

15

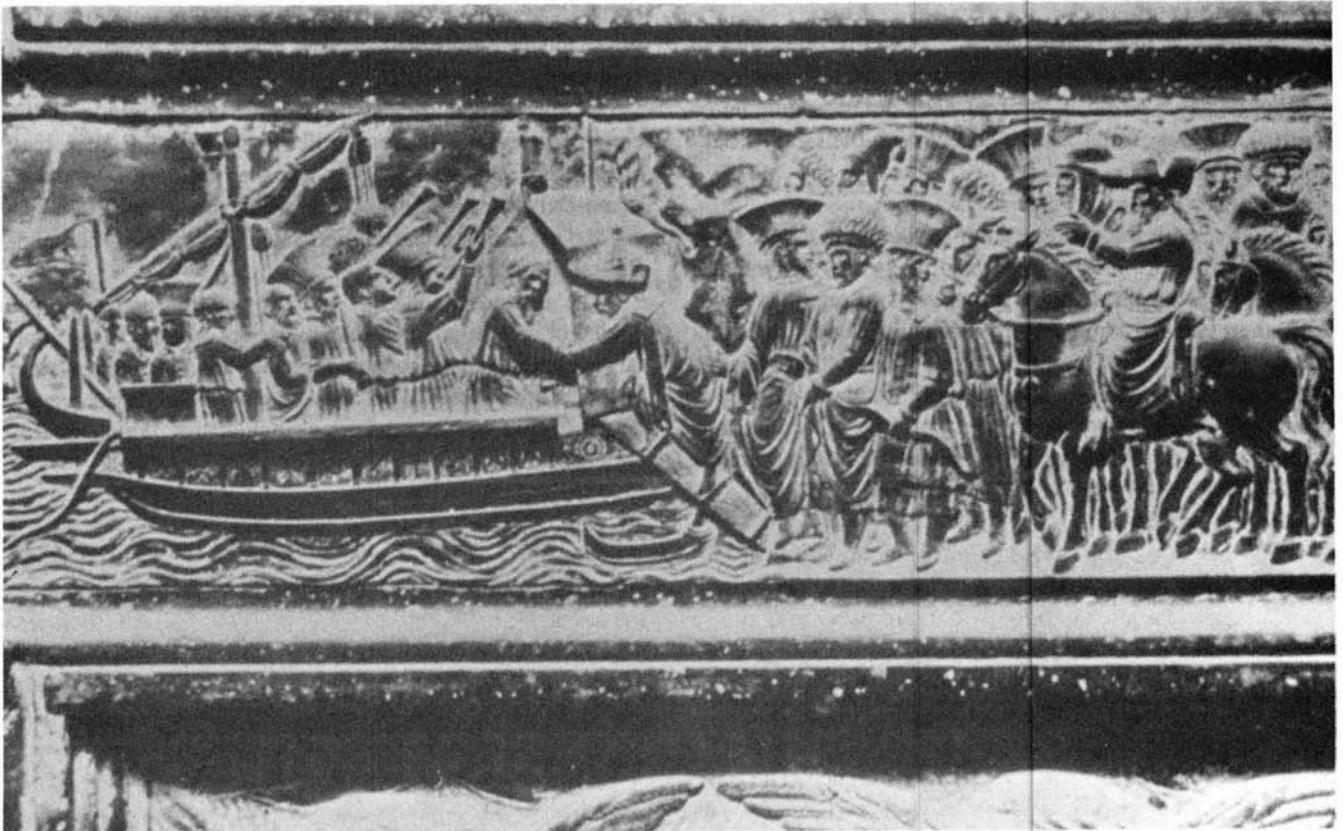
Religion and creative reason

Let us turn to the question of religion, and examine issues of religion from the standpoint which we have elaborated thus far.

To begin, let us take the case of the long-standing split between the Russian (Muscovite) Orthodox Church, and the Western Christian churches, over the issue called the *Filioque*.

For those who are not informed already, the *Filioque* signifies that in the Latin Credo, following St. Augustine's writings, the Latin term *Filioque* was introduced to say that the Holy Spirit flows from the Father and the Son. This was adopted by Isidor of Seville, and so incorporated into the Credo there in Spain. This editing of the Credo went by various routes into all parts of Christianity, and became formally a universal part of the Western Christians' Creed.

