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# AN EVALUATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PERIOD 1140-1270 IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION

by
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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the possibility of establishing a linear relationship between the modern era and the High Middle Ages. Its inspiration is the English poet William Blake, who conceived man's pilgrimage in three stages: Innocence, Experience, and Organized Innocence. The focus of the study is the apogee of the High Middle Ages and the particular question of whether that era can be equated with Blake's initial, integrated state of Innocence. Analysis of the literature, art, and architecture of the period suggests the validity of Blake's model and its potential value as a framework for understanding and coping with the contemporary era.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

It would be convenient to the historian if events fell neatly within the time limits of each hundred years and one could speak with confidence of the distinctive features of certain centuries. Unfortunately they do not. The researcher is confronted by incidents which are meaningful to his thesis but do not conform to the precise hundred year period. In this instance, the basis for the study lies in the themes which present themselves in the thought, art, and events of the latter half of the twelfth, and nearly all of the thirteenth century. Although France seems to have been the chief intellectual region of the period where these developments can be seen most clearly, they can also be found with some variation of type and degree throughout Western Christendom.

For the purpose of this paper, which is concerned with a mood--a feeling of unity which found expression in the concept of High Gothic--a period of approximately one hundred and thirty years will be considered. In 1140 the Abbot Suger dedicated the spacious new narthex of his Abbey at Saint-Denis-en-France. Although the (earlier) Romanesque style was still in vogue, this was the moment when the perfected new form was ushered in, and it affords a point of beginning for the research.

The year 1270, in which the death of Louis IX of France occurred, is a convenient terminal date, although there is actually more than a decade of events which bring this mighty flowering of the Gothic spirit

to its gradual decline. The synthesis of faith and reason which Saint Thomas Aquinas had established was attacked by conservative theologians in the period 1265-1274. Coincidently, both he and his friendly adversary, the Franciscan Saint Bonaventura, died in 1274. Finally, in 1277 the series of condemnations at Paris and Oxford against certain Thomist theses, as well as the doctrine of individualization of the soul by the body, and the determination of the will by the good, resulted in the separation of speculative theology into different schools. The unity which marked the period of High Gothic began to break down and would be completely shattered in the fourteenth century.

At this point it is pertinent to inquire into the motivation which prompted this research. What is the purpose of studying any era in history? Is it only for the greater accumulation of more and more facts? Or, what is more to the point, is there any message for us contained in the study of the European High Middle Ages, in particular the thirteenth century? If so, what direction can it possibly have for the technological world of the twentieth century? These avenues of inquiry lead to more complex questions, but they do become a point of departure as well as offering a focus.

A great rationalist, John Morley, expressed it in the following words exactly one hundred years ago:

> It is the present that really interests us; it is the present that we seek to understand and to explain. I do not in the least want to know what happened in the past, except as it enables me to see my way more clearly through what is happening today. I want to know what men thought and did in the Thirteenth Century, not out of any dilettante or idle antiquarian's curiosity but because the Thirteenth Century is at the root of what men think and do in the nineteenth.[1]

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[1]John Morley, "On Popular Culture," in Prose Masterpieces from Modern Essayists, Essay Index Reprint Series (Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1970; first published 1915), p. 291.

Let us accept the assumption that there is some recognizable special quality about the High Middle Ages. We know that they were times of intense and varied activity. The barriers of feudal society began to give way as people came together, drawn by both the needs and the rewards of trade. This in turn resulted in the formation of urban centers and the beginning of guilds. Movement was everywhere; great armies thronged south and eastward towards Jerusalem on the Crusades, while small bands moved from one shrine to the next on never-ending pilgrimages.

Art and architecture reached an extremely high point of development, as also did the intellectual pursuits in cathedral schools and the newly-formed universities, where mental activity pursued the quest for wisdom. Barbarism and injustice were still rampant; however, life in that era was also involved with acts of simple piety which often reached heights of transcendental devotion to God. There was a meeting of man's opposite worlds as his inner and outer life came together in medievalist expression centered in the religious environment of Western Christendom.

These facts are found in any study of medieval history. What is of added significance, however, is that this period left us a remarkable legacy of church architecture and religious art as living reminders of this particular era in Western civilization. We gaze at these forms of stone and wood, and images of color, and they bestow a certain knowledge. The collective mind of the High Middle Ages can indeed speak to us from the isolation of that state of being seven hundred and more years ago. We read the spoken word of the Schoolmen and learn of their involvement with reasonable discourse; we share the conversations of the mystics in their dialogue with God; we read the <u>chansons</u> and ballads of the poets;

we hear the whisper of the word spoken in the image of stone, of form, of color; we listen to the harmonious melody of the Gregorian Chant; and, of course, we also participate through the medium of the minds of the interpreters who have spanned the intervening centuries.

The message is clearly discernible and tells of the strength of the Christian Church and of the philosophy being formulated at the onset of the building of the great houses of worship. The Scholastics' effort to clarify faith through an appeal to reason is made manifest by the visual ordering of design and space in the Gothic cathedrals, and the presence of light which penetrates the stained-glass windows in the previously dimly lit sanctuaries provides a visible rendition of their philosophy and belief.

As any student of historiography knows, there are various methods of interpreting history.[2] It is the consensus of many historians that the apogee of the High Middle Ages was a time of fusion, of interconnection, and even of renaissance, when all came under the protection of Holy Mother Church.[3] Other assessments, however, temper this "excessive admiration" and offer a more cautious approach, claiming that:

> The apparent unity of Christendom and the deep, simple Christian faith which accompanied it were the objects of uncritical admiration. The unity was not so complete nor

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[2]A concise presentation of varying attitudes to the period of the Middle Ages is given in the Introduction of John B. Morrall's The Medieval Imprint (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1967), pp. 1-18.

[3]Henry Adams, Mont-Saint Michel and Chartres (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company 1933); Charles H. Haskins, The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1964); Friedrich Heer, The Medieval World, Europe 1100-1350, trans. Janet Sondheimer (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969); James J. Walsh, The Thirteenth, Greatest of Centuries (New York: McMullen, 1952; reprint edition New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1970).

> was the faith so naive or so widespread as has often been supposed, but the Church and its teachings did form the background of nearly all activity.[4]

Based on the foregoing thoughtful evaluation the premise is offered that there was a unifying principle prevailing, permeating all levels of this homogeneous, hierarchical society which is recognizable in our research today. Various aspects of this multifaceted society will be examined in succeeding chapters. In this initial segment, however, we are concerned with establishing a relationship between the apex of the High Middle Ages and the present.

For the key which will unlock our perception and offer an innovative approach, we must turn to the model given by the English visionary, artist, and poet William Blake, who lived from 1757-1827. Through the medium of the written word and the visual image, he also sought to explore and present his own view of unity; and he used the terms "Innocence" and "Experience" to describe the contrary states which provide not a cyclical view of Man's quest but ultimate movement to a Third State.[5]

While it is not the purpose of this paper to examine Blake's thought in its entirety as it relates to the High Middle Ages (but only to apply his model of the three stages of man's pilgrimage as explained below), nevertheless a brief resumé of his ideas is presented which points to an interest and understanding of the period in question. The poet-artist drew upon the medieval concepts of hierarchy and spiritual ascent based upon the Augustinian-Platonic environment of the Catholic Church. Through the use of involved terminology he devised a system to describe the divided state of fallen man and his journey toward totality of Being. Blake con-

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[4]William T. H. Jackson, The Literature of the Middle Ages (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p. xii.

[5]Robert F. Gleckner, The Piper and the Bard (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1959), p. 48.

sidered Gothic art as the embodiment of living form and the portrayal of Eternal Existence, and his own drawings were concerned with the vital linear character suggestive of Gothic.[6]

William Blake drew heavily upon the symbolism of that earlier age and gave us Jerusalem as his epic, prophetic work. This city (so dear to the heart of medieval man) he called the City of Peace and equated the term with Liberty. It is interesting to recall that Saint Augustine of Hippo, in his great work, The City of God, also considered "the only reality worth striving for is that which is eternal--the heavenly Jerusalem--'the vision of peace.'"[7] It has been claimed that "no writer had a more persistent influence on the higher ranges of mediaeval thought"[8] than Augustine, and by continuing his imagery Blake makes a direct reference to this period of history.

