Kierkegaard opens Philosophical Fragments with some questions which outline the problem of Christian revelation.

> Can eternal consciousness have an historical starting point? How can such a starting point be of more than historical interest? Can everlasting salvation be based on knowledge of a historical datum?[20]

These questions set the agenda for both his works Fragments and Concluding Unscientific Postscript.

Kierkegaard in Fragments adopts the Socratic method of teaching as a starting point for communicating theological truth. It is important to understand that Kierkegaard attempts to answer Lessing's problem of epistemology in terms of Lessing's categories. Lessing equates theological truth with eternal truth, thus allowing no connection between theological truth and historical event. This will be dealt with later in

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[19]Søren Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, trans. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton Univ., 1974), p. 14.

[20]Søren Kierkegaard, Philosophical Fragments, trans. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton Univ., 1974), p. title page.

this paper. But suffice it to say, this understanding of the nature of theological truth shapes the whole of Kierkegaard's theology.

Within the Socratic method of teaching the teacher does not actually teach the student. Instead, the teacher functions maieutically by causing the student to realize the universal truth already within the student. Kierkegaard writes with reference to the Socratic method, "Thus the Truth is not introduced into the individual from without, but was within."[21] The role of the teacher, then, is one of a midwife. In other words, the teacher is incidental and serves only as an occasion for causing the student to remember the truth. This scheme places no emphasis on the time of occasion nor the place. The important item is that the truth is remembered by the student. Kierkegaard states: "From the standpoint of the Socratic thought every point of departure in time is eo ipso accidental, an occasion, a vanishing moment."[22] Kierkegaard realizes, however, that truth will never be found by this method. He writes further: " . . . it is not possible to advance beyond Socrates, nor will one reach the concept of a Revelation, but merely remain within the sphere of idle chatter."[23]

There is infinitely more to truth than what the Socratic method could ever discover. For truth has been revealed in the incarnation of Christ. Truth is not had through mere dialectical thinking, but ultimately it comes from God who encounters humanity in history. If God himself is our teacher and he reveals himself in time, then that moment in time has "decisive significance."[24] This would not be a regular teacher whose occasion for teaching is accidental. God is truth and, simultaneously, teacher; thus, when he confronts a person it is an

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[21]Ibid., p. 11. [22]Ibid., p. 13. [23]Ibid., p. 14.

[24]Ibid., p. 16.

occasion of decisive significance. He is not a teacher among teachers, but he is the teacher of truth because he is truth. This places him in a most unique situation.

The task of this special teacher is not to cause the student to remember the truth that is within the student but to cause the student to see his/her own error. This error is sin, the very thing which keeps one from the truth. Kierkegaard explains: "The Teacher is then the God himself, who in acting as an occasion prompts the learner to recall that he is in Error."[25] It is only this divine teacher which gives the condition to the student for accepting the truth. This giving of the condition when the Divine encounters a person is called "the moment."

The clear emphasis in Kierkegaard is on self-existence. The past does not exist; the future does not exist - only the present exists. Thus, past historical events receive little attention. The emphasis is on the present, for in the present there is true existence. The fact that God became incarnate in time is true but its significance cannot be historically perceived. The weight of importance is the "now", i.e., the present moment, when God encounters one in their own existence. How then is one to know of the historicity of the incarnation? Indirectly Kierkegaard explains: "I always reason from existence, not toward existence, whether I move in the sphere of palpable sensible fact or in the realm of thought."[26] Objective knowledge is restricted to the present emperical moment. The past event of the incarnation is known, not through objective historical inquiry but through God's revelation to an individual in the moment, in one's existence, i.e., the present.

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[25]Ibid., p. 19. [26]Ibid., p. 50.

The present experience of faith verifies the past event of the incarnation.

For Kierkegaard, to exist is to be in process of becoming. The human predicament is that humanity is between non-being and being. How then can God who is pure being, who is truth, enter into a realm where to exist means to be in process of becoming? How can the infinite be contained in the finite? This idea is an affront to reason. Christian belief involves a collision of reason with the absolute paradox. There is no reconciling the two. But there is optimism in Kierkegaard. He states: "If the Paradox and the Reason come together in a mutual understanding of their unlikeness their encounter will be happy, like love's understanding."[27] But this is only a possibility, for if reason refuses to accept the paradox there is an unhappy relationship. He calls this refusal to accept the paradox as offense.[28]

This paradox is not a logical paradox but a living paradox which acts upon humanity. Reason does not discover the paradox; the paradox confronts reason which makes the paradox more offensive. Kierkegaard states: "This discovery was not made by the reason; it was the Paradox that placed the Reason on the stoll of wonderment."[29]

There is no plea on Kierkegaard's part for reason ever to understand the paradox but only to accept it. One is only to "understand that this is the Paradox."[30] When reason and paradox encounter each other and reason accepts the paradox then a happy moment occurs. This moment takes place "when the Reason sets itself aside and the Paradox bestows itself."[31] This union of paradox and reason, which occurs in the moment engenders a third entity which he calls faith.[32]

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[27]Ibid., p. 61. [28]Ibid. [29]Ibid., p. 65.

[30]Ibid., p. 72. [31]Ibid., p. 73. [32]Ibid.

Kierkegaard and History

Kierkegaard's understanding of history and its relationship to faith will now be treated. What are the answers to his opening questions on the title page of Fragments? At this point it is necessary to pull together Fragments and Postscript, for only by examining both works in light of each other can one come to terms with his understanding of history.

Kierkegaard states that the most important point of theology has been stated in Fragments. This emphasis permeates the whole of his theology, i.e., that the historical is secondary and the meaning is primary. Thus, he considers the task of writing Postscript as approaching the problem "in its historical costume."[33] The essential message of Christianity is stated in Fragments. The validity of historical inquiry is a second thought. In describing the two works he states: "The author can scarcely be charged with having indulged in the feminine practice of saying the most important thing . . . as an after-thought, in a note at the end."[34] The kernel of truth is in Fragments.

To understand Kierkegaard's methodology one must deal with Lessing's articulation of the problem of historical knowledge and eternal truth. In a sense Lessing sets the agenda for Kierkegaard's dealing with the problem. A brief description of Lessing's famous "ditch" is in order.

Lessing's main concern is with theological proof of Christianity. One of his presuppositions is the necessity for certainty in the Christian faith. He rejects any type of historical proof on the ground that there is not certainty in historical investigation. Two questions

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[33]Kierkegaard, Postscript, p. 15. [34]Ibid., p. 14.

emerge in Lessing's argument. What is the role of history in theological truth and can the facticity of an historical event be verified? These two problems are quite distinct. To reject a particular account of an event on the grounds of its failure to satisfy the criteria of reliable historical assertion does nothing to settle the problem of the role such an account could play.[35] To make one question bear upon the other question is a fundamental error. Nevertheless Lessing makes these two questions interdependent. His argument is: if there is no certainty with regard to historical questions, then history can have nothing more than an accidental place in theological truth. For Lessing, certainty is of paramount importance. If a method gave no certainty then the method is invalid, at least for religious discourse.

Another fundamental assumptoin Lessing makes is that universal truth is tantamount to theological truth. By necessity universal truth is mutually exclusive from historical truth simply because history is ensconced in time. That which is rooted in time cannot be universal or eternal. Not everyone has access to certain historical events. Therefore, equating theological truth with universal truth necessitates an abyss between historical and theological truth (universal or eternal truth). This abyss Lessing calls his broad ugly ditch. He writes:

> That, then, is the ugly, broad ditch which I cannot get across, however, often and however earnestly I have tried to make the leap. If anyone can help me over it, let him do it. I beg him, I adjure him. He will deserve a divine reward from me.[36]

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[35]Richard Campbell, 'Lessing's Problem and Kierkegaard's Answer,' The Scottish Journal of Theology, 19 (March 1966):43.

[36]Gotthold Lessing, Lessing's Theological Writings, trans. Henry Chadwich (Stanford: Stanford Univ., 1957), p. 55.

A problem with Lessing's situation is that he is adjuring someone to jump a logical ditch which he himself has dug. Given his categories and presuppositions, the ditch cannot be logically jumped. Again, it must be emphasized that the failure to understand the difference between the two questions cited earlier will lead to Lessing's conclusions if one equates theological and universal truth.

Kierkegaard's solution to Lessing's ditch was to give up ordinary historical assertions as theologically instructive.[37] This was also Lessing's approach to the problem. Lessing states: "If no historical truth can be demonstrated, then nothing can be demonstrated by means of historical truths. That is: accidental truths of history can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason."[38]

Theological truth for Lessing must come through another medium than history, since history is incapable of containing universal truths. Being a product of eighteenth century rationalism, the obvious solution to the problem of certainty is found within reason.

The cogency of Lessing's conclusion hinges upon an implicit a priori assumption that theological truths come into the class of "necessary truth of reason." This is to say that these types of truths lend themselves to the sort of deductive demonstration that one finds in Euclid.[39] If Lessing's identification of necessary truths of reason with theological truth is conceded, then the impassable ditch is a foregone conclusion.

Kierkegaard embraces Lessing's statement of the problem of historical knowledge and theological truth. In the opening chapters of Postscript, Kierkegaard examines Lessing's idea of historical and eternal

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[37]Campbell, p. 44.

[38]Lessing, p. 53.

[39]Campbell, p. 45.

truth and praises him for his stand. He says of Lessing: "He religiously shut himself up within the isolation of his own subjectivity; that he did not permit himself to be decieved into becoming world-historic and systematic with respect to the religious."[40] This is also an indirect cut at Hegel and his system. Kierkegaard dismisses the idea that religious truth has anything to do with historical inquiry.

Historical inquiry leads only to an approximation. There is no certitude in historical knowledge; therefore, it cannot serve as an epistemological base out of which to know religious truth. He writes: "An approximation, when viewed as a basis for an eternal happiness, is wholly inadequate, since the incommensurability makes a result impossible."[41] Regardless of how diligently one may research the history of the resurrection one can only come to an approximate certainty which, for Kierkegaard, is no certainty at all. Kierkegaard terms this historical probability "quantitative approximation."[42] The 'qualitative dialectic' is theological truth; quantitative approximation can never have anything to say to qualitative dialectic. Thus, a gulf exists between them. This is part of the meaning of the term "leap." Kierkegaard does not leap from the historical to the eternal truth but rather from eternal truth to history.

The histroicity of the Scripture is valid and factual, but the way one knows that is by a leap of faith based on an encounter with the Divine. The objective never leads to the subjective. The starting point must be self-existence, i.e., subjectivity. Any objective vertification is merely accidental. Based on this Kierkegaard can say "no one can become immediately contemporary with this historical fact . . . it is an object

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[40]Kierkegaard, Postscript, p. 61. [41]Ibid., p. 25

[42]Ibid., p. 29.

of faith since it concerns coming into existence."[43] As he develops this idea the weight and importance of the paradox becomes clear. God entering into existence is the Absolute Paradox. How the Truth can be "coming into existence" is beyond all understanding. Even the disciples who were contemporary to Christ had to take a leap of faith and believe that the Divine had come into existence. These disciples did not believe because of objective facts, but they believed because God as teacher spoke to them. Kierkegaard writes: "But no contemporary can believe by virtue of his immediate sensation and immediate cognition."[44]

Because of Kierkegaard's idea of truth being subjective, he must maintain that there can be no difference between the contemporary disciple of Christ and one living at present. In both cases the starting point of revelation is "self." "Thus at no time does the past become necessary."[45] This is basically due to the fact that existence is in the present and it is in the present which God reveals himself. But even if the objective fact is standing in the presence of a contemporary disciple there still must be that subjective encounter to which one ideally responds by faith. Any "attempt to construct a quantitative approach to faith is a misunderstanding, and (that) any appearance is successful in this endeavor is an illusion."[46]

Kierkegaard posits a rigid division of objective and subjective when it comes to religious matters. Truth is not an object to be taught but a subject to encounter or by which to be encountered by. Attempting to articulate truth as object or adducing objective facts to support the veracity of an event is to misunderstand the nature of truth.

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[43]Kierkegaard, Fragments, p. 109. [44]Ibid., p. 106.

[45]Ibid. [46]Kierkegaard, Postscript, p. 15.

Kierkegaard states:

> Objectively the interest is focused on the thought-content, subjective on the inwardness. At its maximum, this inward "how" is the passion of the infinite and the passion of the infinite is the truth. But the passion of the infinite is precisely subjectivity, and thus subjectivity becomes the truth . . . . Only in subjectivity is there decisiveness; to seek objectivity is to be in error. It is the passion of the infinite that is the decisive factor, and not its content, for its content is precisely itself. In this manner subjectivity and the subjective "how" constitute the truth.[47]

Kierkegaard's emphasis on truth as subjectivity intensifies his idea of a "leap of faith" because it is a "tremendous risk, and objectively groundless affirmation of the rationally incredible."[48] This is not to say the leap is irrational or blind. Kierkegaard's frequent use of the words "absurd" and "paradoxical" can lead one to believe that he is advocating irrationalism. In reading Kierkegaard one needs to keep in mind that the audience for whom he is writing are persons who believe that Christianity is a completely rationalistic doctrine, which can be fully understood, proven true once and for all.[49] One must also keep in mind that one views the eternal only through finite eyes. It is fair to say that the paradoxes about which Kierkegaard speaks are so because one exists. In other words, they appear to be contradictory but in God's eternity they are not. There is good reason to take a leap of faith, but the reasons are all subjective. Kierkegaard explains:

> When the believer believes the absurd is not the absurd faith transforms it . . . . The passion of faith is the only thing capable of mastering the absurd . . . . In the category of

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[47]Ibid., p. 181.

[48]Arthur E. Murphy, "On Kierkegaard's Claim That 'Truth is Subjective'," in Essays on Kierkegaard, ed. Jerry Gill (Minneapolis: Burgess, 1966), p. 96.

[49]Elmer Duncan, Søren Kierkegaard, Makers of the Modern Theological Mind. (Waco, Texas: Word, 1979), p. 86.

> the absurd rightly understood, there is therefore absolutely nothing terrifying.[50]

Kierkegaard has much to say to us today. His emphasis on the subjective aspect of truth is something which some overlook as being irrelevant for theology today. Kierkegaard's impact upon existential thinkers is incalculable. Through his influence new vistas have been opened which bring into full bloom the wonder of subject or personhood which was effectively squelched under the force of cold impersonal rationalism. One begins to think that truth is nothing more than proposition. Somewhere in the meticulously laid out logic and reasoning of the Enlightenment, the personhood of Christ was lost. Kierkegaard and other existential writers have and are accentuating the fact that God is person and that he strives to have a personal relationship with humanity. The dynamic of personhood is infinitely greater than any logical system. Kierkegaard has rightly brought this to attention.

However, there are some key points in Kierkegaard which are problematic. The major question should be asked: is Kierkegaardian thought Biblical? The answer in some instances seems to be no; for example, his acceptance of Lessing's bifurcation of theological truth and history is questionable. The Biblical revelation <u>is</u> history. Lessing's two questions concerning the role of history in theological truth and the verification of the facticity of historical events, which he sees as bearing upon each other, are difficult to correspond with biblical revelation.

Another weak point in Kierkegaard's theology is that the Old Testament is unnecessary for revelation. Of course, this grows out of

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[50]Alastair McKinnon, "Kierkegaard: 'Paradox' and Irrationalism," in <u>Essays on Kierkegaard</u>, ed. Jerry Gill, (Minneapolis: Burgess, 1966), p. 110.

his disinterest in history as revelation. With his emphasis that history is accidental the question must be asked whether history is necessary at all. Once history and revelation have been separated, one's theology is set afloat with no objective basis and it quickly becomes a religion among religions.

Kierkegaard and Kant

A comparison of Kant and Kierkegaard is interesting. Obviously much can be said about their differences. There is, however, some overlap in their ethical theory. In fact, it has been suggested "that Kierkegaard did not have a distinctive ethical theory of his own. He adopted, with some adjustment the ethical theory of Immanuel Kant."[51]

The emphasis of this writer's comparison is on an epistemological. The dearth of material on this type of comparison of Kant and Kierkegaard's epistemology makes it a difficult subject to research. The writer wishes simply to make note of some fundamental comparisons.