It was adopted by both the Eastern and Western churches



Greeks arriving in Italy for the Ecumenical Council of Florence, in 1438. There, the Eastern Orthodox Church recognized that the original intent of the Nicene Creed had been to incorporate the *Filioque* conception—the doctrinal corollary for the divine spark of reason in humanity. (Shown is a relief, by Filarete, from the bronze doors of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, 1444.)

in the ecumenical unification which occurred in 1439-40, in the Council of Florence. There, the Eastern Orthodox Church recognized, on the basis of evidence from their own writings' original intent, as presented by the later-Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa, that the original intent of the Nicene Creed had been to incorporate the conception, which is otherwise known as the *Filioque*. So, in the 1439 Council of Florence decisions, the Eastern Orthodox Church recognized that the *Filioque* of the Latin Church was a proper and essential part of the Christian Creed for all persons, and was not simply a Western innovation.

This Council decision was opposed by certain people at Mount Athos (Holy Mountain), including a fellow who became the "Quisling" of Greece, later known as the Patriarch Gennadios. (Gennadios helped in betraying Constantinople to the Ottoman conquest, and was rewarded for his treason, by appointment as Patriarch of all the Christians of the Ottoman Empire.)

Gennadios, who represented a faction at Mount Athos, was supported chiefly by a gnostic faction in Venice related to the Bogomils and Cathars and so forth; he was also supported, notably, by the princes of Muscovy, who practiced a heathen variety of Christian doctrine in the gnostic form. The Muscovite form was derived from what is called hesychasm, that is, the bellybutton contemplation of oriental pagan mystics.

That is one split.

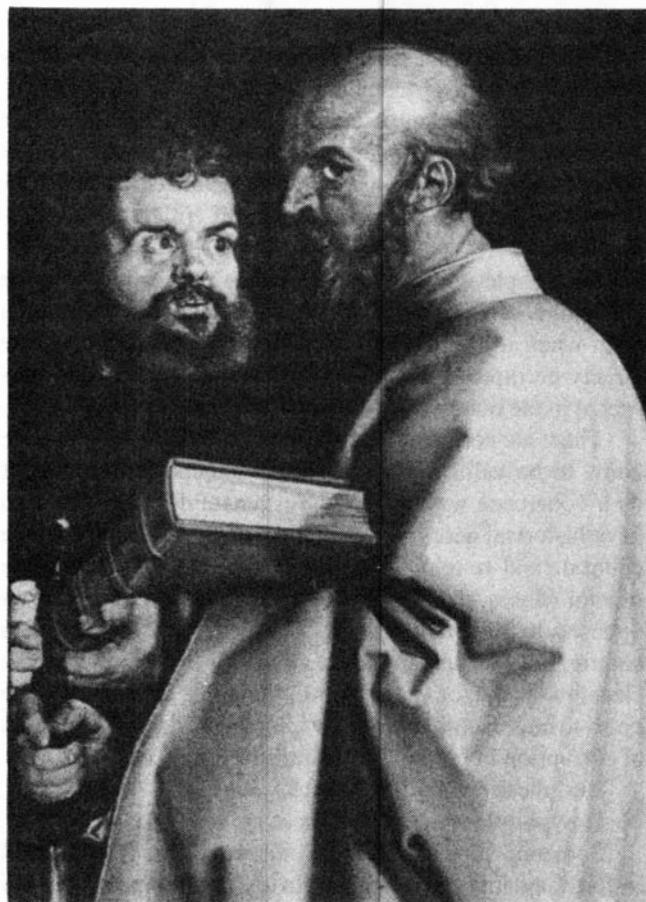
In Protestantism today, we have a split between Orthodox Western Christianity and certain among the Protestant cults, on the same substantive issue. For example, radical Calvinism is a form of gnosticism, *in effect*, which denies the *Filioque*, denies the divine spark of reason in humanity.

You have also those Lutheran radicals, who implicitly join with the Calvinists, on this, as do radical Pietists. For example, Immanuel Kant's Pietism was a significant factor in shaping his gnostic philosophical views. This connection was expressed in his famous *Critiques*, for example, as a follower of the gnostic, virtually satanic, David Hume and Adam Smith.

These issues come up more broadly today.

They are presented, ordinarily, as theological issues. In the United States today, at many divinity schools and theological seminaries, they would tend to be argued from the standpoint of William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*. William James, the famous Harvard psychologist and pragmatist, who was virtually a Satanist, or, at least worst, a gnostic, certainly no Christian.