Blake also carried forward the idea of the Arthurian legends in a myth of his own making: the Human Form, originally one man who was fourfold in totality, became divided, but "shall arise again with tenfold splendor when Arthur shall awake from sleep and resume his dominion over earth and ocean."[9]

As Vincent of Beauvais in the thirteenth century presented his concept of the Four Mirrors which provided, in their totality, the answer

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[6]Kathleen Raine, William Blake (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1971), pp. 17-26.

[7]Saint Augustine, The City of God, trans. Marcus Dods, Great Books of the Western World, vol. 18, ed. Robert M. Hutchins (Chicago: William Benton Publishers, 1952), pp. 450-51.

[8]Haskins, Renaissance, p. 80.

[9]S. Foster Damon, A Blake Dictionary (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1973), p. 30.

to the interconnection of all things,[10] so Blake offered his own concept of the Fourfold Vision as illustrative of the totally integrated individual in a unified society. This imagery also had much dependence upon the symbology of Hugh of St. Victor, who lived shortly before the period under discussion but whose iconography will be briefly touched upon in a later portion of the paper.[11] Born in the latter half of "the eighteenth, lowest of centuries,"[12] the poet stood free from the rationalities of the Deist philosophes of his own age and looked back to the medieval period for inspiration and imagery.

In William Blake's complex symbolism he equated Innocence with the integrated state of being into which all men are born, and wherein the subjective-objective condition is a unified whole. It carries within it all the implications of newness and beginning, and ultimately of renaissance. It is this initial stage which we shall attempt to identify with the apogee of the High Middle Ages, and always in the context of the poet's understanding. Within this frame of reference innocence is not equated with ignorance. It is, instead, a condition of childlike trust wherein inherent potential is only hinted at. In William Blake's Songs of Innocence he celebrated "the imaginative separateness of the child"[13] and viewed it as the nucleus of the whole human situation, instead of a state that precedes the knowledge of adults.[14]

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[10]Emile Mâle, Religious Art from the Twelfth to the Eighteenth Century (New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1949), pp. 62-77.

[11]Grover A. Zinn, "Mandala Symbolism and Use in the Mysticism of Hugh of St. Victor," History of Religions 12 (1972-73):317-41.

[12]Walsh, The Thirteenth, pp. 482-85.

[13]The Portable Blake, ed. Alfred Kazin (New York: The Viking Press, 1959), p. 6.

[14]Ibid., p. 39.

Within this initial state all are related to one another and all are part of each in a vast unity. The modern image of Europe cut up like a jig-saw puzzle with its boundaries, multi-languages, and above all--the strife of nationalism--did not exist in the thirteenth century. True, there were territorial wars fought for the possession of presumed hereditary rights, and claims of the Royal Houses of France and England resulted in dissension and bloodshed. But all of Europe was brought together under a common nexus, Latin, the ecclesiastic language of the Church. A master or a student could, and did, travel from one university or town in one country to another bound by this common intellectual bond. Although the peasant was unable to converse or write in Latin, he too participated in the unified hierarchical social structure by hearing Latin spoken at church services and holy activities of the village priest and by using fragments in his own prayers and religious observances.

It is recognized that there were a vast number of unskilled workers and migrants who perhaps were not so zealous in their support of the Church as other segments of medieval society. However, they too were part of the ecclesiastical drama. In their need for stability they often turned to a "messiah" of their own making, sometimes an apostate friar or monk, and formed a salvationist group. Although considered heretical,

> For these groups, too, holiness was a quality which was to be attained through renunciation of the world and the flesh, through self-abnegation and even through self-torture. For them, too, the outward sign of holiness was the power to bring down divine blessings upon the world, and in particular the power to perform miracles.[15]

In a wider context the state of Innocence could be applied to the entire era of the Early and High Middle Ages; the earlier period which

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[15]Norman Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), p. 31.

saw the dawning of this vast Christian empire, however, might well be described as the embryonic or formative stage. The leaders of thought were by no means unintelligent and helped formulate an integrated type of civilization based upon simple faith and the teachings of the Church. But the concept of unity took time to come to fruition despite its early promise in the Carolingian Empire and,

> There were in fact two societies and two cultures in early mediaeval Europe. On the one hand there was the peace-society of the Church, which was centered in the monasteries and episcopal cities and inherited the tradition of later Roman culture. And, on the other hand, there was the war-society of the feudal nobility and their following whose life was spent in incessant wars and private feuds. . . . The vital problem of the tenth century was whether this feudal barbarism was to capture and absorb the peace-society of the Church, or whether the latter could succeed in imposing its ideals and its higher culture on the feudal nobility, as it had formerly done with the barbarian monarchies of the Anglo-Saxons and the Franks.[16]

Upheaval and disorder were experienced in both societies, but as Christopher Dawson vividly portrays it, "they were the birth-pangs of a new society, and out of the darkness and confusion of the tenth century the new peoples of Christian Europe were born."[17] By the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries this "entity" had emerged strong, whole, imbued with faith and was, in fact, the integrated society of European Christendom with a common Fatherhood, which this writer believes has a marked affinity to the first stage of Blake's progression. Accepting the term Innocence in the context of an integrated state of newness or beginning, the apex of the High Middle Ages stands alone. However, within the continuum of historical events, obviously this period had a

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[16]Christopher Dawson, The Making of Europe (New York: New American Library, 1974), pp. 218, 228-29.

[17]Ibid., p. 230.

certain dependence on the Early Middle Ages and this will be examined briefly later in the work.

But man cannot grow through Innocence alone. Blake's contrary state of Experience has been ordained as the testing ground for man, and he has to follow his course through birth into Innocence and then on through the experiential stage. As a child depends wholly on another for its protection and nourishment, it resides in a condition which is free of anxiety and decision making. Children live in a subjective state in perfect trust that the necessities of life will be taken care of, and yet, by the very nature of this environment, limitations and restrictions are imposed. There can be no self-realization, growth, or movement without Experience, which in a wider context, might also be equated with the "fall from the state of grace."

This new experiential stage brings with it both the excitement of meeting self and the disillusionment that the microcosm of egocentricity both alienates and separates. Dependence is now withdrawn from the "other," and an individual is painfully aware that there is no one else to turn to; fear and anxiety of annihilation of self replace the trust of childhood. It is only when the pilgrim moves out of this situation and forward to a new state of being (in Blake's terminology that of Eden, but perhaps better understood through the expression, Higher Innocence)[18] that unity and harmony are restored.

To elaborate on this model a little further: a child is unaware of experiences which lie ahead and lives within the totality of its own being; therefore, it does not in fact know that it is innocent and integrated.

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[18]Gleckner, Piper, pp. 35, 45.

Experience was ordained as the testing ground for the child and it had to follow its course. It must be clearly recognized, however, that the third state is not a return to the original unified existence but a re-gaining of the holistic situation, understood and evaluated in the light of the experiential pilgrimage. This might be thought of as a form of Examined Innocence--the lost world of Innocence cannot be re-gained, but there is the possibility that the questing individual may reorganize his divided self and forge a new unity.[19]

Inasmuch as this model is concerned with movement from one state to another it is possible to impose an evolutionary process upon it. However, William Blake also allows that the third state can be equated with descent into a further separated state, which he terms Ulro (or matter) with implications of the downward movement of a spiral. Ultimately, ascent is possible, as none are lost forever.[20]

A simple analogy might be as follows: A boy lives in a rural setting, protected within the family environment and knowing only a closed self-centered life. Into this atmosphere, however, there creeps the disquiet and frustration of wanting to know what lies down the road that leads to the city. The boy grows to young manhood and sets out to taste, to savor, and to experience all of the various diversions and entertainments which are offered. In time the effort of seeking for more diversity in all of the aspects of life becomes too great--he is dissatisfied and alone. According to Blake's understanding there is no

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[19]Northrup Frye, Fearful Symmetry (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), p. 424; Morton D. Paley, "Introduction," Twentieth Century Interpretations of Songs of Innocence and of Experience, pp. 1-9.