One finds in the epistemologies of both Kant and Kierkegaard a radical break between faith and knowledge. Kant posits the inapplicability of the categories of the mind to the noumenal world. Thus, any argument to prove the existence of God is invalid. That which is in the phenomenal cannot speak of that which is in the noumenal with any certainty. Kant writes:

> Now I maintain that all attempts of reason to establish a theology by the aid of speculation alone are fruitless, that the principles of reason as applied to nature do not conduct us to any theological truths, and consequently, that a rational theology can have no existence, unless it is found upon the laws of morality. For all synthetical principles of the understanding are valid only as immanent in experience; while the cognition of a Supreme Being necessitates

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[51]Duncan, p. 57.

> their being employed transcendentally and of this the understanding is quite incapable.[52]

In a word, Kant thinks metaphysics to be impossible. Like Kierkegaard, no stock can be placed in reason when religious matters are at hand. In Prolegomen to Any Future Metaphysics, Kant advises thinkers not to bother themselves with traditional metaphysics, since it is strictly a logical impossibility. Kant bases knowledge of God on ethics; Kierkegaard on a moment of subjective encounter with the Divine. They both agree that reason cannot contribute to a knowledge of God. The rigid line that separates reason and faith bears upon both epistemologies.

Two reasons can be cited for Kant's epistemological line between reason and religious knowledge. First, it enables Kant to isolate the nature and limitations of speculative reason. Second, Kant is able to establish moral philosophy and action on an independent basis.[53] Clearly, Kant wishes to base religion on a purely subjective level which is his a priori sense of duty. These two reasons fit rather smoothly into Kierkegaard's epistemology with some adjustment made concerning ethics being a basis of religious knowledge. With this epistemological line drawn, metaphysics or religious speculation is effectively denied.

After Kant had laid out the bifurcation of phenomenon and noumenon, philosophers began to maintain that "the elements and categories of human understanding actually reflect the structure and nature of the noumenal world.[54] The sophisticated analysis of human reason was

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[52]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p. 529.

[53]Jerry Gill, "Kant, Kierkegaard and Religious Knowledge," in Essays on Kierkegaard, ed. Jerry Gill (Minneapolis: Burgess, 1966), p. 63.

[54]Ibid., p. 65.

used by later philosophers in a way quite different from that which Kant ever intended. It was turned around and used as a key to unlocking the mysteries of the noumenon. The systematic philosophy of Hegel represents the climax of this method of metaphysics. Hegel's "Absolute Idealism" unites the structure of the mind with the structure of transcendent reality. Thus, Hegel effected a marriage between philosophy and religious knowledge, a marriage against which Kierkegaard rebelled and which Kant never intended.

Some suggest that Kierkegaard relied upon an epistemological position similar to Kant's epistemology in order to overcome Hegel's identification of idealistic philosophy with religious knowledge. Kierkegaard's espousal of absolute dichotomy between faith and knowledge is clearly seen from this journal entry:

> But such a scientific method becomes especially dangerous and pernicious when it would encroach also upon the sphere of spirit. Let it deal with plants and animals and stars in that way; but to deal with the human spirit in that way is blasphemy, which only weakens ethical and religious passion. Even the act of eating is more reasonable than speculating with a microscope upon the functions of digestion . . . . A dreadful sophistry spreads microscopically and telescopically into tomes and yet in the last resort produces nothing, qualitatively, though it does, to be sure, cheat men out of the simple, profound and passionate wonder which gives impetus to the ethical . . . . The only thing certain is the ethical-religious.[55]

It is interesting to note that Kant's epistemology precludes the possibility of history serving as a revelatory mode. Because Kant restricts knowledge to the phenomenal realm which is accessible to the thinker by only two ways, sense impressions, and a priori categories, history is silent concerning religious knowledge. Consequently, Kant and Kierkegaard have essentially the same attitude concerning revelatory history.

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[55]Kierkegaard, Postscript, p. xv.

For both men, religious knowledge occurs at a purely subjective level. With Kant it is ethical, with Kierkegaard it is the moment of Divine encounter. For Kierkegaard, faith is a leap; reason must be set aside. A happy moment occurs when "the Reason sets itself aside and the Paradox bestows itself."[56] There is also a type of leap in Kant when one comes to religious knowledge. Here one acknowledges the moral imperative within and "postulates" God and immortality. Compare the following famous statement by Kant to Kierkegaard's statement above concerning reason and faith.

> It is evident that even the assumption--as made on behalf of the necessary practical employment of my reason--of God, freedom, and immortality if not permissible unless at the same time speculative reason be deprived of its pretensions to transcendent insight. For in order to arrive at such insights, it must make use of principles which in fact, extend only to objects of possible experience, and which, if also applied to what cannot be an object of experience always really change this into an appearance, thus rendering all practical extension of pure reason impossible. I have therefore found it necessary to deny knowledge, in order to make room for faith.[57] (Italics mine)

It should be noted that when Kant spoke of experience he was not referring to experience in a Kierkegaardian sense but rather as sense experience. Both men found it necessary "to set aside" reason or "deny knowledge" in order to make room for faith.

The dearth of comparisons between Kantian and Kierkegaardian epistemology suggest that this is a topic which has not received due attention. To be sure, the difference between these two men is enormous, particularly in light of the fact that Kant was a deist and Kierkegaard, on a Biblical level, was quite traditional. Nevertheless,

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[56]Kierkegaard, Fragments, p. 73.

[57]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p. 29.

much can be gleaned from a detailed study of their respected epistemologies which this writer thinks are quite similar at key points.

Concluding Remarks

It can be seen that Hegel epistemologically stands in many ways against both Kant and Kierkegaard. Hegel attempts to unify the subjective and the objective. Kant and Kierkegaard separates them. There can be no objective certainty concerning God in the framework of Kant and Kierkegaard. Both view reason as having little to say when it is applied to religious knowledge. Admittedly, there are marked differences between Kant and Kierkegaard in that the former was a deist and the latter was not. But both placed religious awareness in the domain of the subjective. Hegel, as was seen earlier did not wish to separate the objective from the subjective. One must also keep in mind that much of Kierkegaard's reaction to Hegel was based upon a misunderstanding of Hegel. If Kierkegaard's assessment of Hegel is correct, then Hegel did not unify the objective and the subjective but dissolved the subjective into the objective, leaving only the objective religious knowledge. As was argued in the previous chapter, this is not obviously the case. Hegel assumed subjective certainty but he went on to posit objective certainty as well based upon the subjective.

Both Lessing and Kierkegaard gave up the idea that critical history is relevant to faith. Kant never gave it serious consideration because of his deism. Hegel's God reveals himself on all levels of existence, e.g., through art, philosophy, religion, nature, reason, history as well as subjective revelation. For Hegel the whole of existence reveals God. This is ascertainable by anyone who ventures inquiry. This is the

underlying thrust of Hegel's system, that religious knowledge can be derived from every aspect of human existence. Hegel attempts to orchestrate all of them into a system. Hegel strives to demonstrate that existence is indeed unified and that one really does live in a uni-verse.

Kierkegaard should be appreciated for his emphasis that truth (God) is not an object to be cut up, categorized and systemitized as he felt Hegel had done. One wonders if Kierkegaard has not done the theological community a favor by reminding them of this fact. One could suspect that in Hegel's attempt to objectively articulate a "system" he, not unwittingly, reduces God to an object. For Hegel, God is primarily an object to be understood rather than a subject to be existentially known.

Today's theological community is indebted to Hegel for emphasizing that history is a means of religious knowledge. God is active in history revealing himself through the actions of individuals. Hegel employs an important Biblical motif, that history is the arena in which God and humanity enter into a relationship. Much can be gained by careful study of Kierkegaard and Hegel and their concepts of religious knowledge. Perhaps the truth lies somewhere between them. An examination of the thought of Wolfhart Pannenberg will hopefully point in the direction of a mediating position.

PART TWO

WOLFHART PANNENBERG: A CONTEMPORARY RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM OF REVELATION AND KNOWLEDGE

CHAPTER FOUR

PANNENBERG

The Neo-orthodox Setting

An extreme epistemological dualism grew to be a major theological premise of twentieth century theology. In particular Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann are representative of recent attempts to come to terms with the problem of faith and history as articulated by Kant, Hegel and Kierkegaard. Kart Barth (1886-1968), influenced especially by both Kant and Kierkegaard's epistemology, posits the locus of revelation in language (word) not in history (event).[1] He grounds the reality of revelation within history, but history is not revelation.[2] The "Word of God" is the focus of revelation. One receives the Word of God by Scripture with the aid of the Holy Spirit. This releases revelation from being bound by historical events which do not "exist" and places it squarely in the present which is existence. The Holy Spirit through Scripture reveals God. All knowledge of God is rooted in the Word of God and is not open to historical investigation as a means of religious

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[1]Thiselton, p. 322.

[2]Laurence W. Wood, "The Relation of Theology and History Studies in the Context of Epistemological Dualisms" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1972), p. 205.

certainty.[3] The Word of God always speaks to the present, i.e., existence. By this emphasis of revelation, Barth obviates the problem of the relationship of historical investigation and religious certainty. He accomplishes this by promulgating that revelation "has nothing to do with the general problem of historical understanding."[4]

Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1876) supports Barth's basic approach to revelation and historical knowledge. "Barth rightly saw, Bultmann remarks, that Christianity is not merely 'a phenomenon of the history of religion.'"[5] Bultmann goes beyond Barth in bifurcating fact and value, historical knowledge and revelation. Whereas Barth posits history as being the basis for revelation, Bultmann completely splits history and revelation. He theologizes with the critical assumption that there are two types of history, Historie and Geschichte. "Historie designates what actually happened. It points to those events which take place in the cause-effect chain and which can be studied by historians employing scientific-methods."[6] Bultmann expresses no interest in Historie as having anything to do with theology. In Kantian categories Historie is a purely phenomenal and has no bearing upon theology. In contrast to this "Geschichte designates an event of history which continues to have influence or meaning on later persons and events."[7] It

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[3]Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Introduction to the Theology of Karl Barth, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), p. 57.

[4]Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of the Word of God, Vol. I, part 1, trans. G. T. Thomson (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1963), p. 168.

[5]Thiselton, p. 322.

[6]Morris Ashcraft, Rudolf Bultmann, ed. Bob E. Patterson, Makers of the Modern Theological Mind (Waco, TX: Word, 1974), p. 35.

[7]Ibid., p. 36.

has to do with value or timeless truth. Bultmann places faith solely upon Geschichte, not Historie. Thus, he leaves theology out of the phenomenal realm and places it in the noumenal realm (Kant's category) which is purely value and not fact.

Bultmann's epistemological schema possesses great significance for the actual historical (historisch) facts of the New Testament. He denies the actual resurrection.[8] He declares:

> It is impossible to use electric light and the wireless and to avail ourselves of modern medical and surgical discoveries, and at the same time to believe in the New Testament world of spirits and miracles.[9]

In light of this he can assert the validity of an Easter faith apart from the resurrection because theology is concerned with value and has nothing to do with fact. Kant's divorce of theology from phenomenon finds easy expression in twentieth century existentialism.

A major result of Barth and Bultmann's theology is the fragmentation of existence and truth. With good reason Kierkegaard entitles one of his major polemics against Hegel's comprehensive philosophy as Philosophical Fragments. Thus, just as there are two types of history there are two types of truth, i.e., factual and value, with theology having to do with the latter. With this fragmentation, it naturally follows that theology would be preoccupied with ethics. This is lucidly seen in the works of both Kant and Kierkegaard.

The rise of religious existentialism devastated historical knowledge's place in theology. Bultmann writes:

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[8]Rudolf Bultmann et al., Kerygma and Myth, ed. Hans W. Bartsch (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), pp. 38ff.

[9]Ibid., p. 5.

> It would be wrong . . . to raise again the problem of how this preaching arose historically, as though that could vindicate its truth. That would be to tie our faith in the Word of God to the results of historical research . . . . It is not for us to question (the Word of God's) credentials.[10]

Thus, historical knowledge is silenced in relation to faith and theology. Faith, then, must stand upon itself. It possesses no objective basis.

Pannenberg stands as a twentieth century alternative to existential hermeneutics. He rejects the Kantian epistemological dualism which is foundational to Bultmann. Pannenberg views Bultmann and those who have similar views of history as accepting "all too uncritically the neo-Kantian distinction between being and value."[11]

Pannenberg refuses to accept the underlying epistemological dualism fundamental to existential theology. He rejects Kierkegaard's divorce of faith from historical knowledge. When one examines Pannenberg's position, a definite pattern emerges from the historical flow of thought. As was pointed out in the previous chapter, both Kant and Kierkegaard separate fact and value. As was also seen, Hegel reacts to this bifurcation and attempts to construct a system unifying fact and value, phenomenon and noumenon, history and faith. According to Kierkegaard, this attempt failed to bring the two together.[12] Thus, Kierkegaard moves epistemologically back towards Kant as he places theology out of the reach of pure reason or historical inquiry.

Pannenberg, in his reaction to Kant - Kierkegaardian dualisms, moves epistemologically back towards Hegel. He believes that Hegel's basic

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[10]Ibid., p. 41.

[11]Wolfhart Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. I, trans. George H. Kehm (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970), p. 85.

[12]Kierkegaard, pp. 110-3.

approach to theology is correct.[13] Pannenberg states:

> One might suppose that Christian theology would have had sufficient reason to welcome Hegel's philosophy as a means of rescuing itself from its difficult situation, as a liberation from the attacks of rationalist criticisms upon the substance of Christian faith and rom the pressure to seek refuge from these attacks in an inward piety without content.[14]

Pannenberg also concurringly cites Barth's question: "Why did Hegel not become for the Protestant world something similar to what Thomas Aquinas was for Roman Catholicism?"[15] One of Pannenberg's basic goals is to plant faith back into history and move theology back to a more Biblical view of revelation. He attempts to do this by positing history as revelation; thus, unifying Historie and Geschichte.[16] This chapter will demonstrate how Pannenberg does this through an examination of some of his main ideas.

Truth

Fundamental to Pannenberg's approach to theology is his concept of truth. One's view of truth plays a determinitive role in how one articulates theology. Pannenberg carefully traces the history of the concept of truth and, then, voices his own views. A brief recapitulation of Pannenberg's approach follows.

The question of truth is one of the most important questions put to Christianity by both the religious and secular community. The issue

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[13]Thiselton, p. 83.

[14]Wolfhart Pannenberg, The Idea of God and Human Freedom, trans. R. A. Wilson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1973), p. 159.

[15]Ibid., p. 160.

[16]John B. Cobb and James M. Robinson, eds. Theology as History, Vol. III (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 127.

at hand is not whether Christianity represents a particular type of truth among other truths. The question is whether or not Christianity is the absolute truth whose essence is one.[17] Inquiring into the truth of Christianity is to inquire into the whole of reality. Christian truth must embrace the whole of human experience.[18] Faith, for Pannenberg, is not rooted in a particular of reality. It must be rooted in reality as a whole. To understand the nature of truth one must examine the history of truth.

Pannenberg observes that the western view of truth is a synthesis of the Greek and Hebrew ideas of truth.[19] He attempts to demonstrate "that the tension between Greek and Israelitic ideas of truth determines the whole of history of the understanding of truth in the west right down to the present day."[20]

Pannenberg notes that the Hebrew word for truth is emeth. The verb means to stand firm, establish support or bear. Emeth carries the idea of reliability, unshakable dependability of a thing or a word. This idea is set in the context of the faithfulness of persons.[21] Emeth is not timeless truth detached from the contingencies of existence. It must occur or be proven over again with the faithful action of a person standing true to their word. Consequently, truth in the Israelite sense is only demonstrated by history. A person speaks the truth when that person's history of their word is established. Thus, truth is history. It is not something which lies under or behind things or is discovered "by penetrating into their interior depths."[22] Pannenberg

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[17]Wolfhart Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. II, trans. George H. Kehm (London: SCM, 1971), p. 1.

[18]Ibid. [19]Ibid. [20]Ibid., p. 3. [21]Ibid.