Around the world, people would argue, "These are merely doctrinaire matters; and it is merely a matter of opinion, of one sect against another." They would argue, "The only thing that is fundamental, is the religious experience as William James defined it;" "These are matters of revealed religion, revealed doctrine, or allegedly revealed doctrine as opposed to anything which can be settled by means of



St. Paul (with St. Mark in the background), by Albrecht Dürer (detail, "The Four Apostles," ca. 1425, Munich, Old Picture Gallery). What Paul stated in I Corinthians 13, the famous chapter on the primacy of sacred love, is provable, and would be so "even if he had never written it," says LaRouche.

reason."

Unfortunately, many advocates of these various positions in theology, will argue only from the standpoint of revealed doctrine. For example, many Protestants will say, "Well, 'such-and-such' is revealed doctrine in the Sacred Word of God from the Old Testament."

The Old Testament as a whole is not pure and this is provably the case. Some of the Jewish texts, for example, were known to have been corrupted by the Babylonians in the seventh century B.C. by the scribes. These scribes imposed upon the Jewish texts, the satanic, Chaldean cult of Ishtar. The latter was superimposed, in part, upon the Hebrew text, to bring them into conformity, by corruption, with the imperial pantheon of the Babylonian Chaldeans.

There was a second revision of the Jewish texts, in a similar way. The scribes under the Achaemenid occupation also created a pantheon, like the later Roman Pantheon; the Hebrew religion, in order to be tolerated, had to conform in letter and in practice to the terms of membership in this

polytheistic pantheon.

A good deal of the pseudo-Christianity, and pseudo-Judaism come from this particular corruption.

Christian gnosticism comes chiefly from the Mithra cult of Simon Magus. Similarly, Jewish cabbalism comes, in part, out of the same Mithra cult. The Mithra cult was explicitly the author of the Nietzschean Adolf Hitler, at least ultimately.

So, people will argue these issues, typically, from the standpoint of Scripture, revealed religion; they will do so even when it is provably the case that these scriptures are largely corrupted, as the Old Testament is extensively corrupted in the manner we have indicated above.

There are certain aspects of the Old Testament which we know to be valid from a Christian standpoint, because of their coherence with the New Testament doctrine. We also have historical access to proofs, based on knowledge of the cultural, and religious, beliefs of the relevant period, the time of Moses. We know what the Chaldean cults were, as opposed to Egyptian culture. The better part of Egyptian culture, not Mesopotamian, of course, is incorporated in the cleanliness code of Judaism. Anything that is paganism, we know to be corruption. For example, there is a certain amount of corruption in favor of the Canaanite Hiram of Tyre.

But, these are matters of background.

How should we deal with these issues?

Someone quotes his text, his interpretation of a text, and so forth, against somebody else's text, or interpretation of a text; this gets us nowhere. This fails, and leads Christianity, in particular, precisely into the trap of irrational formalism.

On the subject of the *Filioque*: We could know the truth if there were no text. If there were no Latin Creed with the *Filioque* in it, the *Filioque*, even without its incorporation in the Latin Creed, would still be true, and we would be able to prove that that were true.

Why?

For example: In the way we have indicated before, it is *provable*, by reason, that the human being, as a species, is distinguished, set apart from, and above, all other species, including all animal species, qualitatively, by virtue of the divine spark of reason: that potentiality. That separates the human species absolutely from an animal species. Man is not an animal; and animal behavioral experiments tell us almost nothing about man, except the lower part of man, below the belt, so to speak.

It is provable, that creative reason is a creative principle, as we have described it. *It is provable* that you cannot define Creation, or the Creator, except from this standpoint of the definition of creative reason. *It is provable*, that man, by virtue of his potential, is *imago viva Dei*. *It is provable*, that Christianity presents Jesus Christ as the mediation between the Creator and Man, or the aspect of the Creator which mediates between Creator and Man, which brings man out of a state of taking orders from God as a potentate, to man



"St. Augustine Preaching" (a scene from the "St. Augustine Altarpiece" by a late 15th-century Flemish artist, in New York's Cloisters Museum). It was following Augustine's teachings that the Latin term *Filioque* was edited into the Credo and formally became a universal part of Western Christians' creed.

who, out of love of God, a love based on *imago viva Dei*, acts out of the commandment of love, not the commandment of fear. That is all provable.

It is also provable, that this divine spark of reason is not a collective property of the species, in the sense that the Muscovite Russians would argue, but is, rather, a sovereign potentiality, a sovereign power, of the individual as an individual: a *monad*.