[20]S. Foster Damon, William Blake: His Philosophy and Symbols (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1958), pp. 193, 232-33; Gleckner, Piper, p. 50.

return, as in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Instead, the man moves forward and from his own evaluation of all that has happened to him draws on the memory of the integrated days of childhood. Only then is he truly free to form a unitary life, to experience a measure of harmony, and to recognize the interrelatedness of all aspects of creation--or descend into an ultimate disorganized and further separated state of chaos.

With the true voice of the visionary, Blake has provided us with a pattern which can be used on an individual basis, but which has far-reaching significance when applied to the collective situation of Western Civilization. We have accepted the fact that "the Church and its teachings did form the background of nearly all activity"[21] in the High Middle Ages which contributed to a unified environment. The period of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, particularly centered in France, witnessed a renaissance of learning hitherto unprecedented in that area, and culminating in the synthesis of faith and reason as expounded by Saint Thomas Aquinas.

In retrospect there appears to be a direct relationship to the concentration of interrelatedness which wove all of European Christendom together, and the short duration of this universal aspect. There is an implication that, by the very intensity of its spiritual, intellectual and secular activity, the zenith could not be maintained. At first the signs of unrest and disunity were no more than slight ripples held in check by the solidarity of ecclesiastical hierarchy, but by the fourteenth century indications of change pointed towards upheaval.

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[21]Jackson, Literature of the Middle Ages, p. xii. See pages 4-5 of this paper for quotation of the passage in its entirety.

Although it lies beyond the scope of this paper to examine in great detail the disintegration of the synthesis of the High Middle Ages, and especially as it related to the possible movement into William Blake's second phase of Experience, it is interesting to recognize the breaking away from authority and the quest for individuality which took place in the latter part of the thirteenth century. This was no abrupt change. Instead, there was a gradual weakening of the medieval institutions of feudalism, ecclesiastic power, and that particular unified tenor of life which was such an intrinsic part of the environment.

Just as the area of Langue D'Oc had provided the climate for a freer, more open, and more secular expression of life, so the stirrings of change from the fixed medieval system were first felt in the south, in Italy. Later, these ideas spread northward and provided avenues for Renaissance culture which varied in different European countries. All of this direction of change, however, first had its inception in the transitional period, in the fourteenth century, when the voices of churchmen, including John Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, John Wyclif, and John Hus were raised. Their teachings, which were colored with their own individual fervor will be examined briefly in the final chapter.

Although the eighteenth century (the era in which Blake was born) believed in the unity of mankind, nevertheless the act of worship was directed to the altars of Reason, Nature, and Science and not to the Holy Trinity of the medieval Church. The ideals of the brotherhood of man were there, but they were incorporated in a man-centered religion, and the material world was the true reality. The general trend toward scientific evaluation has continued to the present time and analysis has

become the watchword of the twentieth century often with utter disregard for the concept of unity or interdependence.

If we accept Blake's imagery of Innocence and Experience, this situation lends itself to the understanding that man has fallen into Experience as a necessary state through which he may either move into the visionary condition of Eden or the ultimate divided state of Ulro. On the basis of such an awesome possibility the interrelatedness and unity prevalent in the High Middle Ages warrants close examination--not as was mentioned earlier, as the accumulation of more historical data, but as a means of illustrating the concepts of an holistic environment so necessary in this modern age.

In other words, keeping in mind the model offered by William Blake, and working from the premise that there was a marked degree of unification in the structure of the apex of the High Middle Ages, it is the purpose of this study to search out and present a meaningful correlation between his state of Innocence wherein all are related to one another, and the environment which existed in the 130 year period selected. Furthermore, because the third phase of Examined Innocence carries within it an evaluated image of the original state of Innocence there is implication that within that initial unified phase were the seeds for the third stage. It may, therefore, be presumed that a study of the unitary aspects of man's existence will point directly to characteristics hoped for in the third state. Thus, it would seem to follow that an examination of the apogee of the High Middle Ages may "well be at the root of what men think and do"[22] in the present century. An examination of the concept of unity in the High Middle Ages may not provide all of the answers, but it may hopefully point us in

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[22]Morley, "Popular Culture," p. 291.

the right direction toward a closer relationship between the spiritual realm and the secular world. In the words of a noted historian: "Every part of the whole must be connected with the whole as well as with every other part in ranks, conditions, and degrees."[23] On this basis true Oneness may be understood and incorporated in the application of that Higher Innocence, or re-examined Innocence.

Before elaborating on this plan, however, it is necessary to recognize the fact, that, when discussing patterns of history or the philosophy and ideas inherent in those patterns, not every event will fit within the proposed design. Obviously, the writer must be scrupulously careful not to force incidents to comply with the suggested scheme. Nevertheless, if the main characteristics of a period (or several periods of history) do seem to fit into a certain demonstrable device, then a fresh approach to the past may be possible and of interest to the student of history. The researcher, therefore, is practically compelled to present whatever findings emerge from an objective search.

As this study is not an exposition of Blake's thought and Christ-centered philosophy, his complicated and involved symbology and analogy need not be discussed, except as they relate to some definite aspect of the paper or requirement to illustrate a particular point. There are many excellent works examining the thought of this man whose lifelong love of the "living form of Gothic" he equated with Eternal Existence.[24]

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[23]Frederick B. Artz, The Mind of the Middle Ages, A.D. 200-1500 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 291.

[24]See Section VII of the Bibliography for works by noted scholars who have devoted extensive study to William Blake.

The pattern which he places before us is used merely as a guide in order to assess where Western civilization has been and the possibilities which lie ahead.

Whether this is a valid assumption will depend on the theses being examined in the following pages. Henry Van Dyke, who "studied and loved the curious tales which are told in the Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine and other medieval books," claimed that: "If your story is worth telling, you ought to love it enough to be willing to work over it until it is true--true not only to the ideal, but true also to the real."[25] This is the incentive which has motivated this search, and hopefully will provide an opportunity to view the contributions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as intrinsically linked to the activities of the twentieth century.

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[25]Henry Van Dyke, The Story of the Other Wise Man (New York: Grossett & Dunlap, 1973), pp. xii, xiv.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FORM AND THE IMAGE OF GOD

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century French philosopher, Henri Bergson, put forward the idea of knowing a thing by two different methods.[26] The first, "the relative," implies that one figuratively moves around the subject, and knowledge depends on the point of view at which it is discerned. That is, the symbols by which it is expressed, colored by one's understanding of what others have written on the subject, vary as we relate to it. The second method requires that one enter into an "inner state of mind" with the subject or event, implying that one is in sympathy with this state of introspection and inserted therein by an effort of the imagination.

Poets, writers, artists, and in fact all creators of any new form use the faculty of imagination to bridge the gap between what is inwardly felt and that which needs to be outwardly expressed. As this paper will be concerned, in part, with the intangible world of thought expressed through the medium of the written word, mason's chisel, and artist's brush we too must use this bridge as a means of entering the world of new direction. Always remember, however, that the bedrock of the examination is firmly set in factual evidence which the High Middle Ages have bequeathed to succeeding generations in the writings of the

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[26]John K. Ryan, "Henri Bergson - Heraclitus Redivivus," in Twentieth Century Thinkers, ed. John K. Ryan (New York: Alba House, 1964), pp. 19-22.

great scholars of that era who were the contemporary minds of the cathedral builders.

Most necessary to the relative method is the discipline of diligent research in order to sift through the strata of information which the interpreters have written. One must be careful not to become lost in the labyrinth of material available, fascinating as the sources of information might be. Always present is the problem of variations of opinion presented on one subject by different writers. It is then necessary to turn to the second mode of acquiring knowledge: the inner faculty of awareness which illuminates an area not previously examined, or possibly bringing forth a new dimension of understanding from a hitherto unreflected facet.