[22]Ibid.

observes that trust must be grounded in the past which also embraces the future. He cites Hans von Soden's statement "truth is that which will show itself in the future."[23]

The Greek idea of truth leaves no room for history. The Greek verb ἀλήθευειν originally meant "to let something be seen as it is in itself; not to conceal something."[24] Pannenberg points out that the notion of physical senses distorting "that-which-is" is typically Greek thought. Rational thought on the logos is the only thing which has access to things as they are.[25] Fundamental to the Greek concept of truth is that truth never changes. As a result, truth must be divorced from this worldly existence because of its vicissitudes. Greek truth is timeless and unchanging; sense-impressions are fluid appearances always in flux. Pannenberg identifies a marked difference between Hebrew truth which is inherently tied to the flux of history and Greek truth (because of its unchangeable timelessness) which will have nothing to do with history.[26]

Despite these rudimentary differences Pannenberg also observes significant similarities. Both hold that truth is reliable, stable, and enduring. Both maintain that truth can be experienced. Greeks and Hebrews experience truth quite differently. For the Greek, knowledge proves a key for obtaining truth. Truth manifests itself through cognitive experience. There is no Hebrew parallel to this experience of truth.[27] Truth, for the Hebrew, "did not disclose itself in its fullness to the logos of cogitative comprehension, as did the Greek but only when met with trust in God's faithfullness."[28] There is in Hebrew

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[23]Ibid. [24]Ibid. [25]Ibid., p. 4.

[26]Ibid., p. 5. [27]Ibid., p. 6. [28]Ibid.

thought an inseparable link between truth and faith. The Hebrew term for faith, he^{e}min, has the same stem as truth, emeth.[29]

A Greek experiences the consistency and stability of truth by a cognitive process. A Hebrew experiences the consistency and stability of truth by binding himself/herself to God who reveals his stability by his faithfulness to keep his word. Pannenberg observes that Hebrew truth is always set in the context of the future as well as the past.[30] Truth asserts itself in the face of an open future. Thus, for Pannenberg, faith is the trust that the future will once again verify the consistency of the faithfulness of God, i.e., truth.

Pannenberg asserts that Greek truth does not stand vis-a-vis Hebrew truth. Hebrew thought does make some room for knowledge of truth, though it is not purely cognitive, but rather based upon events. Both Greek and Hebrew truth possess stability. Knowledge of that stability is mediated by different means.[31]

Von Soden notes that, for Israel, truth confronted thought in a contingent manner or revelation. By no means is this revelation irrational. Contingent events are the basis of historical experience. By these contingent events God's faithfulness or consistency is revealed; truth is revealed.[32] Historical revelation is the revelation of the "what-is." This "what-is" is self-evident for the Greek; for the Hebrew it has to be demonstrated in history. Abstract necessities of thought, while adequate for Greek thought, were not adequate for Hebrew thought. Truth must demonstrate itself concretely.[33]

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[29]Ibid. [30]Ibid. [31]Ibid., p. 8. [32]Ibid.
[33]Ibid.

Pannenberg makes a key observation that, "for the Israelite, the trust of God embraces all other truth."[34] It provides the foundation for all other truth. God's faithfulness overreaches all of creation and includes all of humanity and spans all of time (Ps. 111:7f; 119:90f; 146:6). Pannenberg observes that the unity of truth posited by Hebrew thought made the early church's combination of Greek and Hebrew thought quite natural.[35] The Hebrew's wholistic view of reality stands in contrast to the Greek view. He states: "Greek thought offers an abridged view of reality in contrast to the deeper experience of reality which is established by the God of the Bible."[36] Pannenberg points out further that the Biblical view of truth and reality takes the Greek view and refines it.

Pannenberg notes that the "Greek dualism between true being and changing sense-appearances is superceded in the biblical understanding of truth."[37] For the Hebrews, true being is thought of not as timeless but as historical. It proves its stability through history. While the Greek gods served as the ground of the cosmos, the Hebrew God actively participates in the cosmos but is distinct from it. In the light of this, Pannenberg writes:

> The Greek truth is superseded in principle by the Biblical truth insofar as the latter includes those features of reality which the Greek idea of truth excluded, though without any less decisive interest in holding fast to the permanent and enduring.[38]

Having collated the Greek and Hebrew concepts of truth, Pannenberg discusses the impact each of these has had on modern Christianity. A major component of Greek thought was that truth reveals itself in the

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[34]Ibid. [35]Ibid. [36]Ibid., p. 9. [37]Ibid.

[38]Ibid., p. 10.

knower. This made a person passive when receiving truth. Truth impressed itself upon the soul, whereby the soul recognizes it as being truth. Western thought, Pannenberg observes, differs at this critical point. The emphasis is not on truth revealing itself to the knower. The knower creates his/her own truth.[39] He writes: "The experience of truth was no longer understood as a passively received duplication of this in the soul, but rather as a creative act of man."[40] With this idea established, truth existing independently from man becomes problematical.[41] Thus, the subject, in Western thought, regards itself as the source of truth. Pannenberg points out that a major consequence of this is that truth "loses its relationship to extrahuman reality and is now only an expression of man himself . . . . "[42] Since Kierkegaard's subjectivization of truth, the objectivity and universality of truth has too often been devalued in Christian theology. Pannenberg observes: "Consistent with this, one then seeks confirmation of even the truth of faith only in the behavior of Christians, only as an expression of a mode of existence, and no longer in that wherein faith believes."[43]

Pannenberg notes that the subject orientation of truth was not completely alien to Greek thought, in that thinking served as the norm for truth. However, it was not the intent of the ancient philosophers for truth to ever become completely subjective. "They meant that thought was distinguished precisely in its aptitude for undistorted reception of that which was inherently being and truth."[44]

Augustine marks a key turning point concerning Christian truth. He "grounded the truth of knowledge upon the self-certainty of

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[39]Ibid., pp. 12-13. [40]Ibid. [41]Ibid., p. 13.
[42]Ibid. [43]Ibid. [44]Ibid., p.14.

thought."[45] Pannenberg points out that Augustine's influence was extended through the medieval Scholastics. Nicolas of Cusa, was perhaps the first to understand thought "as the creative productivity of the human spirit, independent of sense impressions."[46] Cusa appeals to the imago dei doctrine in support of this assumption. Pannenberg observes that this is a major epistemological step towards the modern scientific method of understanding reality.[47] Modern science projects certain hypotheses which are then empirically tested. This is Cusa's "creative productivity". Modern historical method has a similar structure since it also creatively projects schemes or idea upon events. Historical methodology does not merely draw upon sources and the mixing of them. It freely reconstructs the course of events in question by developing a picture of how it could have happened. Cusa's idea of the creative character of intellectual activity as it regards truth, stands as the underpinning of modern historiography.[48]

Creative subjectivity serves as a major thesis of modern existentialism. With this being the case, a problem exists in reconciling extrahuman reality with this creative subjectivity. This problem did not arise for the ancients because humanity was viewed as a replica of extrahuman realities, e.g., image of God. Cusa followed this line of thinking. Pannenberg states in reference to this that:

> God is the presupposition from which alone the agreement of human thought with extra human reality can be explained and guaranteed. Since then, the truth of human thought in the sense of its agreement with extrahuman reality has been guaranteed only on the presupposition of God.[49]

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[45] Ibid. [46] Ibid., p. 15. [47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid., p. 16. [49] Ibid., p. 17.

Pannenberg observes that Kant represents a partial break from this view of reality. As was seen in chapter one, Kant removes God from the phenomenal realm which includes the sciences. Thus, he posits theoretical truth as existing independently from the presupposition of God. Yet, his value system, i.e., ethics, still maintains a divine presupposition. Kant fragmented reality, and the unity of truth was dealt a devasting blow with Kantian epistemology. Pannenberg rightly observes, 'without the presupposition of God, truth is no longer conceivable in terms of agreement.'[50]

Pannenberg calls for a return to a concept of truth as unity. He stands opposed to the Kantian dualism. As long as truth is fragmented, nothing can be argued about truth. Thus religious apologetics is silenced. He declares:

> What is true is that it is possible to argue about truth only where the unity of truth is presupposed. This means that theology must be able to defend its claim to be a science in argument with other views of science, and to do this it must accept a common basis for the argument about what science is.[51]

He also asserts that the unity of all truth bears greatly upon historical method in regard to revelation.[52] Thus Pannenberg represents a return, at the point of unifying science and theology in a common divine ground, to Augustine.

Pannenberg wishes to demonstrate biblical truth as presupposing one truth; i.e., God. This mean that all knowledge, science and

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[50]Ibid., p. 18.

[51]Wolfhart Pannenberg, Theology and the Philosophy of Science, trans. Frances McDonagh (Philadelphis: Westminster, 1976), p. 19.

[52]Ibid.

religion, can fit into a biblical framework. He notes that beginning with the Romantic movement individuals became aware of the diverse views of reality around the world. Each view possessed its own history. It became evident that if truth was to be unified it had to interact with other world views and views represented not only in the present but in the past as well. Thus, truth must embrace the whole of reality which includes the history of human thought.[53] The question may be raised as to how there can be unity when there is so much diversity in the history of thought. Pannenberg answers that the

> unity of truth can now only be thought of as the history of truth, meaning in effect that truth itself has a history and that its essence is the process of this history. Historical change itself must be thought of as the essence of truth if its unity is still to be maintained without narrow-mindedly substituting a particular perspective for the whole of truth.[54]

Hegel's system stands, to date, as the most significant attempt to articulate one truth as being the basis for the whole of reality.[55] Hegel notes that history cannot be sectioned off as though one part has little to do with the others. He unites all of thought both past and present. His view of time is: the present contains the past in a real way; the past lives in the present. Hegel states:

> The acts of thought appear at first to be a matter of history, and, therefore, things of the past, and outside our real existence. But in reality we are what we are through history: or, more accurately, as in the history of thought, what has passed away is only one side, so in the present, what we have as a permanent possession is essentially bound up with our place in history. The possession of self-conscious reason, which belongs to us of the present world, did not arise suddenly, nor did it grow only from

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[53]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol, II, p. 20.

[54]Ibid., p. 21. [55]Ibid.

> the soil of the present. This possession must be regarded as previously present, as an inheritance, and as the result of labour - the labour of all past generations of men.[56]

Pannenberg finds it significant that Hegel viewed truth not as a finished product but as an ever-developing process. "Trust is the whole."[57] It is the combination of the history of truth. Consequently for Hegel, and Pannenberg concurs, truth must be viewed within the context of the whole of really. This is what Hegel's system attempted to accomplish. Pannenberg asserts that Hegel's view "that the truth of the whole will be visible only at the end of history approximates the biblical understanding of truth . . . ."[58] Pannenberg observes two critical points of similarity. First, truth is not a changeless, timeless entity, but it is "a process that runs its course and maintains itself through change."[59] Second, the unity of truth is in the process "which is full of contraditions while it is under way" but will come into full understanding only from the perspective of the end of the process.[60]

Pannenberg, at this point, levels a major objection against Hegel. The future has little room or significance in Hegel's system. Pannenberg notes:

> He had to understand his own position as the end of history in order to be able to think of the unity of history. The unity of history - and thus of truth - comes into view only from its end. Theologically, this means that Hegel no longer had an open future, an eschatology, before him.[61]

Pannenberg has a distinctly Hegelian approach to truth. However,

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[56]G. W. F. Hegel, On Art Religion, Philosophy, ed. J. Glen Gray (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 10.

[57]G. W. F. Hegel, Phenomenology of Mind, trans. J. B. Baille, (New York: MacMillian, 1949), p. 84.

[58]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol, II, p. 22.

[59]Ibid. [60]Ibid. [61]Ibid.

he makes a key adjustment of Hegel's thought. Pannenberg posits that truth can only be fully apprehended when the whole of reality is in view. Thus, unlike Hegel, Pannenberg places the end of history in the future. In order to understand fully the flow of history, history must be viewed in its totality. This cannot be done at present because history is not complete. He writes: "The meaning of a past event can be fully determined only in the total content of history (Geschichte) as a whole."[62] Pannenberg is not stating that meaning cannot be determined from events but that meaning must be provisional and open to new data that might come in the future. Because of the unity of truth, the same principles apply to science. Any statement, scientific or philosophical, implicitly presupposes the totality of both reality and human experience.'[63] Thus, any assertion, whether about science or God, must be open to the possibility of future verification or refutation.[64]

Thomas Torrance makes a similar point by declaring that any scientific knowledge must be tentative and open to the future. He illustrates his point by citing the relation between Newtonian physics and quantum mechanics.[65] Heisenberg, the twentieth century German physicist, recognized that "scientific concepts cover always only a very limited part of relaity, and the other part that has not yet been understood is infinite."[66] Like science, theology also must be open to

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[62]Pannenberg, Theology and the Philosophy of Science, p. 70.

[63]Ibid. [64]Ibid., p. 220.

[65]Thomas F. Torrance, Theological Science (Oxford: Oxford Univ., 1969), p. 16.

[66]Ibid.

the future. The underlying truth of both is one truth. Admittedly, because of the differing nature of the two, there are some methodological differences between science and theology.[67] However, science must be open to the whole of reality; theology must have that same openness. Pannenberg declares that: "theology deals with the totality of meaning of experience and must be aware of this if it is to know what it is saying when it talks about God."[68]

With this general methodology, Pannenberg lays the cornerstone of his theology. His starting point is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The key to understanding revelation lies in the proleptic character of the Christ event. That is to say, the resurrection of Christ is proleptically the end of history. This makes the resurrection the focal point of all theology. In the resurrection event one sees the end of history happen in the context of the historical porcess. Jesus Christ is the total self-revelation of God. Thus, in Christ one finds the destiny of humanity and the knowledge of God. At the present humanity is suspended between the already and the not-yet. One can have partial understanding of the meaning of the resurrection event but must wait until the end of history for full understanding. Full understanding, however, will be connected with the historical event of the resurrection. That event is pregnant with the eschaton. For Pannenberg the incarnation is still a partial mystery. He quotes a line from T. S. Eliot's poem "The Dry Salvages" as illustrative of his point. "The hint half guessed, the gift half understood, is Incarnation."[69]

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[67]Pannenberg, Theology and the Philosophy of Science, pp. 221ff.

[68]Ibid., p. 224.

[69]Cobb and Robinson, p. 276.

Pannenberg observes that the destiny of Jesus Christ was the basis of the certainty of truth. He raises the question whether one living in the twentieth century can possess the same certainty of truth. Pannenberg answers in the affirmative but bases this upon two presuppositions. First, the apocalyptic hope of the resurrection still contains truth for twentieth century humanity and "can still be reproduced within our understanding of the being of man in the world."[70] Second, one "must still understand the resurrection of Jesus as a historical event which happened at a specific time: as a reality, and not a mere hallucination."[71] Pannenberg writes further: "On these two presuppositions hinges the decision as to whether the primitive Christian understanding of revelation can still be carried out as our own, despite the change in our intellectual situation"[72] These two presuppositions will be discussed more fully in subsequent sections of this paper.

Faith and Reason

The tension between faith and reason has been a major problem of contemporary theology, especially because of the Kantian split between faith and knowledge. Pannenberg attempts to integrate faith and reason. He makes no case for objective certainty or the idea that Christianity can be proven in the same way one proves a mathematical theorem. This is not the function of theology in Pannenberg's system. To be sure, he does not take the opposite extreme and retreat to pure

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[70]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. II, p. 25.

[71]Ibid., p. 26.

[72]Ibid.

subjectivism as he believes neo-orthodoxy does. The theologian's task is to investigate historical foundations of revelation. There can be no objective certainty in the absolute sense simply because human beings are fallible and finite. A more complete understanding of our faith will come only at the end of history, but, for now, theological dispute and a degree of objective uncertainty prevail. He writes:

> The truth of the faith is not given to theology in advance for the simple reason that it is still in dispute in the history of Christianity and so is the object of Christian theology. The function of theology is to study and describe Christianity understood as the history which receives its impetus from the investigation of the truth of the Christian faith, or of the reality of the kingdom of God made present in Jesus.[73]

Is Christian faith irrational? Pannenberg answers this question negatively. Pannenberg wishes to set forth the idea that Christianity has a rational basis. To understand clearly faith and reason, he examines each term.