It is also provable, that this distinction we have just identified and outlined defines a different kind of ordering of society, as against barbarian or pagan society, and that this form of society is superior to, and natural, relative to all other forms of society. That Christian civilization, as defined from this standpoint, not an arbitrary standpoint, is the highest form of civilization which man could achieve, and every other form of civilization is inferior to it. That is provable.

It is also provable, that any contrary notion of religiosity is false. So, why do we get into doctrinal arguments about text and interpretation of text, where reason guides us to the

right answer?

The text is not to be despised by any means on this account. For example, the Gospel texts, the texts of the Epistles: These are historical statements of Christianity. They contain statements which are true, which may not have been known to be true by virtue of the action of reason in an ordinary sense—in the action of scholarship, or science—at that time. However, we can know them to be true. They are accessible to reason, and we are gratified to find that the truth has been told; but we can prove it.

This takes us to the verge of the matter. There are certain mysteries of Christianity, but they are very limited. Virtually everything people would normally argue about, except this one- or twofold mystery, is subject to reason. Be informed by texts, perhaps helped by texts, by Biblical texts, but not dependent upon them. *It is provable* by reason.

Let us take an example of this: Corinthians I:13, of Paul, the famous one.

What is stated there is provable, even if Paul had never written that; but he did write it. It is beautiful, in the center of a number of chapters of the same Epistle, which converge on the same point.

Paul instructed the Corinthians on this point, and instructed others. Does it detract from Paul's conveying that, that this argument he makes were provable? No, it is like a hypothesis. Paul has stated a theorem. It is up to us to prove the theorem. But Paul stating the theorem was the essential act—that this was said, even though it were scientifically provable, without the Epistle. Would it have been understood as widely, would it have been applied, if that had not been done, if that Epistle had not been written? The implication is fairly obvious.

The point I wanted to stress here, in this kind of intermezzo, is that as members of an ecumenical association, we must oppose arbitrary, doctrinal, textual argument in religion, and say, "These matters which are of importance can all be reduced to reason; and, whatever the text is assumed to say, or is interpreted to say, is irrelevant in that sense. Where is the proof? Where is the proof?" (Except in that which is identified as a mystery.)

Now, on the Russian part, what do you get? Then you get the holiness, the holiness as defined by oriental paganism, brought into pseudo-Christianity as gnosticism, beginning at least the time of Constantine, who promoted gnosticism with Arius and the Sinai Desert monks (St. Catherine's of Sinai),

as the latter hesychasts, or bellybutton worshipers, which were characteristic of the troglodytes of, say, Mount Athos's Holy Mountain later.

This is sickness; but, this is the essence which separates the so-called Russian holy man of the Muscovite model, from the Christian; which defines Russian culture as really barbarism, with a facade of Christian terminology. It is not Christianity. The fact that the Russians would like to call themselves Christians, may be commendable; it is not to be discouraged; but what they have got is not the true article.

Finally, to the Protestants.

We see that the Presbyterian Church, at least the Church of Scotland's leadership, is being destroyed from the top. It has gone outside Christianity, toward satanism, by way of paganism. That is what it is doing officially, with this motion set before it. This was done, in conjunction with the Muscovite Russian Church, with the ecumenical gestures which were taken during 1989, to promote precisely that. This has been the role of Archbishop Runcie, within the Church of England, who did the same kind of terrible thing. This is typical of the satanist, gnostic Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the Episcopal Cathedral in New York City, and its Lindisfarne attribute.

But, the essence of the matter here is the danger of the radical Calvinism, of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, which spreads widely throughout Protestant Christianity in the United States. The danger is, the separation of faith from works: faith without works, which is the characteristic of radical Calvinism, the characteristic of the worst part of radical Lutheranism. Those aspects of Protestantism are what must be fought and combatted.

It is not a theological matter, as such. It is a matter of reason. We are obliged—contrary to the Quaker, who says he must not participate in military affairs—to be accountable for the condition of mankind. We are obliged to that by determinable, knowable, moral standards respecting past, present, and future generations in entirety.

This, the radical Calvinist rejects; this, the gnostic rejects; this, the radical Lutheran rejects. This must be combatted. It is not a matter of interpretation of the Bible, even though the Lutheran version of argument on this is false, as Calvin's is, even from the standpoint of the Bible. But that is not the hard proof.

The hard proof is: This is insane; and, Christ and the Creator are not insane. That is the point to be made.