Because of its many levels of thought and areas of activity the world of the High Middle Ages is extremely complex, and any study becomes fraught with the temptation to over-simplify. It will be necessary, therefore, to confine the research to certain selective themes which illustrate the basis of the thesis: of newness, of beginning, and of renaissance set within the framework of the Catholic Church and its unifying structure, and always bearing in mind that the ultimate purpose of the themes is to relate them to the twentieth century in conjunction with the model we are using.

Just as the written word is a symbol of man's thought, so is the iconographic image a pronounced statement of expression. However, it goes beyond thought to that which also embodies hope and yearning. This is perfectly expressed in the architecture of Gothic cathedrals. The pointed arch allowed great flexibility in construction, its upward thrust making it possible to hold space in a new way. The flying buttress was

even more important in that it transferred the stress formerly placed on piers and walls through the spanning arch to the buttress itself, and then down to the foundation.[27] In this writer's opinion this provides us with a profound image of the climate of the High Middle Ages --the soaring spirituality was there, but it was brought down to a level of human understanding and expression. Art is a reflection of the society in which it was conceived. The architecture, sculpture, tapestries, illuminated manuscripts, and paintings which have not been renovated or "restored" beyond recognition are vehicles for the thought which inspired their creation.

The development of art in any era, in any country, is enhanced by its religion, which greatly influences the creation of beauty. The apogee of the High Middle Ages, however, affords the viewer an unusual experience:

> . . . its essential element, the thing that differentiates it from the art that preceded and that which followed, is its spiritual impulse . . . which informed the time, and by its intensity, its penetrating power, and its dynamic force wrought a rounded and complete civilization and manifested this through a thousand varied channels.[28]

We have come to recognize the art of this period as "Gothic," an expression which came into use in Italy at the Renaissance. Imagining himself on the pinnacle of new-found freedoms and a return to classical forms of architecture, Renaissance Man (with Vassari as spokesman) looked back over the preceding centuries and termed buildings which

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[27]David Macaulay, Cathedral (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973), p. 30.

[28]Adams, Mont-Saint-Michel, p. vi.

differed from "the true Roman manner" as the work of the barbarous Goths. Originally this term applied only to the Early Middle Ages; it was later extended, however, to the perfected medieval architecture and withdrawn from the earlier period.[29]

In the seventeenth century Sir Christopher Wren, who designed St. Paul's Cathedral in London, was still full of scorn for the "Gothic Style"; and the diarist, Sir John Evelyn, on a visit to Rome praised the structure of the Farnese Palace designed by Michaelangelo "after the ancient manner and in a time when Architecture was but newly recovered from Gotic [sic] barbarity."[30] Of such remarks is history fashioned and tagged for succeeding generations.

But what is Gothic? In architecture, where perhaps its essence is most fully realized, its features are the pointed arch, the crossribbed vault, and the Flying buttress, all constructive means--used to what end? It provides a marriage between structural form and harmonious appearance, with emphasis on the remarkable light which is diffused by the large expanse of stained-glass windows. In its original and purest form it has come down to us in church architecture. We can only surmise what the

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[29]William R. Lethaby, Mediaeval Art (first published 1904; reprint edition Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), p. 135.

[30]John Evelyn, The Diary of John Evelyn, 6 vols. ed. E. S. de Beer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 2:214. The Introduction states that Evelyn used the term at least thirty times in the Diary, and it was an established expression for the "modern" style of architecture from 1622. Other less popular etymologies have been suggested by Louis Charpentier, The Mysteries of Chartres Cathedral, trans. Ronald Fraser (New York: Avon Books, 1975), pp. 44-45. The first hypothesis comes from the Celtic "argoat," meaning a country of trees or having the appearance of forests of high trees. The second is from the Greek, "goetie," meaning to have the power of fascination, and no one who has stood within the environment of a Gothic cathedral will argue with that possibility. Finally, there is suggested a Cabbalistic or esoteric etymology, "argotique," derived from the ship Argo in Greek mythology with its connotation of a secret, alchemical language.

landscape of Europe would be like, devoid of these testimonies of man's need to express Spirit. It is also interesting to observe that America is dotted with Gothic replicas in an effort to regain the rich heritage which these master artisans left us.

In order to understand the emphasis of Gothic architecture and its importance as a point of beginning for the research, it is necessary that we briefly appraise the style of building which preceded it and in many instances was concurrently being built. This has been termed Romanesque, and it had its inception in those portions of Western Europe which had been dominated by the Romans. Just as the Teutonic people had built its civilization upon the former ruins of a Roman province, so the new Gothic form (which succeeded the Romanesque style) developed in those same areas.[31]

In Christian thought, the Old Testament has always been regarded as a precursor of the New Testament: "to use the language of the Middle Ages, the New Testament reveals to us in full sunlight what the Old Testament had shown in the uncertain glimmer of the moon and stars."[32] This concept is clearly portrayed in the stained-glass lancet windows below the south rose window of the cathedral at Chartres which shows the Apostles standing on the shoulders of the Old Testament prophets.[33] This memorable image exemplifies the continuation of God's revealed word. It also makes more understandable the fact that the fundamentals of the Gothic style, while bringing forth a new image, also owed much to an earlier expression of understanding.

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[31]Lethaby, Mediaeval Art, p. 135.

[32]Mâle, Religious Art, p. 72.

[33]E. H. Gombrich, "The Visual Image," Scientific American 227 (September 1972):82-96, Scientific American Offprints No. 548.

It is interesting to speculate at what point in the evolving consciousness of man is the leap made toward innovation, both in the ideal and the capability to bring it into concrete manifestation; the possibility was there, but the Greeks continued to span space by a simple beam lying across two columns. It was the Romans who began using the rounded arch; however, instances of the pointed arch occur in aqueducts as far back as 700 B.C. in Mesopotamia.[34] From there it passed to Persia, and when the Moslems conquered that country, they adopted it. The Normans found the pointed arch used extensively when they took Sicily from the Moslems in the latter part of the eleventh century, and it was also well establish when the Crusaders entered Syria.

Church builders of the eleventh and first half of the twelfth centuries, following Roman design, rounded their arches and vaults. They also built massive walls, which were thickened at the points of stress to carry the weight. Windows were few, but the walls were hung with tapestries and painted with bright colors to enrich the interior. Gradually the Romanesque mason began to experiment with the pointed arch, although rounded arches were still used on many occasions throughout all of the twelfth century. The ribbed vault and the buttress were also used, but there was a certain lack of unity among these structural innovations. The total effect was still the sum of separate parts--each a statement of independent individuality, standing within its open spaces. As such it was not Gothic in design and in spirit.

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[34]Banister Fletcher, A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), p. 86. This edition, the seventeenth, provides comprehensive material for the study of architectural features of Romanesque and Gothic styles which is not included in the revised eighteenth edition.

There is no doubt that the Norman warriors and early crusaders had brought back from their expeditions to Sicily and the east new concepts in building. The pointed arch allowed greater flexibility in construction, the thrust of which made it possible to hold space in a new way as well as allowing more light. Specially constructed ribs, which were semicircular in shape and placed across the sides and diagonals of vaulting compartments that supported the panels of stone, gave a different character to the Romanesque architecture. But these revisions in construction were not yet Gothic in form or feeling.

In order to understand the springing-to-life of this new art form we must turn to a small area, the Île de France--and in particular the abbey Saint-Denis-en-France which was the shrine of the patron saint of France. Denis was one of seven bishops sent from Rome in the third century to preside over the cities of Gaul. He later became the first Bishop of Paris and was martyred outside that city in A.D. 251 under the persecution of the Roman Emperor, Domitian. Legends grew around the historical Denis and by the ninth century he was accepted as the protector of the peoples of France.[35]

> It was [in] the crypt of Saint-Denis that the genealogical tree of the French monarchy, which Clovis had founded with God's aid in virtue of his baptism had its roots and there, beside the tombs of their forbears, the successive kings of France laid their crowns and the emblems of their power.[36]

The indefinable essence which is Gothic was born out of a special trinity: the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis, the Abbot Suger, and the French

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[35]Gabrielle M. Spiegel, "The Cult of St. Denis and the Capetian Kingship," Journal of Medieval History 1 (April 1975):44-49.