Rational inquiry into faith is the only means by which the integrity of faith is preserved. In fact, Pannenberg notes that a lack of rational inquiry harms the essence of faith.[74] Faith would likely be "perverted into blind credulity toward the authority claim of the preached message."[75] The purity of faith can only be maintained if a lucid understanding of its rational basis is grasped. This is not a matter of "grounding faith in man instead of God."[76] Without rational inquiry faith is solely effected by God. This issue is one of mediation of faith.

Pannenberg finds objectionable the notion that faith is solely trust.

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[73]Pannenberg, Theology and the Philosophy of Science, p. 417.

[74]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. II, p. 28.

[75]Ibid. [76]Ibid.

He notes that this is not what the Reformation meant by faith.[77] An isolated act of trust cannot stand on its own. If trust is not to be irrational, it must appeal to some basis of the trustworthiness of the object or subject trusted. Pannenberg makes an appeal to classical Protestant dogmatics which defines faith in terms of knowledge (notitia), assent (assensus), and trust (fiducia).[78] The relationship among the three is important. He points out "that knowledge of the content of faith (notitia with assessus) remains the logical presupposition of the trust which is based upon it."[79] One must ground fiducia in notitia and assensus. Pannenberg asserts that to ground faith upon trust is to make faith the basis of faith. The issue at hand is: in what logical order should fiducia, notitia, and assensus be placed? He maintains that Christian biblical faith is ground upon knowledge (Rom. 6:8f; II Cor. 4:13). The disciples did not see the resurrected Christ because they believed; they believed because they saw. Thus, faith must rest upon knowledge.

It is crucial in understanding Pannenberg to note his distinction between the logic of faith and the psychology of faith.[80] The logic of faith demands trust (fiducia) to be grounded upon knowledge (notitia). Knowledge precedes trust. But Pannenberg clearly declares that: "In the psychological enactment of faith, both (knowledge and trust) can be taken up in the same act. Trust can also arise in the expectation that the (logically, already presupposed) knowledge will later be disclosed."[81] He also points out that this distinction between the psychology and the

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[77] Ibid., p. 30. [78] Ibid. [79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid., pp. 32-33. [81] Ibid., p. 33.

logic of faith is implicit in the whole of epistemology. This is "characteristic not only of the attititude of faith but also of the cognitive process generally."[82] Any assertion, theological or scientific, may be based in part upon knowledge, but it anticipates that the proposition will be verified in the future when the move of reality is known. Furthermore, this would be verified with objective certainty if the whole of reality was known.[83] To be sure key differences between empirical science and theology exist, but they do have some common epistemological roots.[84]

Pannenberg is suspicious of any appeal to supernatural knowledge. For him all knowledge is natural. He states:

> I cannot free myself of the suspicion that the distinguishing of a special knowledge of faith leads once again to the conclusion that the truth of such knowledge can be justified in the last analysis, only by a decision of faith.[85]

To separate knowledge into natural and supernatural categories does violence to the unity of truth. It is not a question of divine revelation versus no revelation. It is a questions of the mode of revelation. One might note that this does not preclude divine activity as recorded in the Old Testament. Pannenberg chooses to call these special events "divine manifestions." rather than God's "self-revelation."[86]

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[82]Ibid.

[83]Pannenberg, Theology and the Philosophy of Science, p. 220.

[84]For further discussion see Theology and the Philosophy of Science, pp. 206ff.

[85]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol, II, p. 33.

[86]Frank Tupper, The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1973), p. 82.

God has revealed himself in such a fashion so that all humanity might see. Pannenberg posits:

> Nothing must mute the fact that the truth lies before everyone's eyes, that its perception is a natural consequence which emerges solely from the facts. [The perception of God's revelation is Christ does not require an] additional perfection of man, as though he could not focus upon such a super-natural truth with his normal cognitive facilities.[87]

This position precludes faith from being based exclusively upon a subjective experience. Further:

> If we take our bearings solely from the experiences of our personal life, the decision to believe or not to believe always retains an ultimately arbitrary, emotional element. It is the breadth of total experience of every and all reality which provides the field where we have to inquire whether the divine nature of the God of the Bible can stand up to verification; it is not the narrow bounds of an entirely personal experience of life, taken in isolation.[88]

This is not to say experience has no part in religious certainty. Pannenberg is not promulgating a purely cognitive religious experience. He clearly asserts that

> mere knowledge of God's revelation does not yet make one a participant in the salvation (of Christ) . . . . Salvation is received only in the act of trust, which is essentially self-surrender, in the exact, literal sense of a placing of one's reliance entirely upon that to which one entrusts himself. The knowledge of that which faith believes cannot displace the act of self-abandonment in trust.[89]

Pannenberg's view of the Holy Spirit has come under criticicism by those who feel the Spirit has no place in his theology. In Revelation as History, he states that the Holy Spirit is "not the condition

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[87]Wolfhart Pannenberg, Revelation as History, trans. David Grunskou (New York: MacMillian, 1968), p. 136.

[88]Wolfhart Pannenberg, The Apostle's Creed, trans. Margaret Kohl (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), p. 35.

[89]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol I, p. 37.

without which the Christ-event could not be recognized as revelation."[90] The conclusion drawn by his critics is that, for Pannenberg, the Spirit has nothing at all to do with the origin of faith. In response to this he maintains that such a conclusion was not intended.[91] The point is that the Holy Spirit is not the criterion of truth. "The convincingness of the Christian message can stem only from its content. Where this is not the case, the appeal to the Holy Spirit is no help at all to the preacher."[92] Pannenberg claims that if the argumentation is valid "the Holy Spirit becomes effective through his (preacher's) words . . . ."[93] Argumentation does not compete with the word of the Spirit. They work together.[94] The veracity of the message which is preached can only be answered out of its content. Thus, the inherent meaning of the event reported appeals to the hearer.[95] The Spirit acts upon the one who hears the gospel through the reporting of revelatory event of the resurrection of Christ.

The content of the preceding paragraph deals with revelation in a logical fashion. Pannenberg notes that one must be sensitive to the psychological aspect of religious experience. He states: "With respect to the psychological process of its (the Christian message) apprehension - an illumination is necessary in order for that which is true in itself to appear . . . ."[96] The task of this illumination is that of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not add to the content of the Christian message. He does, though, clear away prejudgments

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[90]Pannenberg, Revelation as History, p. 36.

[91]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. II, p. 34.

[92]Ibid., p. 35. [93]Ibid. [94]Ibid. [95]Ibid.

[96]Ibid., p. 40.

which obscure the truthfulness of the message itself.[97] Pannenberg observes in respect to theological content that "logically impeccable grounding is one thing, but the consent of man is very often quite another matter."[98] An argument may be logically perfect; yet, one may not apprehend the reasoning because of pre-judgment. Pannenberg also observes: "The sweeping away of such pre-judgments can never be a matter of rational argument alone because these pre-judgments are themselves irrationally rooted, provided that we are dealing with pre-judgments."[99]

Illumination is necessary to clear the way for the content of the Christian message. The Holy Spirit attempts to illumine the hearer by removing the pre-judgments which preclude the proclamation of the Christ event to be apprehended, but the Spirit adds nothing substantial to that event. It works through the event. The veracity of the event stands on its own and has no occasion to appeal to the Holy Spirit for verification. "The Spirit, who illuminates, leads to the truth of the Word and thereby shows himself to be the power of the Word itself."[100]

Pannenberg's concern with a modern view of the Holy Spirit is that it has become a "catchword" for subjectivity. He points out that the New Testament concept of the Spirit is "no 'haven of ignorance' for pious experience, which exempts one from all obligation to account for its contents."[101] While faith is clearly a gift from God, in Pannenberg's mind, it is necessarily linked to a knowledge of the revelatory event of the resurrection. The resurrection will be discussed later.

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[97] Ibid. [98] Ibid. [99] Ibid., p. 41.

[100] Ibid., p. 42. [101] Ibid., p. 47.

Faith and reason, then, can be seen as not standing vis-a-vis one another. Nevertheless, he does not maintain that faith and reason can be unified at this point in history. He states that "the perfect unity of faith and reason has been promised for the eschaton only (I Cor. 13:12f)."[102] Pannenberg departs from Hegel at this point because Hegel thought that from his own point in history he could completely reconcile faith and reason. If faith does not stand vis-a-vis reason and there can be no perfect unity at present, then what is the relationship between the two? The key in answering this is understanding that, even though there will be unity only in the eschaton, one can have a provisional understanding of that unity presently. The basis for anticipating the unity of the two is grounded in the past proleptic event of the resurrection of Christ. This will be discussed further in a later section.

In order to explore in greater detail the relationship between faith and reason, Pannenberg appeals to a history of the tension between the two. Having already defined what he means by faith, he discusses, historically, reason's role in faith. Pannenberg astutely points out that for each age the problem of faith and reason is different.[103] In the past, authority of the Scripture, dogma, and the Church served as the stabilizing elements in theology. It must be pointed out that these three authorities did not serve as havens for irrational theology. Their authority was based upon the veracity of historical revelation which was scrutinized by the theological methods of that day. He writes: "The acceptance of an authority was ground in insight into its credibility."[104]

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[102] Ibid. [103] Ibid., pp. 50ff. [104] Ibid., p. 52.

Augustine states: "No one believes anything unless he has first thought that it is to be believed."[105]

The twentieth century stiuation, Pannenberg maintains, is different. Theology must dialogue with the questions of twentieth century reason. Whereas, at one stage of history appealing to authority was acceptable, presently it is viewed as irrational. It is critical for one to understand that the place and definition of reason is fluid and changes from age to age. This will be illustrated later as Pannenberg critiques three types of reason. Twentieth century questions based upon a contemporary view of reality and history must be answered by twentieth century answers. Thus, an appeal to authority is not adequate. Pannenberg notes:

> In the face of this modern attack upon the meaningfulness of the Christian faith, theology cannot retreat to the standpoint of authority. The difference between the modern and the medieval situations consists in the fact that the authority of the Christian tradition (be it of the church and its dogma, or of Holy Scripture) can scarcely be viewed any longer as unpreblematically authoritative. As long as the mere authority of Scripture can guarantee the truth of its contents, theology can only demand that reason simply submit to it. In the realm of modern thought, however, where even historical questions are settled not by appeals to authorities but by the new science of historical criticism, persistence in maintaining the authoritative character of faith in contrast to reason takes on a new aspect. This insistence upon an authority that is no longer generally convincing as an authority takes on the character of an external coercion, and an individual's acceptance of such a claim becomes an arbitrary decision.[106]

This viewpoint is not surprising considering Pannenberg's understanding of revelation. God's self-revelation is universably binding and absolute. It is ensconced in a historical event which is unique and absolute. Regardless of culture or age, self-revelation possesses a

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[105]Ibid. [106]Ibid., p. 51.

consistent core to which any method or form of articulation must remain faithful. The aspect of theology which is fluid and not universally binding is the mode of apprehension. This is relevant to the cultural situation. Thus, the authority of Church, dogma, or Scripture may be legitimate in one age or culture and may not be in another, e.g., twentieth century culture. Pannenberg's point is that the content of God's self-revelation is open for rational inquiry and will stand on its own under the scrutiny of the age. It must be emphasized that Pannenberg speaks in purely logical terms concerning religious epistemology. One does not hold one's faith in suspension until its veracity is apprehended by the believer. The believer can have faith without such inquiry, yet trusting that there is a rational basis for belief if one cares to investigate. As pointed out earlier, even when one investigates one must trust that complete understanding will be forthcoming in the eschaton. For now, however, adequate but provisional knowledge will suffice until the end of history.

For the present age the task of setting forth a rational account of the truth of faith is urgent. Appealing to the authority of Scripture as the ground of faith as an a priori is no longer adequate. Appealing to religion grounded in a religious ethical experience, as Kant attempted to do, is not adequate either. Such a basis can make no claim to be universally binding. Pannenberg points out that appealing to such a basis "can only lead to a subjectivism which is not only non-obligatory for one's fellowmen, but also destroys the essence of faith."[107]

Pannenberg examines three types of reason common in the history of philosophy: a priori reason, the so-called receiving reason

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[107]Ibid., p. 53.

(Vernehemende Vernunft), and historical reason.[108] To answer the question, "What has faith to do with reason?", it is critical to inquire, "What type of reason?" What follows is Pannenberg's examination of the three types of reason just mentioned.

The type of reason which Luther reacted against was the Aristotelian-Thomistic understand of reason. Thomas makes a distinction between intellect (intelletus) and coordination of reason (ratio). The analogy Thomas draws in relating the two is that of rest and movement. The intellect exists in serene contemplation of truth, whereas reason "moves from one representation (Vorstellung) to another in its ranging about (discursus) in order to lay hold of the one truth that binds all truths together."[109] The intellect intuitively discerns that which reason can attain only as a result of its discurus.[110]

Thomas posits that human knowledge is not yet a perfectly intellectual sort. One cannot have an unmediated view of the true essences of things. The body limits human apprehension of things as they are. Therefore, one needs reason to apprehend at least a partial understanding of reality. Pannenberg calls this the process of ratiocination. Ratiocination would not be possible without a starting point. This starting point is that "we at least possess general principles that are immediately evident."[111] Pannenberg points out that this is a form of aprioristic reason. In other words, one has a priori categories which are applied to experience. "All knowledge occurs as an application to the data of experience of principles already contained in the intellect."[112]

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[108] Ibid., p. 55. [109] Ibid. [110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid. [112] Ibid., p. 56.

An outgrowth of this is that reason in applying these given principle of the intellect to sense impressions, "cannot be open to something that is not congruous with these principles."[113] Luther sharply criticized reason because the Christian faith could not be derived from these a priori principles. Thus, the content of Christian faith had to be regarded as suprarational or supranatural, i.e., "situated beyond the natural range of reason."[114] Pannenberg observes that Thomas Aquinas relates faith and reason in such a way that "the supranatural truths of faith must step into the place of natural principles of knowledge, the light of faith in place of the light of nature, in order that the knowledge of faith may occur."[115] Revelation for Thomas is an illumination of reason, raising it to an awareness other than natural a priori principles.

One can see that this understanding of reason easily lends itself to be carried over into Kantian thought. As this paper has already demonstrated, rational activity, for Kant, was "thought of as the application of a priori principles to the material of experience."[116] Luther was correct, in Pannenberg's thought, to react against reason. Reason could have nothing to do with faith. The reader saw in this paper that with Kant's view of reason coupled with his deism a split between reason and faith naturally ensued. His "setting reason aside to make room for faith" completely undercuts any objective basis for metaphysics. This type of reason, Pannenberg affirms, is basically incompatible with faith.[117]

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[113] Ibid. [114] Ibid. [115] Ibid. [116] Ibid., p. 57.
[117] Ibid.

In opposition to a Kantian view of reason, philosophers such as Herder and Jacobi have set forth the idea of "reception" as being the essence of reason.[118] This follows a Platonic thought that reason is receiving "that which is." Jacobi equates the receiving with faith.[119] Pannenberg points out, though, that the receiving reason is oriented toward something other than the content of Christian faith. This type of reason leaves no room for the idea of future essential to Hebrew faith. The Israelites did not ground faith in the thing behind sense appearances as if it were a timeless reality. Instead they ground faith in knowledge of historical events and the person (God) who effected those events. Faith, then, is trust that the future will verify the faithfulness of God (Heb. 11:1). Thus, Pannenberg asserts that this Greek view of reason (Plato) is incompatible with faith. He points out that

> in the history of theology, receiving reason, in the Greek sense of a perception of what always is, has repeatedly obstructed understanding of the historical truth of the promising God, on which faith depends.[120]

By its very nature faith is future oriented. Reason restricted to the present can never be made to coexist with faith.

Pannenberg is most sympathetic toward the third type of reason which he examines - historical reason. He maintains that one cannot adhere to a fixed view of reason. Imagination plays a major role in historical history. Reason is granted a certain creative power to build new constructs in response to new understanding concerning the nature of reality. This understanding of reason is key to Hegelian thought. With each age a new construct of reason, history and reality prevails.

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[118] Ibid. [119] Ibid. [120] Ibid.

Each construct is transformed into a new construct with the coming of a new age.[121] As stated earlier, Pannenberg criticizes Hegel for assuming that his construct of reality and history was the final one. Pannenberg alters the Hegelian system by making the final construct of reality and history to be at the end of history. Reason can reflect upon reality and history, but its conclusions are always provisional. Thus, reason must have an openness toward the future with regard to its own construct.