[36]Georges Duby, The Europe of the Cathedrals, 1140-1280, trans. Stuart Gilbert (Geneva: Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1966), p. 13.

monarch. Suger, a Benedictine, wanted to make the abbey a spiritual center of France, a pilgrimage church to outshine the splendor of all others, the "focal point of religious, as well as patriotic emotion."[37] The visible structure developed through the use of the features already mentioned in Romanesque architecture, which provided the foundation for the physical environment. Suger's masons drew freely from abbeys and churches in Burgundy and in the England-Normandy political unit to provide the basis for the structural form.[38] Within this setting of wedding the religious to the patriotic and the spiritual to the secular, with Suger acting as mediator and midwife, the Gothic "form" came into being.

Suger believed that it was his duty to embellish Saint-Denis by all the means in his power and in his calling felt that he was working for the honor of God and the kings of France who were buried in Saint-Denis, "as well as the living king--his benefactor and friend."[39] Suger was chief spiritual advisor as well as chancellor and counsellor to Louis VI. He arranged the ill-fated marriage of Eleanor of Aquitaine to the king's son, later Louis VII. On occasion Suger acted as regent in that king's absence. This is the historical situation which might have resulted in a larger, grander, and more richly appointed edifice to God and king. But something new was introduced, and this was the concept of light. Light filtered through the stained-glass windows became transmuted--the Light Divine--a mystic revelation of the omniscient Spirit of God.

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[37]H. W. Janson, History of Art (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1970), p. 230.

[38]George Henderson, Gothic (London: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 58.

[39]Duby, Europe, p. 14.

Of course, this was made possible by a very concrete architectural device, the flying buttress, as well as by the use of the pointed arch and thrust and counter-thrust between internal piers. By placing this support a little distance from the wall it is to sustain, and by spanning the intervening distance by an arch, the stress placed on the piers and walls is transferred through the flying buttress to the buttress itself and then down to the foundation.[40] The result is to take the load off the walls, which can then be pierced with glass and the "total effect is to hang the building like a cage from the arched roof. The inside of the building is open, because the skeleton is outside."[41] In addition the pointed arch has less outward and more downward thrust than the rounded arch. This also lessens the need for walls as a means of support.

The quest for luminosity is basic to the Christian principle that God is Light. In the High Middle Ages added emphasis to this aspect of theology was given by the teachings of Dionysius and the application of light in cathedral symbolism. As early as A.D. 758 a manuscript of Dionysius had been presented to Pepin, King of the Franks, who had been educated at Saint-Denis.[42] At that time the writings were identified with the convert Denis (Dionysius), friend of St. Paul, spoken of in Acts; as such they were revered by the Church. Further confusion was caused by also identifying them with St. Denis, the patron saint of France. In the ninth century the abbot Hilduin of Saint-Denis translated other

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[40]Macaulay, Cathedral, p. 30.

[41]Jacob Bronowski, The Ascent of Man (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1973), p. 109.

[42]Duby, Europe, p. 15.

Dionysian manuscripts from the original Greek text into Latin.[43] At the same time as attributing them to the martyred saint he identified the abbey with the community established by St. Denis, thereby evoking a relationship between the apostle, the mystical writings, and Saint-Denis. Thus the abbey maintained a very special place in the minds and hearts of French ecclesiastics and laymen, and when Suger embarked on his innovative rebuilding program he was mindful of every implication.

In the early part of the twelfth century, however, doubt was raised by Peter Abelard over the true authorship of the mystical writings. His characteristic outspokenness resulted in a furor, and Abelard was forced to seek sanctuary in another county.[44] Later scholarship indicated that the manuscripts were probably by a Syrian Christian monk of the fifth or sixth century who had formerly been a follower of the pagan Neoplatonist Proclus.[45]

According to the writings of the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite the universe is one vast field of light. He says:

> There is, therefore, one Source of Light for everything which is illuminated, namely, God, who by His Nature, truly and rightly, is the Essence of Light, and Cause of being and of vision. But it is ordained that in imitation of God each of the higher ranks of beings is the source in turn for the one which follows it; since the Divine Rays are passed through it to the other.[46]

From this can also be grasped a sense of unity, a philosophy of interconnection which will be examined further. It is necessary at this

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[43]Spiegel, "Cult," p. 50.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Evelyn Underhill, Mysticism (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1961), p. 456.

[46]Dionysius the Areopagite, The Mystical Theology and the Celestial Hierarchies, trans. Editors of the Shrine of Wisdom (Brook, England: The Shrine of Wisdom, 1965), pp. 56-57.

point, however, to understand that the intrinsic theme of Gothic architecture is the introduction of light. "Here we have the key to that 'new art,' the art of France of which Suger's church is the perfect paradigm: an art of clarity, of progressive illumination."[47]

This idea was to be carried forward and would reach its "classic" phase in the thirteenth century--still retaining its pure, original form, but fulfilling the expectation suggested at Saint-Denis in the mid-twelfth century. Abbot Suger had the vision; he supervised every phase of the building and with his masons, craftsmen, goldsmiths, and painters carried that ideal out into external form. He expressed it in the following words which he had placed over the portal to his new church to act both as an initiation and to explain its function: "The dull mind rises to truth through that which is material. And, seeing the light, is resurrected from its former submersion."[48]

At the dedication in 1144, nineteen bishops and archbishops consecrated the altars, while King Louis VII with twelve knights took on the role of Christ and His twelve Apostles.[49] This ceremony provided the imagery for a united ecclesiastic and secular community with Louis as the Lord's annointed.

It is not the purpose of this paper to make comparisons between the various styles of Gothic architecture which were built during the period we are examining. The essential elements differed in various locales in Europe.

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[47]Duby, Europe, p. 14.

[48]Abbot Suger, cited by Duby in Europe, pp. 14-15.

[49]Abbot Suger, "The Consecration of the Church of Saint-Denis," in The Medieval Pageant: Readings in Medieval History, ed. Norton Downs (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1964), pp. 137-38; Heer, Medieval World, p. 330.

> Admittedly, from the mid-twelfth century the French pointed arch was being introduced into Germany, Spain, Italy, Scandinavia, Hungary and Portugal by the international network of Cistercian houses, some 350 in all. But Cistercian Gothic retained certain basic Romanesque qualities and kept close to the freshness, purity, and naiveté of its beginning. For a long time to come this Cistercian Gothic would have a greater appeal for the less sophisticated peoples of Europe . . .[50]

Because of the close-knit political situation which existed between France and England, and the interchange between the two countries, there were certain similarities of construction in those areas--but there were also fundamental differences. In England the highest tower was usually over the crossing of the nave and transepts, whereas in France the highest towers were generally the two at the entrance to the west front. Also in England the tendency was toward greater length and wider span of the transepts, and a square eastern end. In France the characteristics were vast height, massive window walls, and rounded apse. It is important to understand that:

> The ideas which assumed substance in the French cathedrals are not the property of France alone; they were the common patrimony of Catholic Europe. Yet France is recognizable in this passion for the universal. France alone was capable of turning the cathedral into an image of the world, an abstract of history, a mirror of spiritual life. The distinction of France lies in the fact that she was able to impose upon a multitude of ideas a superior law.[51]

Art confronts the viewer as a statement of creative thought. Although the entry in a pipe roll is also the expression of a thought or an event it does not carry the impact which a visual image does. In the twentieth century we are familiar with image reinforcement. Before they can read, children's minds are bombarded with media advertising on tele-

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[50]Heer, Medieval World, p. 332.

[51]Mâle, Religious Art, p. 97.

vision. They associate a clown with certain fast food services, as well as the benefits of certain cereals over others. Why? Because the verbal message gains from the impact of the visual image; it is not long before the image becomes synonymous with the thought behind it. In the most fundamental of learning processes, a children's primer always lists a letter of the alphabet accompanied by a picture for reinforcement. Thus "A" is associated with apple, and so forth. For the people of the High Middle Ages, the cathedral was equated with the visual Word of God and more. It was, in fact, an encyclopedia of human knowledge.

> It contains scenes from the Scriptures and the legends of saints; motives [sic] from the animal and vegetable kingdom; representations of the seasons of agricultural labor, of the arts and sciences and crafts and finally moral allegories, as for instance ingenious personifications of the virtues and the vices.[52]

It was the product of activity at every level. Carried into manifestation by the vision of abbots and high churchmen who directed the master mason, it became a visible form of the Church's teachings. The lord gave of his land on which to build; the burgess gave of his money; the people contributed their brawn and energy to move the stone and cut the wood. The artisan measured and drew plans; laborers manned the great hoist (the forerunner of the crane) as scaffolds were built and mighty beams swung into place. Even the beast was a part of the community: the efforts of the ox who hauled materials over rough roads from quarry and forest have been immortalized in stone.[53] On occasion ecclesiastics and laity worked together pulling heavily laden carts up a hill. All

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[52]Walsh, The Thirteenth, p. 116.

[53]Duby, Europe, p. 51. In this plate eight oxen can be clearly seen at each of the four corners of the twin west towers.

came together, and miracles were recorded of the Presence of Spirit itself.[54]

The environment provided the grand opportunity for service. Even the silent witnesses of the dead added their presence and prayers by the very images carved on the tombstones. The saints and Biblical characters stood sentinel at door and niche, and over all the glorious Immanent Light streamed through a thousand jewels as the sun moved in orbit across the sky and penetrated the great colored windows. In a transfigured world where "light is more dazzling than in ordinary life, and shadow more mysterious," the cathedral was indeed the ark which provided the image of profound security and protection.[55]

But when all of the virtues of Gothic architecture have been extolled, when all of the superlatives have been exhausted, and when all of the imagery examined, there is one intrinsic essence which sets it apart from all other styles. It is free in a never-ceasing action of thrust and counter-thrust. It embodies a youthful spirit of new life which reminds one of William Blake's first stage of Innocence, and provides an image of joyous activity. "Compared with it, the art of other periods is as crystals are to plants."[56]

It was the springtime of life: carvings done in the twelfth century are concerned with curling tendrils, spiraling leaves, and swelling buds. They creep around capitals, over arches, and around doorways in a profusion of spirit, just as Blake illustrated his own poems with these

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[54]"Gothic Art 1140-c.1450," in Sources & Documents in the History of Art Series, comp. Teresa G. Frisch, ed. H. W. Janson (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1971), pp. 22-26.

[55]Mâle, Religious Art, p. 96.

[56]Percy Dearmer, "Art," in Medieval Contributions to Modern Civilization, ed. F. J. C. Hearnshaw (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, Inc., 1966), p. 161.

natural elements in a style reminiscent of medieval manuscripts. The thirteenth century was still the timeless summer of a child's world but the buds had now opened and the artist's environment was a bower of flowers. He brought to his world "the tender curiosity we know only as children."[57] It was the forest primeval: "The great rose with the setting sun behind it seems in the hours of evening to be the sun itself on the point of disappearing at the edge of a marvellous forest."[58]

An examination of Scholasticism properly belongs in the section on philosophy. At this point, however, it is possible to establish a relationship between the thought of the High Middle Ages and cathedral architecture. The Scholastics attempted to make faith clearer by an appeal to reason; they also attempted to make reason clearer by an appeal to imagination. They also felt bound to make imagination clearer by an appeal to the senses. Saint Bonaventure claimed:

> For since, relative to our life on earth, the world is itself a ladder for ascending to God, we find here certain traces, certain images. . . . That we may arrive at an understanding of the First Principle which is most spiritual and eternal and above us, we ought to proceed through the traces which are corporeal and temporal and outside us; and this is to be led into the way of God.[59]

The principles of Scholasticism in the visual arts were expressed through an exact division of space in cathedral architecture, and we recognize this effort to bring forth greater clarification. The presence of light, despite its Platonic-Augustinian overtones, also enhances this

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[57]Mâle, Religious Art, p. 66.

[58]Ibid., p. 96.

[59]Saint Bonaventura, The Mind's Road to God, trans. George Boas (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, Inc., 1953), p. 8.

imagery of greater clarity. In Scholasticism there was an involvement with division, subdivision, and method.[60] Parts were broken down into smaller parts denoting logical order. Here again, there is still a dependence on the levels of the celestial hierarchy of the pseudo-Dionysius; however, in the thirteenth century all of educated Christendom was further influenced by the Summa Theologica of Saint Thomas Aquinas, which was concerned with Order.

The twenty-one volumes of the Summa provide an all-encompassing viewpoint of Christian thought. In the tradition of the Greek dialectical approach each problem is presented as an open-ended question. Opposing viewpoints are always set forth before Saint Thomas presents his own reconciliation. Similarly, the medieval mind, familiar with Scholastic principles regarded the division of space in the cathedral within the same frame of reference of order and logical sequence.

Whereas in Romanesque architecture there was solidarity and a sense of the impenetrable, within the Gothic environment there was logical division; supports divided and subdivided into main piers, major shafts, minor shafts, and still more minor shafts. Ribs and arches were broken down into a series of moldings. It was a process of "progressive divisibility," and yet there was the feeling of interconnection and uniformity.[61] Unless the parts related to each other there would be chaos. Fragmentation and separation without an underlying structural cohesivenss result in disorder--the exact antithesis of the message of Scholasticism

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[60]Erwin Panofsky, Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1972), p. 38.

[61]Ibid.

and the visual image of Gothic with its emphasis on clarity and light. Aquinas himself states that beauty "consists in a certain brilliance and due proportion. Both characteristics are found, basically, in reason, to which it is appropriate to give light and to regulate due proportion in other things."[62]

This need for orderly division also manifested in another art form which resulted in the exact system of marking time in music. Mention might be made here that breves, semi-breves, and minims were the symbols used to articulate that division. These terms are still used in England. The thirteenth century marks the high point of medieval music for "it is during this period that the highest degree of union between aesthetic goal and artistic fulfillment of that goal existed" in the environment fostered by the Church and its thinkers.[63]

There came together in that particular period of history a sense of unity and oneness wherein all manner of parts could be examined and arranged in a glorious hierarchy--the summit of which was God, who ruled an ordered universe. The pseudo-Areopagite provided the pattern:

> For each of those who is allotted a place in the Divine Order finds his perfection in being uplifted, according to his capacity, towards the Divine Likeness; and what is still more divine, he becomes, as the Scriptures say, a fellow-worker with God, and shows forth the Divine Activity revealed as far as possible in himself.[64]

Whether the symmetry and arrangement of the ideals in Gothic were directly attributable to medieval thoughtand philosophy or whether there was a simultaneous understanding of Order which influenced the spoken

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[62]The Pocket Aquinas, ed. Vernon J. Bourke (New York: Washington Square Press, Inc., 1960), p. 264.

[63]Albert Seay, Music in the Medieval World (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1965), p. 122.

[64]Dionysius, Mystical Theology, p. 30.

word, the written word, and the visual image, we cannot say with certainty. There does seem to be a direct relationship between the thought, writings, and visual image which points to the interconnection and oneness of all things under the sun. We do know that, whereas formerly in the Romanesque setting, there had been a jumble of sculptured figures, now they were placed in careful symmetry and juxtaposition.[65]

For the most part the Romanesque environment was an expression of monastic life; the Gothic cathedral, however, belonged to the people in an open, urban setting. They felt so at ease there that sometimes their "behaviour was childlike in both directions; it had the child's happy familiarity and, sometimes, the child's embarrassing lack of restraint."[66] They made themselves completely at home in the Father's house, sitting on the floor and chatting and laughing noisily, even throughout Mass.

There was at the same time, however, a great spirituality in the hearts of many of these simple folk. We are told that, on one occasion, when Saint Francis had preached to the people of Saburniano "that all the men and women of that city desired in their devotion to follow after him and forsake the city."[67] When the host was elevated by the priest in the celebration of the Eucharist (which practice was adopted after 1200), the sight of the miraculous Presence comforted and sustained the faithful. In fact the ritual of the Mass was believed to aid both the living and the

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[65]Panofsky, Gothic Architecture, pp. 41-42.

[66]G. G. Coulton, Medieval Panorama (New York: W. W. Norton Company Inc., 1975), p. 187.