The meaning of any aspect of reality is linked to the future and is always articulated in light of a foreconception of the final construct which exists at the end of history. Thus, this conception of reason drives one to the horizon of eschatology for its final construct. Consequently, both faith and reason, for Pannenberg, are directed toward the future. And, indeed, in the future both will be brought together. As for the present thought, a disparity still exists between the two. With regard to their present relationship Pannenberg notes:

> A difference between faith and reason remains, nevertheless. Faith is explicitly directed toward that eschatological future and consummation which reason anticipates while at the same time keeping behind it when it says what those things are whose essences it names. Reason is indeed not confined to such naming of present things. As a movement of reflection, it returns to its absolute presupposition, which has been shown to us to be the anticipation of a final future constituting the wholeness of reality. But reason is always concerned with present things in the first instance. For this reason, it can happen that it might forget its own implicit presupposition and understand itself on the basis of the present things with which it is involved.[122]

One can see that Pannenberg acknowledges a certain tension between faith and reason. The question naturally arises regarding the place of psychological certainty of God's self-revelation. Pannenberg

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[121] Ibid., p. 60.

[122] Ibid., p. 63.

is confronted with the same problem as Lessing and Kierkegaard: "Can historical knowledge serve as the basis for faith?"

Pannenberg observes that whether one embraces a broad concept of faith, encompassing fiducia, assensus, and notitia, or whether one concurs with the Reformation's linguistic usage, concentrating on the element of trust in faith, knowledge (logically) must precede trust.[123] Specifically, for Pannenberg, the focus of knowledge is the historical knowledge of the resurrection of Christ. He contends that this knowledge leads to trust or faith. Pannenberg reasons:

> In the sense of a logical presupposition (though not always a psychological antecedent), the knowledge of Jesus history, including his resurrection from the dead, is the basis of faith. Furthermore, this knowledge has the peculiarity that it leads on to faith. Knowledge is not a stage beyond faith but leads into faith - and the more exact it is, the more certainly it does so.[124]

Faith is not a blind trust in the historicity of a particular historical event. This would lead to subjectivism. Faith must lay itself open to historical inquiry. In fact, Pannenberg asserts that it is only in this spirit of openness to inquriy that faith can be at ease. "Faith can breathe freely only when it can be certain, even in the field of scientific research, that its foundation is true."[25] To be sure reason cannot fully comprehend the Christ event. To separate faith and historical investigation, however reduces faith to a work of self-redemption. Faith will ultimately depend upon the believer and the decision to believe.[126]

Pannenberg distinguishes between the certainty of faith and historical certainty. They lie on two different levels. "Thus the

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[123]Ibid., pp. 30-1.

[124]Cobb and Robinson, p. 129.

[125]Ibid., p. 131.

[126]Tupper, p. 126.

unconditional revelatory summons to faith is not compromised by the provisionality that characterizes the knowledge of historical revelation."[127] Pannenberg argues that there is no essential contradiction in basing trust on a historical event which can be known historically only with probability. Historical research can never establish definite certainty but only greater or lesser degress of probability. Yet, the certainty of faith is found in the completeness of trust. It is trusting that he who has revealed himself in the past will reveal himself in the eschaton. Like the Hebrew concept of faith, trust in God is rooted in the knowledge of history. God demands nothing less than total trust. Pannenberg notes that "total trust is required despite the relative uncertainty of our historical knowledge of Jesus."[128]

Even though faith-establishing knowledge varies from age to age, faith itself is not shaken, "so long as the current image of the facts of history permits faith to recognize anew and to appropriate again the event which establishes faith itself."[129] Therefore, Pannenberg alters the usual view of faith in light of historical knowlege by maintaining that all that is needed is for the possibility of the historicity of the resurrection event. Even if by current historiography the historicity of the resurrection was given a low probability, faith would remain entact. It must be emphasized that Pannenberg asserts that the historical probability of the resurrection is in fact very hight. Pannenberg is not retreating to subjectivism with this stand. To be sure, if

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[127]Ibid. [128]Cobb and Robinson, p. 273.

[129]Pannenberg, Revelation as History, p. 138.

there were no historical evidence, then faith would be brought into dispute.[130]

Clearly, in Pannenberg's thought faith and knowledge are not the same.[131] By transcending historical knowledge, faith achieves a certain independence from the knowledge of the event out of which it emerged.[132] Though faith is rooted in the historical event which reveals God, i.e., the resurrection, "faith itself relies upon the God who has revealed himself therein."[133] Faith's independence from knowledge is never absolute; it is relative. Pannenberg declares: "Faith does not cling to its own form of knowledge, but abandons itself to the event from which it lives, though always by means of knowledge through which it holds fast to this event."[134] One could have knowledge of the event and yet not have faith. Unless one is willing to trust the God of the event for salvation there is no faith. Pannenberg states:

> No mere knowledge of the object of faith is capable of granting a part in the saving event; that belongs to faith alone. For only in the act of faith do I forsake myself in order to anchor myself in the reality in which I trust. In this act of trust, faith goes beyond its own criteria, abandoning not only (it)self but the particular form of knowledge of its object from which it started, and laying itself open to a new and better knowledge of the truth on which it relies.[135]

While faith presupposes historical knowledge, it achieves relative independence from that knowledge; yet, it cannot be totally independent.

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[130]Cobb and Robinson, p. 274. [131]Ibid., p. 128.

[132]Tupper, p. 127. [133]Ibid.

[134]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. I, p. 209.

[135]Wolfhart Pannenberg, Jesus-God and Man, 2nd ed. trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968), p. 83.

Faith must posses some objective basis. Pannenberg does not solve Lessing's problem of the ugly ditch - at least to Lessing's satisfaction. The issue is that Lessing wanted objective certainty. He would not find it in Pannenberg. One wonders where trust would fit in if objective certainty were possible. This would radically alter the Hebrew concept of faith. It might be pointed out that Lessing's problem in its essence is not one of historical epistemology but epistemology in general. Even the apostles who saw the resurrected Christ would be hard pressed to answer modern epistemological questions raised in response to their experience. It may be that Lessing creates a problem for which there can be no answer. But the questions is: does this warrant the divorcing of faith from historical knowledge as Kierkegaard does simply because faith and knowledge can be reconciled totally? As it has been demonstrated Pannenberg answers this negatively.

Pannenberg makes no pretense in resolving the tension between faith and reason. The tension will always exist as long as the whole of reality is non-accessable. Unity, from a human perspective, will exist with the coming eschaton. At this point it might be suggested that Pannenberg and Kierkegaard are not very far apart. Both are keenly aware of the tension between faith and reason. They differ in that Kierkegaard does not tolerate the tension. Instead, he denies that revelation could be mediated in the context of such tension, thus divorcing revelation from historical inquiry. Pannenberg, not Kierkegaard, is the one who is most theologically aware of the tension between faith and knowledge.

Theological Anthropology

In order to understand how God reveals himself to humanity, one must understand the constitution of personhood. Pannenberg sets forth some key ideas concerning anthropology. A person cannot find all of his/her needs met within this realm of existence. He states: "One may presumably characterize it as a generally demonstrable anthropological finding that the definition of the essence of man does not come to ultimate fulfillment in the finitude of his earthly life."[136] A person has certain existential needs. God answers those needs.

The fundamental point Pannenberg posits in his theological anthropology is that a person possesses openness. He calls this "the openness to the World."[137] Understanding this phrase is critical to understanding Pannenberg's view of humanity. There is a great distinction between animals and humans. The distinction lies in the fact that animals are limited to an environment that is fixed by heredity.[138] Humans on the other hand are not inwardly tied to the environment. Animals are driven by instincts which are mechanically triggered by the environment. A person's drives are basically undirected. One learns how to express drives by culture.[139]

What is a person's view of the world? What are the responsibilities involved? Pannenberg's main point is that a person's inward force drives oneself beyond the world as it is known into the unknown.

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[136]Wolfhart Pannenberg, What is Man, trans. Duane A. Priebe (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1962), p. 3.

[137]Ibid., p. 4. [138]Ibid. [139]Ibid., pp. 8-9.

Thus, humans constantly create culture as an artificial environment yet are never satisfied with the constructs.[140] He writes: "They not only transform nature into culture, but they constantly replace earlier forms of culture with new ones. Thus man finds no final satisfaction even through his own creations"[141] Humans are constantly driven towards an undefined end or a goal. Pannenberg writes further: "The pressure of human drives is directed toward something undefined. It arises because our drives find no goal that entirely satisfies them."[142] This inward restlessness is the root of all religious life. Humanity is constantly striving for what is beyond the horizon. Religion serves as the framework region beyond the horizon. Pannenberg maintains that religion is not merely a construction of humanity. This need for religion has deeper roots. He astutely observes: "Man is dependent . . . on something that escapes him as often as he reaches for fulfillment. Man's chronic need, his infinite dependence, presupposes something outside himself that is beyond every experience of the world."[143]

The God of the Old Testament created humanity to have dominion over the world. This inward restlessness and awareness of dependence was never meant to be found in this world. Humanity is to rule the world not worship it. God, in his transcendence over the world, is the one and only upon whom humanity is dependent. The openness to the world is the one and only, upon whom humanity is dependent. The openness to the world to find that the unbounded horizon which it longs for is God himself. God and the world are never to be confused. Pannenberg writes of the Old Testamant person that "for him the world could

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[140]Ibid., p. 9. [141]Ibid. [142]Ibid., p. 10.

[143]Ibid.

no longer be a world full of gods and thus an object of pious awe as it was for other religions. The world was divested of its deities and was handed over to human management."[144] The only object of worship which could meet humanity's restlessness was not the world but the transcendent God. Pannenberg's point is that humanity was made for God and that careful examination of humanity's constitution bears this fact out.

Pannenberg maintains that the capacity and need to trust is built into humanity's make up. In light of the relationship between trust and faith one might say that humanity was made for faith. He posits that "no one can live without trusting."[145] This bears out the fact that a person must face their world with a sense of openness. The reason for the necessity of trust is based upon humanity's limited view of reality. A person, then, is dependent upon the whole of reality which one cannot fully perceive.[146]

In the act of trusting a person places himself/herself at the mercy of the object or subject trusted. The assumption is that the future will justify fully the step of trust. Yet, one does not trust something or someone when it or he/she is not found trustworthy. Trust is present, yet it is rooted in the past and anticipates the future. Thus, experience of the thing trusted is key.[147]

Pannenberg observes that the tendency of a person is away from trust and towards security.[148] He means by security the assuredness which is derived from controlling one's environment. In ancient civilizations people attempted to control their environment and the gods by

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[144]Ibid., p. 28. [145]Ibid., p. 29. [146]Ibid.

[147]Ibid., pp 34ff. [148]Ibid., p. 34.

magic. The gods were a means to an end thus precluding the possibility of relationship. Pannenberg observes a key principle: "A personal relationship in which one wants to control the other must perish as a human relationship."[149] This attempt to control can involve the deification of security. In Pannenberg's system a person is made for trust and that trust ultimately must be directed toward God. He observes that one's relationship with God is "destroyed when a person tries to replace trust with security."[150]

Control in itself is not bad. As stated before, humanity was created to have dominion over the earth. However, it was also created to trust God. The finite is to be controlled; the infinite is to be trusted. As opposed to animals, persons are not inwardly dependent upon their environment. Thus partial control is possible. The fact is, to control something presupposes independence from the thing controlled. Therefore, in light of humanity's dependence upon the infinite, one can only trust it.[151]

Though humanity was created to control the finite, total control is not possible because the totality of finite reality is not known. Whether one admits it or not, a person must and does trust the finite.[152] The question is, why does humanity refuse to trust the infinite as well? The answer, as previously noted, is that the highest premium is placed upon security as opposed to trust. It is ironic that humanity must trust that which it was originally to control (nature) and has always attempted to control that which can only be trusted (God).

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[149]Ibid., p. 35. [150]Ibid., p. 37. [151]Ibid., p. 38.

[152]Ibid.

God wishes humanity to trust him, yet, in order for him to be trusted, he must manifest himself in some comprehensivel fashion. Thus, Pannenberg opens the idea up for the incarnation.[153] For Pannenberg Jesus Christ is the embodiment of the divine. Christ represents the union of the finite and the infinite. God has invaded humanity's world to make himself a subject of trust. More will be said about Christ later.

A key anthropological insight which Pannenberg makes is his phenomenological analysis of hope. Hope stands at the center of a person's existence. This is in distinction to other creatures which have little awareness of time. "All other creatures live entirely in the present. When animals anticipate the future, they still do not experience it as future."[154] A person is constantly aware of the future. It is natural for a person to calculate life in light of the future but this can be done only to a small degree.[155] Ultimately the future brings the unexpected for which there can be no calculation. So Pannenberg observes that "hope beings just at the point where calculation ceases."[156]

The ultimate problem of life is being constantly aware of one's own death. For Pannenberg this bears greatly upon the meaning of life. He observes: "Whether or not hope is a meaningful attitude in life at all is decided for the individual in the final analysis in the question of whether there is anything to be hoped for beyond death."[157] Because of a person's ability to know the future as future and, thus have a

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[153]Ibid., p. 41. [154]Ibid., p. 42. [155]Ibid., p. 62.

[156]Pannenberg, Jesus-God and Man, p. 84.

[157]Pannenberg, What is Man, p. 44

knowledge of his/her own death, then hope beyond death is essential for a meaningful existence in the present.[158] Pannenberg raises the question: "Does not the knowledge that death is unavoidable render everything that fills our fleeting days stale and empty?"[159] It is only when one is certain of the future can one clearly focus upon the present with meaningful concentration.

Hope was key for the Israelites. They were aware of the future as history. They had full expectations that God would completely reveal himself in their history. Later in Jewish history they embraced an apocalyptic expectation of the resurrection of the dead.[160] This was carried over into Christianity and, in fact, was corroborated by the resurrection of Christ. Only in God can one find total fulfillment. The hope beyond death that is inherent in a person finds a legitimate base in Christ. It ceases to be wishful thinking and becomes a reality because the resurrection has already happened in Christ. The hope for all humankind is directed toward the end of history when the resurrection will occur. Pannenberg's point in examining anthropology is to demonstrate the consistency of the content of revelation with the nature of humanity.

Revelation as History

Theologians such as Barth and Bultmann maintain that critical history poses a threat to faith. Barth, who reacted against the higher critical methodology of late nineteenth and early twentieth century

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[158] Ibid. [159] Ibid., p. 50.

[160] Pannenberg, Revelation as History, p. 9.

liberalism, sought to retain the purity of faith by removing it into a realm beyond the reaches of historical criticism. He accomplished this by placing the locus of revelation upon language, thus, the neo-orthodox emphasis is revelation through the "Word of God." Barth considers a means of revelation in the Old Testament to be the name of Yahweh. The announcement of God's name was looked upon as his direct self-revelation (DC, I/I, pp. 363ff.).[161] Even in light of the fact that in ancient times the name of a person symbolizes one's essence, Pannenberg disagrees with Barth. Pannenberg observes that "Ex. 3:15 expressly states, the impartation of Yahweh's name is made so that man can appeal to God by means of this name."[162]

Pannenberg redefines the concept of revelation in terms of the whole of history. Instead of setting faith vis-a-vis critical history, he reconstructs critical history to point the way to faith. Pannenberg revamps the critical method of investigating history by rejecting "its positivistic presuppositions and its absolutizing of the principle of analogy which precluded the possibility of any absolutly unique event occurring in history."[163] Pannenberg equates theological knowledge with critical historical knowledge. He does not allow the bifurcation of reality into fact and value as did Kant and Kierkegaard. By bringing together historical knowledge and theology, Pannenberg follows Hegel's assumption of the unity of fact and value, history and religion. Pannenberg's

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[161]Ibid., p. 10.

[162]Laurence W. Wood, "History and Hermeneutics: A Pannenbergian Perspective," Wesleyan Theological Journal, 16 (Spring, 1981): 7-8.