[67]The Little Flowers of St. Francis, trans. T. Okey (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1951), p. 37.

dead; the latter could shorten their time in purgatory if Masses were said for them.[68]

It was the Mother of God, however, who captured the hearts of all during this period in history. Everyone came under her beneficence, from the most learned and most mystical to the most illiterate. Every great name in the annals of believers sang her praises. The cult of the Virgin developed in the thirteenth century, but it had its inception in the preceding one. The new orders of the Franciscans and the Dominicans were her true knights who served with devotion. According to their understanding she "appeared at the end of the long night of ancient of days" and heralded a new beginning.[69] Bearing in mind this imagery of the long night and dark travail, it is possible to see this era as a birth of new idealization--which further might be equated with the concept of newness (suggestive of innocence) with which we are concerned in this study.

Quite literally Mary is the gateway. Her stories are found sculptured in the porches of all cathedrals in the thirteenth century. She also had an area dedicated exclusively to her worship: the building of Lady Chapels, which were eastern additions (in reality "a church within a church")gained in popularity in the thirteenth century.[70] The Scholastics lauded Mary's virtues and digressed on her symbolic name in both tripartite and quadripartite division. The whole of the Middle Ages saw in the Virgin the bride of the Biblical "Song of Songs" with its mys-

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[68]Jacobus de Voragine, The Golden Legend, trans. and adapted from the Latin by Granger Ryan and Helmut Ripperger (New York: Longman's Green and Co., 1948), pp. 648-57.

[69]Emile Mâle, Gothic Image, trans. Dora Nussey (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), pp. 232-33.

[70]Fletcher, History, p. 649.

tical implication as extolled by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux.[71] It was from the store of symbolic names gathered by Peter the Venerable, friend and defender of Abelard, that early Marian iconology obtained its vocabulary.[72] The work of the Pseudo-Matthew, the Evangelium de Nativitate Mariae et Infantia Salvatoris (the Gospel of the Birth of Mary and the Infancy of the Savior) also influenced Vincent of Beauvais and Jacobus de Voragine to assemble a number of apocryphal events which they blended with the life of the Virgin;[73] and these stories of Mary provided the source for many of the beautiful windows of that period.

The churchmen understood the power that the visual image had over minds that were childlike and impressionable. The concept of Mary's majesty was prevalent in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, and at no other period did religious iconography impart so much dignity to the Mother of God.[74] She was depicted as the Queen of Heaven, portrayed in regal splendor and enthroned in the midst of angels. Toward the latter part of this period, however, we see signs of transition toward humanization; she became a woman and a mother--carrying her baby easily upon her hip in a spirit of joy.

Mary was depicted in sculpture, as mentioned above, but it was the stained-glass windows which presented her in all the radiance of that art. The glass of that period was always of the "pot metal" type, with each separate bit of color requiring a separate piece of glass. It was made

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[71]Saint Bernard de Clairvaux, On the Song of Songs, I, trans. Kilian Walsh, Cistercian Fathers Series 4 (Spencer, Mass: Cistercian Publications, 1971), passim; On the Song of Songs, II, trans. Kilian Walsh, Cistercian Fathers Series 7 (Kalamazoo, Mich: Cistercian Publications, 1976), passim.

[72]Duby, Europe, p. 61.

[73]Mâle, Gothic Image, pp. 238-39.

[74]Ibid., pp. 235-36.

from a mixture of beechwood ash and washed sand that was melted at high temperatures. Different kinds of metals were added to the molten mixture to provide color. The substance was then blown from a hollow pipe and spun into a flat circular shape; after that it was allowed to cool and laid on a white-washed bench. The pattern, already drawn on the bench, would show through the glass and provide a guide for the cutter.[75] The next stage was for the glass to be cut into the required shape, not by the diamond, which is a seventeenth-century device, but by first weakening it with a red-hot iron and then chipping to the desired size.[76] Finally, it was held together in a lead frame which complemented the design. Single pieces of glass were usually no larger than eight inches square, but sections as large as thirty inches by thirty inches could be made when held together by the lead.

A complete paper could be written on Gothic windows, but the following information, although condensed, gives the main classifications of design. Groups of small figures illustrating the lives or miracles of saints, as well as scriptural scenes, told their stories in Medallion windows. Popular throughout the period under discussion was the Jesse window, which consisted of a branch or main stem with the patriarch Jesse at the base, while branches or vines leaped outward and formed a series of leafy medallions illustrating the human descent or human lineage of the Lord. The Doom window, as its name implies, contains a representation of the Last Judgment. The Quarry window is a variety of the Grisaille type; later, geometrical designs in stain were used as background for large figures or medallions, which make up the Quarry window,

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[75]Macaulay, Cathedral, p. 60.

[76]Helen M. Pratt, The Cathedral Churches of England (New York: Duffield and Company, 1924), p. 70.

but the earliest ones were made entirely of a greenish-white, almost colorless glass (known as grisaille), with the design traced on the glass and the intervening spaces filled in with cross-hatching. This gave a brilliant and silvery effect.[77]

Gothic architecture is concerned with linear extension:

> The Gothic mind preferred the straight line, vector of the historical process whose trend the thirteenth-century churchmen were beginning to perceive more clearly, the long straight path taken by the Christian and indeed all life on its way towards eternity. Straight, too is the ray of light that represents the act of creation and divine grace, the line followed by the reasoning mind in action, by scholastic inquiry and all the intellectual progress of the age. Each proceeds unswervingly towards its terminal point. Only the rose window, symbol of fulfilled creation, in which God's light issuing from its transcendent source, then converging back towards it conforms like the heavenly bodies to the pattern of a closed circle.[78]

> These elaborate compositions signify at once the cycles of the cosmos, the merging of Time into Eternity and the mystery of God who is Light, of Christ the sun. . . . The rose is also a symbol of love; it represents the fiery core of that divine love in which all human loves are consumed. And we also see in it a figuration of the labyrinth through which profane love gropes its way towards that sacred love which is its goal.[79]

In the above two passages we see the consummate expression of the symbolic imagery of the Gothic cathedral--in terms of opposites, woven into a vast unity, which is the intrinsic theme of this age. The artist presented a visual thesis of the definition of space, which corresponded to the conceptual antithesis of the theologian filling this space with God.[80]

There is, however, an even greater symbology inherent in the rose window, and this is its relationship to the concept of the mandala. The

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[77]Ibid., p. 66.

[78]Duby, Europe, p. 132.

[79]Ibid., p. 203.

[80]Herbert Read, Icon & Idea (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 71.

word is Sanskrit, literally meaning circle (or quartered circle showing the four cardinal points) and center--image of the cosmos in its entirety.[81] Psychologist Carl Jung's studies in this century show that it is an archetype (a universal symbol) for the idea of interrelatedness which is revealed throughout its structure.[82]

The circle is further elaborated into a flower, a lotus in the East or a rose as the Western equivalent. In Christian metaphor: "Mary is the flower in which God lies hidden; or the rose window in which the rex gloriae and judge of the world is enthroned."[83] Although this comes a little later than the period we are examining, there is the suggestion of a mandala image in the vision of Dante. Emanating out from the "living light" upon which his gaze was fixed, there appeared "within the deep and luminous extension of the High Light three circles" which surrounded the center point.[84]

The function of the mandala is to bring the eye and, therefore, the consciousness of the beholder repeatedly back to the center from which all emanates. This symbolism is found throughout Gothic architecture. Salisbury Cathedral in England, which was built during the period 1220-1258 (with the exception of the west front and the spire, which

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[81]José and Miriam Argüelles, Mandala (Berkeley: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1972), p. 13.

[82]Carl C. Jung, Mandala Symbolism, Bollingen Series XX, vol. 9, part 1, trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 4.

[83]Ibid., p. 45.