[163]Ibid., p. 13.

quest is for objective knowledge. Thus, he clearly breaks from the "Kantian presupposition that reason can cognize no valid theological content which rather must be referred to faith as a subjective postulation."[164]

While Pannenberg follows Hegel's idea that God reveals himself in history, Pannenberg views Hegel's idea of history as being limited. Since history in Hegel's view is "the exhibition of spirit striving to attain knowledge of its own nature,"[165] he reduces history "to the nonessential insofar as anything really new occurring."[166] Pannenberg sees history as progressing toward a goal - the eschaton. One may have provisional knowledge of God by knowing of His acts in history, but one cannot have a total knowledge of reality. Reality is history and history is not complete. The whole of reality can only be seen from the end. Pannenberg writes: "The end of history can also be understood as some thing which is itself only provisionally known."[167] Total knowledge will come only at the end of history.

Central to Pannenberg's view of revelation is his view of time. Time is looked upon as a continuum. Any event in history has an impact upon all other events both future and past. This presupposes

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[164]G. W. F. Hegel, Reason in History, trans. Robert S. Hartman (New York: Liberal Arts), p. 25.

[165]Wood, 'The Relation of Theology and History Studied in the Context of Epistemological Dualisms,' p. 337.

[166]Wolfhart Pannenberg, History and Hermeneutic ed. Robert W. Funk, Journal for Theology and the Church, Vol. 4 (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 151.

[167]Wolfhart Pannenberg, Theology and the Kingdom of God, ed. Richard J. Neuhaus (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), p. 53.

that in God lies the totality of reality. This permits the fact that the "future and the present are inextricably interwoven."[168] God stands at the end of history drawing temporal events of history to himself. The future is the focus of history. Pannenberg writes: "The future decides the specific meaning, the essence, of everything by revealing what it really was and is."[169] The future then is not an abstract possibility that has yet to be actualized. Rather it takes an active role in the present. "The past and the present are seen to be the effect of the future."[170] A strong sense of unity of time and history emerges out of this. If God stands at the end of time drawing the flow of history to himself and humanity is aware of this, then there necessarily must be a unity between Historie and Geschichte. This is the assumption upon which Pannenberg operates.

Pannenberg develops seven theses which outline his approach to revelation as history. In these theses he explores the Old Testament and New Testament concept of revelation. Then he focuses upon the significance of the Christ event for revelation and demonstrates that in the resurrection of Christ is the end of history. Each of the seven theses is outlined as follows:

> Thesis One: The self-revelation of God in the Biblical witnesses is not of a direct type in the sense of a Theophany, but is indirect and brought about by means of the historical acts of God.[171]

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[168] Ibid., p. 60.

[169] Wood, "The Relation of Theology and History Studied in the Context of Epistemological Dualisms," p, 347.

[170] Pannenberg, Revelation as History, p. 125.

[171] Pannenberg, Jesus-God and Man, p. 127.

What Pannenberg means by self-revelation is not "communication of some 'truths' by supernatural means . . . but it is essentially God's 'self-disclosure.'"[172] This concept of revelation can be traced back to Hegel as was seen in the previous chapter of this paper. Hegel is ultimately where Barth came to understand revelation as God's self-disclosure (CD, I/1, pp. 362f.) as he (Barth) studies the Hegelian, Marheinke.[173]

Revelation as seen in the Old Testament is historical in nature. The identity of Yahweh was known through his historical activity. In the early traditions God's self-revelation came through the exodus from Egypt. This event embodies the proof of Yahweh's deity and his power (Ex. 7:17, 8:16, 18; 9:14).[174] Deuteronomy shifts the attention from the exodus to the "occupancy of the land, all of which is viewed as the self-vindication of Jahweh."[175] To be sure, the revelation of Yahweh was expanded to encompass both the exodus and the occupation of the land (Dt. 4:37-40).

As the history of Israel progressed the past events, e.g., the exodus and the occupancy of the promised land, became obscure. The prophets of the exile "no longer took the events connected with the occupancy of the land as the ultimate self-vindication of Jahweh."[176] The focus of Yahweh's self-vindication shifted from the past to the future. "The apocalyptic writings expected final and ultimate self-vindication of Yahweh in connection with the end event, and envision

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[172]Ibid.

[173]Pannenberg, Revelation as History, p. 125.

[174]Ibid., p. 126. [175]Ibid. [176]Ibid., p. 127.

his appearance in glory."[177] Pannenberg points out that it is only when one views Christ and his resurrection in this historical context can these events be understood.[178] He roots the message of Christ, his death, and his resurrection in the historical setting of that day. To separate one from the others does violence to the meaning of the event. Thus, to understand revelation is to understand history.

Pannenberg observes that the concept of God's self-revelation is not totally dependent upon the terms for revelation. Proceeding from ἀποκαλύπτειν to φανέρουν will not elucidate the idea of revelation. He observes that the term glory is the key term. Von Rad demonstrates that kābôd Yahweh in the Old Testament is connected with God's self manifestation.[179] In Isaiah the manifestation of the glory of Yahweh is generally bound up with his historical acts.[180] One may note that since the time of the postexilic prophets the appearance of Yahweh's glory has become a future event (Is. 43:1ff). Von Rad calls this future glory the "eschatological hope."[181]

This emphasis is found in the New Testament as well. δόξα is a key New Testament term in connection with God's revelation. At this point Christ becomes the focal point because the glory of God is visible in Christ (II Cor. 4:6). God indirectly reveals himself in the fate of Christ. Christ has made the future present. The eschaton, which is at the end of history has broken in the middle of history.[182] Through Christ, God has been the believing community, the πνεῦμα τῆς δόξης (I Pet. 4:14). Pannenberg states:

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[177]Ibid. [178]Ibid. [179]Ibid. [180]Ibid., p. 129.
[181]Ibid. [182]Ibid.

> Because the Spirit is the specific form of reality in the new aeon, the event of Christ is itself spiritual as the eschatological event, and the resulting participation in the Spirit mediated through the proclamation of this event and faith in it (Gal. 3:2 and 14) is the earnest money on ths future glory (I Cor. 1:22; 5:2; Rom. 8:23).[183]

For the first century apostles the past event of salvation, "the future of the faithful, and the present of the Spirit are all bound together in the eschatological nearness of God."[184] In subsequent generations the tendency was to dissolve past and future into the present. This was done in the gnostic movement by placing the total emphasis of religious knowlege upon a subjective, direct revelation of God in the present. Pannenberg notes that this effectively destroys the historical character of revelation. One can easily observe the end results of gnosticism in Bultmann. Pannenberg wishes to preserve the historical character of revelation by making a distinction between the past, present, and future. A tension exists for Pannenberg at this point. While there is a marked distinction in the tenses of time, the future still has an impact upon the present and past. The present and the future may be inextricably interwoven, yet they still, in a measure, stand in distinction from one another.

Having God revealing himself in history means that he does so indirectly. With indirect revelation God reveals his own essence at the end of history. Through the course of history, however, this indirect revelation has content other than what is ultimately to be communicated, i.e., the essence of God.[185] Direct revelation, the type gnostisism maintained,

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[183]Ibid. [184]Tupper, p. 85.

[185]Pannenberg, Revelation as History, pp. 14-15.

has God revealing himself immediately in the fashion of a divine epiphany but in the sense of a complete self-disclosure.[186] Pannenberg clearly asserts that biblical revelation is historical, thus indirect. Each act in history reveals a part of God's essence. One must take all of the act together to discern God's revelation. Pannenberg writes:

> Each individual event regarded as an act of God illuminates the being of God, but only fragmentarily. God performs many other acts, continually unforeseeable, which in different ways refers back to him as their author. So, it seems, no single act could possibly reveal him.[187]

The similarity between Hegel and Pannenberg at this point is clear. One may note that Pannenberg maintains that the Christ event is God's total self-revelation. The last line of the above quote refers to historical events prior to the death and resurrection of Christ.

> Thesis Two: Revelation is not comprehended completely in the beginning, but at the end of the revealing history.[188]

The idea of connecting revelation with the end of history is related to its indirect character.[189] It is only at the end of history that God's deity is fully perceived. God's revelation in Israel's history was destined to become revelation in universal history. In fact this can be seen in the major prophets of Israel.[190] God reveals himself in Israel's history and, thus, in universal history. His full self disclosure comes explicitly only at the end. Pannenberg notes that "it is not so much the course of history as it is the end of history that is at one with the essence of God."[191] Pannenberg moves away from Hegel at this point.

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[186] Ibid., p. 16. [187] Ibid., p. 131. [188] Ibid.

[189] Ibid., p. 133. [190] Ibid. [191] Ibid., p. 134.

As mentioned earlier, Hegel posited his own time to be the end of history. Hegel and Pannenberg have two different ideas as to what total self-revelation means.

The key to Pannenberg's idea of revelation is the notion that in Christ "the end of history is experienced in advance as an anticipation."[192] Thus, the resurrection of Jesus is unique in history. In him one can see partially the content of the end of history. Jesus is the total revelation of God; yet, the content is not yet fully visible. Jesus, however, partially reveals God for all the world to see.

> Thesis Three: In distinction from special manifestations of the diety, the historical revelation is open to anyone who has eyes to see. It has a universal character.[193]

Pannenberg reacts against the idea that revelation is an occurrence that one cannot perceive with natural eyes and is only known through secret mediation. This smacks of gnosticism. He is quick to point out that the activity of the biblical God is no secret to anyone. It is "open to anyone who has eyes to see."[194] In the Old Testament Yahweh's self-vindicating acts of history served to prove his deity to all people, not just to Israel.

This idea is found in Paul. Some do not believe, not because the gospel is accessible to only a few, but because "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers." (II Cor. 4:4) Pannenberg notes that, "there is no need for any additional perfection of man as though he could not focus on the 'supernatural' truth with his normal equipment for knowing."[195] Thus, he dismisses the notion that the Holy Spirit is a precondition for faith.

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[192] Ibid., p. 135. [193] Ibid., p. 137. [194] Ibid., p. 136.

[195] Ibid., p. 137.

It is important to understand that placing knowledge of revelation in the natural realm does not mean that a person is only confirming what he/she already "knows through the force of his intellect."[196] All knowledge is not found within one's being. A person must be acted upon from without in order for one to have specific knowledge. The revelatory events and their message are made available to humankind only because God has acted in history. These events, even though they are in the natural realm, "do have a transforming power. When these are taken seriously for what they are, and in the historical context to which they belong, then they speak their own language, the language of facts."[197] (Italics mine)

A person does not bring faith to the events of historical revelation as though faith was a prerequisite. "It is through an open appropriation of these events that true faith is sparked."[198] Faith and trust have to do with the future. Faith is grounded in the past. Faith is not a blind leap. It must have some basis. The prophets called Israel to have faith in Yahweh's promises (which were future) on the basis of his faithfulness of past experience (history). In the same way one must base faith upon the knowledge of the resurrection. Thus, the task of historical research is necessary. Faith, however, is not totally dependent upon historical knowledge. Pannenberg notes: "Thus far-reaching independence of faith from the particular form of historical knowledge out of which it has come is founded on the fact that in the act of trust, faith transcends its own picture of the event."[199] Faith must be based upon historical knowledge; yet, Pannenberg does not reduce faith

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[196]Ibid. [197]Ibid. [198]Ibid., pp. 138-9.

[199]Ibid., p. 139.

to historical knowledge. This is a tension in Pannenberg's thought which will only be resolved in the eschaton. To be sure Pannenberg lucidly posits that "it is not knowledge, but the resulting faith in God that secures participation in salvation."[200] How does God prove his deity in Jesus Christ? Pannenberg answers this in the fourth thesis.

> Thesis Four: The universal revelation of the deity of God is not yet realized in the history of Israel, but first in the fate of Jesus of Nazareth insofar as the end of all events is anticipated in his fate.[201]

Yahweh has not proven himself to be the God of all men in the Old Testament. Certainly, this universal self-vindication was announced by the Old Testament prophets but only as a future event. Pannenberg views Yahweh's revelation in Israel's history as being incomplete. He points out that the twentieth century person is heir of the "Greek philosophical tradition and can give the name God in an unqualified way only to the one God of all men . . . ."[202]

As was mentioned earlier, the apocalyptic writers looked to the future when Yahweh would once and for all self-vindicate himself before all humanity. Closely connected with this end, when the kābôd Yahweh would be manifested, was the resurrection of the dead. With this apocalyptic feat God would show himself to be the deity of all humanity. This apocalyptic end has been actualized in the person of Jesus Christ. "For, in him, the resurrection of the dead has already taken place, though to all other men this is still something yet to be experience."[203]

Pannenberg observes that this final revelation meets the criterion of diety in Greek philosophy. The Greek method of discovering the one

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[200] Ibid. [201] Ibid., p. 140. [202] Ibid., p. 141.

[203] Ibid.

diety was by contemplation of the cosmos. This is not dissimilar to the early Christian approach because when all of reality, i.e., all of history, is apprehended, God's essence is revealed. Of course this has not yet occurred in an explicit sense. This will only come at the end of history. Pannenberg sees the Greek view of the cosmos limiting because it is a closed system. It is not open for any new unique events. Thus, the "experience of the reality of history is superior to that connected with the contemplation of the cosmos."[204]

The whole of history can be viewed only from the end. With the resurrected Christ the end has appeared. In Christ is revealed historically the ultimate end of all humanity. He stands as the anticipation of the end and the revelation of God. Thus, Pannenberg reasons, "no further revelation of God can happen."[205] To be sure God is still active in history, but there is no further revelation.[206]

> Thesis Five: The Christ event does not reveal the deity of the God of Israel as an isolated event, but rather insofar as it is a part of the history of God with Israel.[207]

The traditions of Israel are essential for understanding the significance of Christ. The Father of Jesus is the God of Israel. In many ways Christ's teachings were out of the prophetic tradition. He stood in distinction from the prophets in that he possessed a consciousness of authority unparalleled throughout Israel's history. While Jesus was connected with John the Baptist, he moved beyond John in that he proclaimed not only repentance, but proclaimed the impending end and himself as the means of eschatological salvation.[208] Thus the message

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[204]Ibid., p. 143. [205]Ibid., p. 144.

[206]Ibid., p. 145. [207]Ibid. [208]Ibid.

and fate of Jesus cannot be understood apart from the prophetic-apocalyptic expectation of the end.[209] In fact, Christ proleptically reveals the end of history.

The concept of prolepsis is essential in understanding Pannenberg's Christology. How can the historical particularity of Christ, one event within the whole of history, be the final revelation of God?[210] Christ stands as the pre-actualization of the end of history. This anticipated end in Jesus binds history into a unitary whole.[211] Pannenberg notes that "Jesus is the anticipated end and not the middle of history."[212] In other words with the resurrection of Jesus the end of history has erupted within history. The actual content of this proleptic relvelation is only particularly revealed. Only at the end of history with the Christ event is God explicitly apprehended. The end of history will focus back upon the Christ event because there exists a unity, beyond total comprehension, between the resurrection and the end of history. Yet, enough is revealed to understand Christ as the bearer of eschatological salvation. It is important to note that "it is not simply the history of Jesus that reveals God but Jesus himself, for the event of revelation must not be separated from the being of God."[213] Thus, one is not dealing with just an historical event but God himself. Prolepsis is the underlying concept which allows Christ to transcend the event while at the same moment maintaining a unity between the event and the revelation.

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[209]Tupper, p. 92. [210]Ibid.

[211]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. I, p. 24.

[212]Tupper, p. 93.

[213]Pannenberg, Revelation as History, p. 149.

Thesis Six: In the formulation of the non-Jewish conceptions of revelation in the gentile Christian Church, the universality of the eschatological self-vindication of God in the fate of Jesus comes to actual expression.[214]

Because of the inextricable connection of the Christ event and Israelite history, a problem emerges for the proclamation of the gospel to the non-Jewish community. They do not bring to the gospel the Old Testament or the apocalyptic expectation. The resurrection of an individual did not connote apocalyptic feeling to many non-Jews. In fact, the idea of resurrection from the dead was common in Hellenistic times.[215] Gods dying and rising again can be found in ancient near eastern mythology. Only the Jew connected the resurrection of the dead with eschatology.

"The primitive Christian mission among the Gentiles made expectation of the end and the resurrection of the dead part of its mission kergyma (I Thes. 1:9f; Heb. 6:2)."[216] The importance of not separating the Christ event from its Hebrew roots was ever present in the apostle's mind. Yet the task was set before the early Church to proclaim the kerygma to a Hellenized world. Pannenberg observes that gnostic thought played a role in translating the gospel into Greek categories. "It was the means by which the eschatological synificance of the Christ event could be expressed."[217] He further notes that gnosticisim's function was to convey the gospel where apocalyptic presuppositions could not longer be understood.[218] This created a tension in the theological community of the early Church. Though gnosticism abetted the proclamation of the kerygma, there existed significant dangers.

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[214]Ibid., p. 147. [215]Ibid. [216]Ibid., p. 149.
[217]Ibid. [218]Ibid., p. 150.

Pannenberg observes three key differences between gnosticism and the Hebrew kergyma. First, for the gnostic, revelation occurs directly, i.e., through direct communication. This was done via a heavenly pneuma through a revealer. As already discussed, God reveals himself indirectly through acts in history. Secondly, for the gnostic, revelation by-passes the mind and deals directly with the spirit. Again as has been discussed, God's revelation is for all to see. Ancient Hebrew anthropology made no distinction between mind and spirit. Thirdly, "the gnostic understanding of revelation involves the appearance of the divine in the human."[219] Pannenberg notes gnosticism's heavy influence upon incarnational theology. The incarnation itself is, of course, valid. Gnosticism, however, pays little mind to the cross or resurrection of Christ and Pannenberg contends the resurrection to be the heart of God's revelation in Christ.[220] While gnosticism served to make the God who raised Christ intelligible as God to the Gentiles, the points of difference just mentioned were a concern for the early church.

> Thesis Seven: The Word relates itself to revelation as foretelling, forthtelling and report.[221]

Pannenberg wishes to point out that the revelatory "word" is not to be confused with the gnostic concept of a word of direct revelation. Biblically, history is not composed of brute facts. The history of revelation is far more. It is understanding, hope, and remembrance. "The development of understanding is itself an event in history."[222] A history of the transmission of history is history. The point is, revelation is complex and requires critical faculties to understand the

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[219]Ibid. [220]Ibid., p. 152. [221]Ibid.

[222]Ibid., p. 153.

nuances. Pannenberg in no way allows for revelation to be totally independent of history and the historical context.

Pannenberg attempts to define the meaning of the "Word of God."[223] He makes three points concerning its meaning. First is, "the Word of God as promise."[224] Israel knew of the deity of Yahweh because his acts in history served as fulfillment of his promise. The prophetic word was the vehicle of proclamation but was not itself the revelation. The acts of history served as the revelation. The second point is "the Word of God as forthtelling."[225] The law of Yahweh falls into this category. Pannenberg points out that the law followed the divine self-vindication of Yahweh, e.g., the giving of the law after the exodus. It was God's acts which established the validity of the law. The third point is "the Word of God as Kerygma."[226] The first two uses of the Word of God are deeply rooted in the Old Testament. This last use is new with the New Testament. The kerygma comes from the eschatological revelation of God. It is the reporting of the Christ event which is unique in history. This report goes beyond a mere objective and detached chronological description of the Christ event. It is rather a proclamation.[227] One must be careful not to bifurcate the historical event and the kerygma. One cannot be totally independent of the other. The locus of revelation is the event not the kerygma.

These seven theses offer an outline of Pannenberg's understanding of revelation as history. With these he attempts to ground revelation in God's acts of history. With these points in mind, Pannenberg's historical method must be examined.

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[223]Ibid. [224]Ibid. [225]Ibid., p. 154.

[226]Ibid. [227]Cobb and Robinson, p. 239.

It is one thing to talk of God revealing himself in history yet how does one come to a knowledge of such events? As has been previously stated one cannot make a decision based totally upon personal experience. Logically there must be some objective basis for believing. Pannenberg states: "Immediate religious experience cannot by itself alone establish the certainty of the trust of its content."[228] Indeed, if God has revealed himself in history, these revelatory acts must be subject to historical inquiry.[229]

Admittedly, an anthropocentric element inheres in the structure of historical method. Yet, Pannenberg contends that this does not necessarily limit historical inquiry to an anthropocentric world view.[230] To justify this stance Pannenberg examines the basic component of the historical method, namely the presupposition of universal correlation and the application of analogy.[231]

Universal correlation of all historical phenomena posits that every historical occurrence is reciprocally connected with the circumstances in its environment and cannot be segregated from other events related to its happening. Thus, for Pannenberg there can be no separate salvation history, only universal history. As pointed out earlier, all divine acts in history can only be fully understood when seen in the context of the rest of history. Pannenberg contends that Barth's "primal history" is not acceptable on theological grounds. Pannenberg states that

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[228]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. I, pp. 38-9.

[229]Tupper, p. 111.

[230]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. I, pp. 45-50.

[231]Ibid., p. 41.

> God's redemptive deed took place within the universal correlative connections of human history and not in a ghetto of redemptive history, or in a primal history belonging to a dimension which is 'oblique' to ordinary history . . . .[232]

Universal correlation accepts the causal relation between historical phenomena. It must be pointed out however that the contingency of historical events and the openness of history to the future precludes any attempt to understand history in an essentially evolutionary fashion. The tension between the historical method and a theological conception of history is due not to the universal correlation itself but to the misuse of the causal principle.[223]

The principle of analogy, or more precisely the application of analogy by modern historiography, is the decisive problem for the relation of historical method to theology.[234] In historical research, analogy means that phenomena is difficult to understand "should be conceived and evaluated in terms of the investigator's experience and observation."[235] The method of analogy proceeds from the known to the unknown. It represents the "power of disclosure through the illumination of 'what is obscure' by referring it to 'what is plain.'"[236] Even though the employment of the principle of analogy is anthropocentric, Pannenberg maintains that anthropocentric methodology does not necessitate an anthropocentric world view.[237]

The misuse of the principle of analogy can preclude revelatory events which are unique in history. Pannenberg notes that an unnecessary constriction of historical inquiry through anthropocentrism

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[232]Tupper, p. 112. [233]Ibid. [234]Ibid.

[235]Ibid. [236]Cobb and Robinson, pp. 264-5.

[237]Tupper, p. 112.

does occur when, instead of specifying concrete analogies in light of a specific case, the historian "appealing to the omnipotence of analogy - postulates the fundamental homogencity of all reality which makes man's usual experience the norm for understanding history."[238] Pannenberg maintains this approach is restricting to historical research and distorts any openness history has to the future. When employed properly, analogy is a powerful tool to point beyond the normal experiences of phenomena to the unknown. Absolutizing a general analogy to apply to all of reality is the point at which it becomes restricting. Analogy allows one to look beyond the known. Pannenberg observes:

> The most fruitful possibility opened up by the discovery of historical analogies consists in the fact that it allows more precise comprehension of the ever-present concrete limitation of what is held in common, the particularity that is present in every case in the phenomena being compared. A genuine extension of knowledge takes place in this way. The fundamental anthropological disposition of being able to transcend any given content, the power of concrete negation, is expressed in ability to evaluate discovered analogies right up to their limits.[239]

It is important to note that in historical research one does not begin with a detached gathering of fact. Rather, one starts out with a vague formulation or theory concerning a series of events. Then by weighing the evidence one adjusts one's theory or model. Pannenberg states:

> All reported details, which are always to be understood as expressions of the view of the reporter, obtain historical significance only through relationship with the conception of the course of history which the historian brings with him. Depending on the findings concerning the particulars, this conception will be confirmed, modified, or else abandoned as inadequate in order to make room for a new one.[240]

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[238]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol, I, pp. 47.

[239]Ibid. [240]Tupper, p. 114.

The two basic component's to Pannenberg historical method are "an imaginatively projected theory of the whole of history and concrete historical investigation in terms of the theory."[241] Thus, Pannenberg eschews historical positivism in light of the priority of historical imagination. Though this emphasis on historical imagination permits the element of subjectivism to enter historiography, Pannenberg maintains its validity. The historian still answers to the facts. He notes:

> To the extent that the projection of a historical course of events is verifiable by its agreement with the available findings on the particulars, it is obviously no mere individually conditioned perspective in the consciousness of the historian but rather a recounting of the event itself in its own context.[242]

Clearly, Pannenberg insists, against Barth, that theology is in no position to say what actually happened in the past. That is the task of the historian. Theology is drawn from history. Never is the reverse true. Faith, though based upon historical knowledge, is future oriented (Heb. 11:1).

Pannenberg's Christological Method

The focus of Pannenberg's attention concerning revelation is upon his christology. The question may be raised, "What does christology have to do with the historical Jesus or the apostolic Kerygma?" Martin Kähler and Albrecht Ritschl take their starting point of theology in the proclamation of Christ, or the apostolic kerygma. One can only know the true Jesus Christ in a complete sense by examining the content of his community's proclamation about him[243] They were responding

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[241]Pannenberg, Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. I, p. 71.

[242]Pannenberg, Jesus-God and Man, p. 22.

[243]Ibid.

to the movement to bifurcate the Christ of faith and the Jesus of history. The goal of this movement was to search out the true historical Jesus apart from any kerygma. Pannenberg agrees with Kähler's objection when as he argues against setting the figure and message of Jesus in opposition to the apostolic preaching in such a way that the two would be disjoint. But the rejection of this antithesis does not mean that the essence of Jesus Christ is to be found only in the apostolic preaching or in the truly historic Jesus.[244]

Pannenberg asserts that, from a truly historical perspective, there must be a continuity between the historical Jesus and the preached Christ. One must inquire, as an historian, how the facticity of the life of Jesus gave rise to the apostolic kerygma of the early church. Any assertion of an antithesis between the Christ of faith and the historical Jesus is completely unsatisfactory to the true historian.[245] It is necessary for the theologian to go behind the Apostolic kerygma to the historical Jesus and establish how one relates to the other. Even this approach leaves many directions in which one could take christology.

Some theologians, like Wilhelm Herrmann, embrace the continuity between the apostolic kerygma and the Jesus of history but emphasize the precariousness of faith based on historical investigation. The foundation of faith must be something consistent. Herrmann contends that the results of historical research are constantly changing. Faith should be something accessible to both learned and unlearned alike. It should not be based on scholarly investigation.[246]

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[244]Ibid. [245]Ibid., p. 24. [246]Ibid., p. 25.

Herrmann's approach is inadequate for Pannenberg. One must go beyond the preached Christ and come to terms with the historical Jesus. It is this historical Jesus that gives the New Testament unity. Treating the scripture as an historical text is the only way continuity is preserved. This is so because Jesus of Nazareth is the central figure of the New Testament.[247]

Schleiermacher instituted a new emphasis by making contemporary Christian experience central to theology and using it as the departure point. This theory is pervasive in liberal and existential circles today. One consequence of this theological orientation is exclusive subjectivism. It involves the risk of having a faith that has no historical basis. Bultmann speaks in terms of an encounter with the proclaimed Christ in the kerygma. The emphasis is not upon who Jesus was, but rather, upon who Jesus is as he encounters us.

Ebeling counters this position by arguing that if the person to whom the kerygma refers is in no way definable or historically verifiable, then the kerygma is nothing but pure myth.[248] Pannenberg concurs with Ebeling at this point. To Pannenberg, "the basis of our faith . . . lies completely in what happened in the past."[249]

Walter Kunneth speaks of a contemporary experience with the Christ of faith which vindicates the veracity of the historicity of Jesus Christ. The question must be raised: "On what basis does one assert faith?" Can one believe simply because he experiences the risen Lord in a contemporary experience? Pannenberg asserts that no one can be certain of any such subjective experience. There is no criteria for one to judge whether he is self-deluded or not. He clearly contends, in

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[247]Ibid., p. 27. [248]Ibid. [249]Ibid., p. 28.

opposition to Althaus, that faith has everything to do with what Jesus was. Pannenberg's christology is concerned not only with the Christian community's confession of Christ, but, above and beyond that, he is concerned with the grounding of faith in the activity and fate of Jesus Christ as historical figure.[250] Christology cannot take its starting point from an experience, a creed, or proclamation of faith. It must start with history. Christology must go behind the apostolic kerygma and explore the historical facts that gave rise to the kerygma of faith.

For Pannenberg there can be no separation of the revelation of God through Christ, i.e., the apostolic kerygma and the historical Jesus. History is not an appendage to faith. He does not allow for any division at this point. In fact, Pannenberg feels very strongly that faith must inhere in history. The two are inseparable. He states: "Only when its revelatory character is not something additional to the events but rather, is inherent in them can the events form the basis of faith."[251] Faith grounded in event is meaningless and arbitrary when event is disjointed from history.

Pannenberg's objective in christology is to establish the true understanding of Jesus' significance in history. He is not attempting to isolate the historical Jesus apart from the Christ of faith. Starting from history he works towards building a bridge to the apostolic kerygma. His task, therefore, is not purely historical. In a word, it is in Jesus of Nazareth that God is revealed, and the thrust of Pannenberg's christology is to articulate the dynamics of this fact.

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[250]Ibid., p. 30. [251]Tupper, p. 129.

The essence of Pannenberg's christology is that when one deals with Jesus Christ one is dealing with God. Provisional knowledge of God does exist apart from Jesus, but Christians confess Jesus Christ to be the final revelation of God.[252] As already seen there are two starting points in christology, Jesus of history and the Christ of the kerygma. Pannenberg starts with the Jesus of history. This is not to say that he neglects the Christian community's confessions of Christ, but clearly his emphasis is grounding these confessions in the activity and fate of Jesus in the past.[253] Pannenberg identifies these two christological methodologies as "Christology from above" and "Christology from below."[254] Christology from above denotes starting from the divinity of Jesus to which the incarnation is central. Christology from below is concerned primarily with Jesus' message and fate. It arrives at the incarnation and divinity of Jesus as the final result of an historical investigation. It starts from the historical man Jesus and works its way to the recognition of his divinity.[255]

The christological procedure "from above to below" is followed by Karl Barth. He speaks about a history of the incarnation. "The Son of God goes into what is foreign, into humiliation, by becoming a man, uniting himself with the man Jesus" (CD, IV/1, #59).[256] He has combined two doctrines which were distinguished in seventeenth century orthodox Protestant dogmatics.

First was the doctrine of Jesus as man and God, the doctrine of two natures. Second was the doctrine of the humiliation and exaltation

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[252]Ibid., p. 131.

[253]Pannenberg, Jesus-God and Man, p. 33.

[254]Ibid. [255]Ibid. [256]Ibid., p. 34.

of the incarnate Son of God as two consecutive stages along Jesus' path. Pannenberg points out that Barth comes closer to the basic outline of the gnostic redeemer myth than is necessarily characteristic of an incarnational christology that is constructed "from above to below." There is a cyclic pattern established in this, a descent of the redeemer from heaven and his return there. This serves as Barth's basic concept of christology.[257] Pannenberg observes that the difference in Barth, as in all of the church's christology, is that the redeemer redeems not himself but man as a being essentially different from God."[258]

It is characteristic of any attempt to build a christology from above that the doctrine of the Trinity is presupposed. The question at hand is: How is Jesus Christ human? What does it mean to say Jesus was divine and yet human? For Barth there can be no logical reason to confess Jesus as divine. One must confess the divinity of Jesus because Jesus is divine. In a word, theologians who embrace a christology from above are mute at the point of giving justification to the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. This is perceived by Pannenberg as being a weakness in this methodology.[259]

Pannenberg espies three objections to christology from above. Firstly, as has been stated previously, he finds objectionable presupposing the divinity of Jesus. For Pannenberg, the primary task of christology is to present the reasons for the confessions of Jesus' divinity. Christology must provide an answer to the question: How has Jesus' appearance in history led to the recognition of his divinity?[260]

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[257]Ibid. [258]Ibid. [259]Ibid.

[260]Ibid., p. 35.

Secondly, christology that takes the divinity of Jesus as its starting point faces the problem of establishing the historical uniqueness of the man Jesus. Furthermore, the importance of Jesus' relation to the Judaism of his time is undermined. Yet, one's understanding of Jesus as a historical figure is essentially concatenated with his Jewish heritage. The office of priesthood which Christ held and the meaning of sacrifice become inane upon the separation of Jesus and Judaism. His historical singularity is compromised. Any person could have been enjoined with the divine. Pannenberg states that "no determinative significance can accrue to the historical particularity of Jesus."[261] Even the significances of his death is called into question. Why must a person who is engaged by God subordinate himself to human death? These issues are difficult to handle when Jesus and Judaism are disjoint as is the case of christology from above. Pannenberg asserts there must be a necessary connection between Jesus Christ and his personal history and culture. Christology from above vitiates the link between the two.[262]

The third objection to christology from above is methodology. The method of christology

> from above is closed to us. One would have to stand in the position of God in order to fully understand the path of Christ from divine to the human. All of history is viewed from the human situation. One can never transcend this limitation and view the incarnation from God's perspective. One must start from human history in dealing with the incarnation of Jesus Christ.[263]

Pannenberg's christological method is squarely based upon the historicity of Jesus of Nazareth. If one is to call Jesus divine, he must posit historical evidence to do so. The issue at hand is Christ's claim to deity, his unity with God.[264]

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[261]Ibid. [262]Ibid. [263]Ibid., p. 36. [264]Ibid.

An important emphasis surfaces at this point in Pannenberg's christological methodology, the unity of word and event. An event is a happening, a historical fact. The fact that Jesus Christ healed the sick or fed five thousand persons with two fish and five loaves of bread are just brute facts -- they are events. Events in history are meaningless and static without interpretation of some sort. With most history one is left to supply an interpretation of a particular fact. The event of the resurrection is unique in that the interpretation is given to us by Jesus himself. He gives us "the Word." The word interprets the event and, thereby, gives it life and makes it significant to us. As a consequence of Jesus giving the word, there is a safeguard against arbitrariness in interpreting the event of the resurrection.

The Word for Pannenberg is not just the mere words of Jesus but is representative of the whole dynamic of Jesus' unity with God. Statements about Jesus taken independently from his relationship with God could only result in a crass distortion of his historical reality.[265] The treatment of Christ must encompass the totality of Jesus' life. There must be a unity between what Jesus said concerning his deity and the events in his life. The words gives life and specificity to the event. The event serves as an historical foundation for the word. It gives the word concreteness and makes the word accessible by reason in an objective fashion. There is a necessary reciprocity between word and event.

If Pannenberg's christology begins with history, what is the substance of his claim that Jesus' divinity can be substantiated by an

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[265]Wolfhart Pannenberg, Faith and Reality, trans. John Maxwell (Philadelphia: Westminister, 1977), p. 59.

historical method? Pannenberg's demonstration of the historicity of Jesus' resurrection is central to his christology. The pivotal point on which the entire life of Jesus and its significance to us rests is the resurrection.

The resurrection is the key to understanding the life of Christ. Without the resurrection the events of Jesus' life would be incoherent and unintelligible. Certainly the disciples did not understand the full meaning of the teachings of Christ prior to Christ's resurrection. One must remember that the Gospels are not a mere account ipso facto of the activities of Jesus. They are the articulation of the life of Christ as seen through the resurrection. A rough analogy would be someone reading a complicated book with little understanding, then towards the end of the text something is stated which suddenly gives meaning to what has been read up to that point. The resurrection is the sole starting point for Pannenberg in dealing with Jesus. Jesus is not God because he healed the sick, forgave sin, walked on water, or died on a cross. Jesus is God because he was resurrected from the dead. Pannenberg states: "From the end, which is the resurrection, he is revealed as the God of the beginning."[266]

There is an important principle in Pannenberg's historical methodology that warrants citing. History is a science and, like science, history is descriptive of reality. History and science have no way to define anything. They, at best, can only give an account of what is. This is not to say that history and science are purely descriptive. It is the task of these disciplines to describe and give interpretive accounts of the relatedness of fact. In a word, a value judgment is made with any

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[266]Torrance, p. 10.

factual account. There is a value judgment at work in the sense of applying its meaningfulness to us.

The foundational element in Pannenberg's historical methodology is "openness" to all possibilities in history. Thomas Torrance develops this idea in his book Theological Science. Torrance systematically delineates a method of investigation in the sciences which include history.

Torrance sets forth a method of science that emphasizes an openness one must have to asking questions about the reality being investigated. What is known must be dictated by the object one investigates. One must be open to what reality has to say upon questioning it. Torrance states: "We must operate with an open epistemology in which we allow the way of knowing to be clarified and modified pari passu with advance in deeper and fuller knowledge of the object."[267]

Torrance adduces quantum physics as a contemporary example of his point.[268] Quantum physics operates with a system of physical laws unknown to the twentieth century scientific community prior to its discovery. The source of the new laws of quantum physics, which contradict Newtonian physical laws, is quantum physics itself. The object brought under investigation must be the governing element of our conclusions. One cannot freely impose one's prior theory of the nature of the object's existence with a closed mind. Torrance states:

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[267]Torrance, p. 10.

[268]See index of Thomas Torrance's Theological Science (Oxford: Oxford University, 1969). Under "Quantum Physics."

> All scientific knowledge has a systematic interest for it must attempt to order the material content of its knowledge as far as possible into a coherent whole. It would be unscientific, however, to systematize knowledge in any field according to an alien principle, for the nature of the truth involved must be allowed to prescribe how knowledge of it shall be ordered. In other words, the systematic interest must be the servant of objective knowledge and never allowed to become its master.[269]

All of one's knowledge comes from one's dealings with reality. It cannot be supposed that one has actualized and discovered all of reality. Again, quantum physics serves as an example. The question arises: What else is there that remains undiscovered? Of course the question cannot be answered, but it reminds one that one must be open to new realities as one interacts with reality.

Since history is a science, the same principles of epistemology are at work. There is an important distinction which must be made between history and science. A basis for the scientific method is reproducibility of the phenomenon under inquiry with a controlled environment. Obviously, history does not lend itself to reproducibility. Yet, historical epistemology must have in its nature the same spirit of openness about the possibility of a particular thing happening. This is exactly what Bultmann's epistemology lacks. Bultmann presupposes a set of universal laws that for him governs what is possible and not possible in history. Therefore, the veracity of an historical event is determined first by its consistancy with known physical laws and second by an historical method. With this mind set Bultmann can approach the resurrection account stating "any school boy knows that dead men don't rise." He further states: "It is impossible to use electric light and the wireless and to avail ourselves of modern medical and surgical

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[269]Torrance, p. 138.

discoveries, and at the same time to believe in the New Testament world of spirits and miracles."[270]

Bultmann operates with a closed view of science and physical laws which governs his historical method. In Torrancian terminology, Bultmann operates with a set of "closed concepts,"[271] that is, a set of rigid rules that are inflexible. The basis for these rules of physical law which Bultmann embraces are derived from reality. Torrance has pointed out that we must be open to reality, ready to receive what it has to offer us. Bultmann, in a sense, is stating that he has the last word on what is possible and what is not in terms of reality, i. e., physical laws. This implies, operating on Torrance's method of epistemology, that Bultmann knows all there is to know about physical laws of the universe in order to posit his statement about the resurrection from the dead.

Torrance's approach of openness to reality is not limited to corporal reality. It is a principle which applies to the whole of reality, metaphysical as well as physical. Butlmann's closed concept of reality precludes the possibility of metaphysical or supernatural explanations of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In order for one to dogmatically conclude the nonexistence of the metaphysical or the supernatural and conclude that he/she has the last word on what is possible in terms of physical laws, one has to assume one has complete knowledge of the whole of reality. Bultmann makes the assumption.

Pannenberg's historical methodology is in concurrence with Torrance's thought on epistemology. For Pannenberg, one must be open to the reality under investigation. The governing principle of the possibility

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[270]Bultmann, p. 5.

[271]Torrance, p. 15.

of a particular event occurring is primarily determined by an historical method. Whether or not Christ was resurrected from the dead is an historical problem, not a scientific problem. Therefore, the fundamental difference between Bultmann and Pannenberg is one of presuppositions. Pannenberg is open to all possibilities which are governed by an historical method. Regardless of how congent Pannenberg's historical arguments are, they would have no effect on Bultmann's position because Bultmann's objection to a physical resurrection is not historical but scientific.

Pannenberg's entire christology is built upon the historicity of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His faith is totally contingent upon the facticity of the resurrected Lord. It is absurd, in Pannenberg's thought to state: "I believe Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by faith." He believes the resurrection, not because of faith, but rather, because it is historically verifiable. Certainly none of the apostles believed in the resurrection by means of faith. They believed because it was an event that was historically verifiable by the existance of an empty tomb and post-resurrection appearances.

Pannenberg is not willing to talk of any revelation apart from an historical reference. He will not talk in terms of God directly revealing himself to an individual. Any revelation must be in terms of an historical event in some way.

Historical reference is for Pannenberg the authenticating element in any Christian experience. This is not to say that he mitigates a present experience with the risen Lord. Pannenberg clearly states: "[the historical] basis of our faith must stand the test of our present experience of reality."[272] There exists, for Pannenberg, an inseparable

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[272]Pannenberg, Jesus-God and Man, p. 27.

bond between any experience of God and history. He states further: "Our present experience of reality . . . itself lies completely in what happened in the past."[273]

Pannenberg is, on occasion, misinterpreted because of his great emphasis on history as revelation. Grobel levels the accusation: "Pannenberg directs attention away from the question of God's immediate dealings with individuals."[274] Pannenberg answers the accusation by stating: "Far be it from me to contest the immediacy of contingent divine activity in individuals. Where this activity becomes the content of consciousness, certainly, an immediate, individual experience of God occurs."[275] But when such an event happens to an individual it must have a reference to history. Any isolated event that an individual has with God must be categorized as something other than revelation. Pannenberg asserts that "even when such a direct self-manifestations appears in the form of prophetic inspiration, I cannot attribute to it an autonomous status as revelation."[276] One who has such an experience must confront the question of whether or not he really experienced God or whether the word "God" might not here be merely a conventional cipher or one reproduced by personal necessity which should more correctly be described in psychological terms as opposed to theological.[277] The overlying emphasis of revelation for Pannenberg is through the whole of history. "If one is at all justified in speaking of God as the power over everything, it is only in view of the whole of reality, and not of certain special experiences [disjoint from history]."[278]

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[273]Ibid. [274]Cobb and Robinson, p. 209.

[275]Ibid., p. 238. [276]Ibid. [277]Ibid., p. 239.

[278]Ibid.

Clearly, for Pannenberg history is the foundation for faith. It may appear to some that he has reduced faith to mere historical investigation. Faith does, in fact, play a significant role in Pannenberg's christology. As stated earlier, one does not accept the resurrection by faith but by historical method. One does accept the eschatological significance of the resurrection by faith. Faith is not based upon faith. The antecedent of faith is history. Faith must have an object, which is the historical verifiable resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

Pannenberg makes it clear that historical investigation is not a prerequisite for salvation.

> [Historical] knowledge is thus not a condition for participating in salvation, but rather it assures faith about its basis. It thereby enables faith to resist the gnawing doubt that it has no basis beyond itself and that it merely satisfies a subjective need through fictions, and thus is only accomplishing self-redepmtion through self-deception.[279]

With the amount of emphasis Pannenberg places upon history, the question of historical certainty arises. The questions arise out of Pannenberg's own epistemology. He states: "The conclusions of such historical research are never completely incontestable. They are always more or less probable and can be changed by new discoveries and new approaches to the problem."[280] The implication is that there can be no one hundred percent historical certainty of Jesus' resurrection. Does this not leave open the accusation that one's faith is based upon something problematic? The answer is a qualified "no". Pannenberg states: "Historically assured certainty is the greatest certainty we can ever have of past events."[281] If one calls in the question the historicity of the resurrection because of a lack of one hundred percent

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[279]Ibid., p. 269.

[280]Pannenberg, Faith and Reality, p. 71.

[281]Ibid.

certainty then one must also call into question the historicity of any historical event. For Pannenberg, the evidence overwhelmingly affirms the facticity of the resurrection.

The question may be asked: Why root faith in something one can know only with an historical probability? Why not choose a more adequate basis? Faith must have an antecedent lest it be arbitrary. Therefore, as stated before, faith cannot be based on faith. Experience will not serve as a basis, because of its subjectivity and arbitrariness. History is the only foundation for faith.

In dealing with the question of faith being based upon historical probability, Pannenberg draws a logical distinction between historical certainty and certainty of faith. He states: "These two lie on different levels, and therefore there is no essential contradiction in basing a sure trust on an event which we can know historically only with probability."[282] All history can only be known in terms of probability.

> But certainty of faith, on the other hand, depends on the peculiarity of a particular historical event, namely, the history of Jesus . . . . The certainty of faith consists in the completeness of trust which in turn is grounded in the eschatological meaning of the history of Jesus.[283]

There is no way to prove historically the eschatological significance of the resurrection. Because it is historically verifiable and because it is a unique event in history, what Jesus claimed to be must elicit our full and sober attention.

It is only in this precarious and provisional way that knowledge is possible of the full significance of the life of Jesus Christ. Knowledge

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[282]Cobb and Robinson, p. 273. [283]Ibid.

of the historical Christ and certainty of faith find themselves in this shadow of the mystery of the incarnation. "Both the variability of our historical knowledge of the history of Jesus as wel as the inexpressibility of its meaning"[284] makes one aware of the limits of knowledge and language. The fact arises out of an incompleted history with as open future which is God. Pannenberg fully recognizes and wishes to maintain the mysteriousness of the infinite becoming finite. If there were no mystery involved in an historical understanding of the Christ event, then what one would be dealing with would be something less than the infinite. In essence, for Pannenberg, one will never fully understand the inner dynamics of the incarnation.

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[284]Ibid., p. 275.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Pannenberg strives to establish a theological method which is compatible with what he thinks is the essential component of Christianity, i.e., the historical nature of divine revelation. The epistemology of Kantian deism removed God altogether from the realm of religious knowledge. His approach to philosophical theology did not allow the possibility of any divine revelation in history. God's being is totally removed from the phenomenal world and is inaccessible to human inquiry. Kierkegaard followed a similar path in that he denied the possibility of knowing God from the standpoint of rational inquiry. Unlike Kant, Kierkegaard did believe one could know God through the leap of faith. That is, one is enabled to know God because He creates the condition for faith in the existential moment. Kierkegaard unlike Kant, believed this moment of faith guaranteed subjectively that the historical events upon which Christianity are based are also trustworthy.

This approach divorces theology and philosophy as they were viewed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Consequently, Christianity was removed from the possibility of philosophical investigation.

Both Kant and Kierkegaard were attempting to answer the philosophy of their time and were striving to protect the aspects of religion they felt were important. A major point of weakness in Kant and Kierkegaard is that neither man integrated biblical thought into their philosophies. Kant rejected biblical authority altogether. Kierkegaard, while embracing biblical authority, failed to perceive the bearing of the historical nature of revelation in the Old Testament upon the New

Testament concept of revelation. As a result Kierkegaard's over-emphasis on subjectivity, the rational and objective aspect of His truth was minimized. That is, the volitional aspect of truth was elevated at the expense of the intellectual aspect.

Hegel's wholistic approach to reality allows him to integrate all aspects of knowledge in formulating theology. He does not separate theology from other disciplines. Philosophy, history and science all have a part in theology. Pannenberg follows the same approach. He makes theology accountable, in some measure, to all disciplines. Pannenberg constructs theology based upon careful study of the whole of Scripture as well as the sciences and history in general. He examines the historical nature of revelation in the Old Testament and articulates a concept of New Testament revelation in light of this.

Unlike Hegel, Pannenberg demonstrates an appreciation of the open-ended nature of historical reality. Total understanding of God's revelation in Jesus Christ will come only at the end of history. Pannenberg rejects the idea that theology is completely amenable to reason. Yet he does not allow for any absolute separation of faith and reason. Faith is not reason; but faith must be reasonable. There exists a tension between faith and reason in Pannenberg's thought. Moving to either extreme would eliminate the tension. Pannenberg refuses to do so because Scripture does not. Biblical revelation by its own admission will not be fully comprehended until the eschaton (I Cor. 13:12).

Pannenberg offers a significant alternative to current neo-orthodox theology. By his own methodology with its emphasis upon historical revelation, he secures the resurrection of Jesus Christ as a real historical, objective event, as the focus of God's revelation to humanity.

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