[84]Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy, trans. Jefferson B. Fletcher, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), p. 470. Paradise XXXIII:110-145.

were not added until the mid-fourteenth century), offers a case in point. The cloisters, which are the oldest and largest in any English cathedral, bear a very interesting feature. Medallion or circular shapes appear within each arch, and the same theme also decorates the walls. This is similar in design to that used in the chapter-house windows which, by its physical structure, also carries out the circular theme. The length of the nave and the width of the great transept both are 230 feet. This is interesting in view of the fact that a center point is provided. The tower vault at this convergence is also a study in mandala design.[85]

Mention must also be made of one other coincidence in connection with the imagery of the straight line. There is an alignment which connects the ancient center at Stonehenge with that of the original site of the early cathedral at Old Sarum and then continues on to a point in the center of the chapter-house of the present cathedral. This in turn also connects with another ancient earthwork, Clearbury Ring.[86] Using an Ordnance Survey map, with a scale of four miles to the inch, these points can be very clearly traced. It is as though a visual image pointing out the continuity of ancient history with the building of the great cathedral to the new design in the thirteenth century is presented. Speculation only may be made as to the validity of this conjecture, but it is one which would present an interesting study. Possible variations of mandala imagery in Gothic cathedrals could be explored endessly, but the foregoing illustrates one such example.

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[85]Julian Carlyon, "A Theory Towards the Further Understanding of Gothic Architecture," in Britain, A Study in Patterns (London: Research Into Lost Knowledge Organisation, 1971), pp. 54-55.

[86]John Michell, The View Over Atlantis (New York: Ballantine Books 1973), p. 44.

At this point brief mention must be made of the drawings of Hugh of St. Victor, who died in 1141 and therefore stands only on the threshold of the period we are studying. His work was designed to help his novice monks in the life of contemplative ascetism, in particular Richard of St. Victor, who was second only to St. Bernard in influencing later mysticism.[87] Further, "Hugh's mysticism would suggest that much of the Christocentricity of Franciscan mysticism and the Christocentric nature of Bonaventura's theological vision have their antecedent formulation in the work of the Victorines."[88] He stressed the need for imagery in theology, claiming that only by the use of visible symbols can invisible concepts be presented.

In his treatise, De arco Noe Mystica, written about 1130, Hugh furnished the complex structure for reconstructing a drawing which could be construed as a mandala. The account gives a detailed description of fixing the center of the drawing and sketching the central square. It is not necessary to give the entire process except to say that the form of the ark is in the shape of a pyramid or mountain and is equated with the mountain of Zion "and the return of all nations to the cosmic center where mankind is reunified and united in the eschatalogical celebration of the celestial liturgy."[89] It is an exercise in symbology, incorporating numbers, colors, and geometric forms. Each iconographic element serves a particular purpose of instruction and interiorization, which gradually initiates the novice into the realm of contemplative experience. It is,

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[87]Underhill, Mysticism, p. 458.

[88]Zinn, "Mandala Symbolism" p. 340.

[89]Ibid., p. 321.

in fact, a speculative dimension of the pseudo-Dionysian mystical ascent, which was an integral part of the teachings of the Victorines.[90]

The symbolic pattern of numbers also dominates the thought of Joachim of Fiore in a reaction to the method of the Scholastics. The core of his work deals with the mystery of sacred history and the inner meaning of the Trinity. Although he shows great dependence on the importance of sevens, it is the pattern of threes which dominates his system as well as his radical eschatology. His concept of allegorical history will be examined briefly in a later portion of the study. There is also the suggestion that Joachim's thought influenced Bonaventura's writings. The seraphic doctor's identification of Francis with the Angel of the Sixth Seal of the Apocalypse, "who ushers in the sixth and crucial age of history," shows a relationship to Joachim's authentic writings and this particular angelic figure.[91]

It was Vincent of Beauvais (c.1190-c.1264), who endeavored to provide an overall view of knowledge, including history. His work, the Speculum Majus, which was divided into four parts: the mirror of nature, of knowledge, of history, and of morality was so complete that "it comprises the first modern encyclopedia."[92] Emile Mâle has used its all-encompassing features as a means of cataloging the various styles and art forms found in Gothic cathedrals. His works provide the basis for the following comments on The Four Mirrors.[93]

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[90]Grover A. Zinn, "De Gradibus Ascensionum: The Stages of Contemplative ascent in Two Treatises on Noah's Ark by Hugh of St. Victor," Studies in Medieval Culture 5 (1975):61-75.

[91]Bernard McGinn, "The Abbot and the Doctors: Scholastic Reactions to the Radical Eschatology of Joachim of Fiore," Church History 40 (1971) :42.

[92]Walsh, The Thirteenth, p. 231.

[93]Mâle, Gothic Image; and Religious Art.

In The Mirror of Nature, Vincent enumerated and described all the elements, minerals, plants, and animals. He elaborated on the realities of the world in accordance with the sequence of God's creation of them as well as their relation to the different days of the week. Naturally, the sixth day was treated with importance, because man was created then. The Mirror of Knowledge presents the story of man's fall and his ultimate salvation through the Redeemer. Vincent of Beauvais enumated the seven liberal arts, which also correspond with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; in addition, he listed the various divisions of knowledge. The Mirror of Morality further elaborates on one of the divisions of knowledge --the mechanical arts. For it is through the work of his hands that man is able to take an active step and raise himself from "the fall." This particular division shows a marked dependence on Aquinas' Summa, because it offers a blue-print for arriving at the virtuous life. Finally, The Mirror of History records the struggle of living humanity under the protective and watchful Eye of God. This, of course, records the history of the Church, which begins with the first just man, Abel. The unity of this section of his study is preserved by an uninterrupted progression of saints of the Old and New Law; it is through them that the history of the world is understood.

The quadripartite view of one world which Vincent presented, as well as the four-sided ark of Hugh of St. Victor is suggestive of the circle-squared, the symbol for unity and wholeness. William Blake also depended on the symbolism of four in which to present his cosmological myth. The four fundamental aspects of Man, which he termed the Four Zoas, when viewed through the contrary states of Innocence and Experience, deal with the theory of the macrocosm and the microcosm, that is, the progress of the

individual soul as well as the history of human development. Interestingly, in this century Carl Jung proposed and worked with the theory of the divisions within each individual in his four-fold analysis of man.

In the 1140's Bernardus Silvestris of Chartres (c.1085-c.1178) presented an allegorical myth of the creation of the world and of man entitled Cosmographia. Primarily a work of literature, it offered a macrocosmic and microcosmic view of universal order with encyclopedic aspects. In a setting which incorporated the nine orders of angels, the twelve divisions of the zodiac, the four elements and divisions of the earth as well as its topography and flora and fauna, he interwove Platonic philosophy with scientific theories. Coinciding with the advent of Gothic form, his art form was also innovative and although "he was not entirely original as a scientific theorist, his capacity for myth-making was unsurpassed in his time."[94] According to Bernard, divine light is equated with God's wisdom. He states in the Cosmographia (1.4: 25-52):

> This is the wisdom of God, nourished or brought forth from the living flames of eternity. From wisdom counsel is born, from counsel, the will to act, from divine volition, the activity of the world. For every wish of God is goodness. In other words the will of God or the goodness of the highest Father is an accord of his mind in one and the same operation. Who, then, perceiving the eternal causes which contribute towards this result, might deprecate his world and eternity?[95]

By the thirteenth century there was an abundance of encyclopedic works and many writings appeared with the titles of Summa, Speculum or

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[94]Brian Stock, Myth and Science in the Twelfth Century, a Study of Bernard Silvester (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 10; also selected readings in Winthrop Wetherbee, Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), passim.

[95]Stock, Myth and Science, p. 142.

Imago Mundi.[96] In particular two works provide the backdrop before which the whole drama of the period being covered in this study was enacted. Every aspect of life, which included all facets of the arts, was dependent to some degree on the beliefs contained in The Four Mirrors of Vincent of Beauvais and Jacobus de Voragine's Legenda Sanctorum (The Legend of the Saints) which was popularly called the Golden Legend.

Jacobus, a Dominican (c.1228-1298), Archbishop of Genoa, lived the life of a poor man, spending the revenues from his position in caring for the poor and ministering to their spiritual and bodily needs. He commenced his work by stating: "The whole of this fugitive life is divided into four periods: the period of erring or wandering from the way; the period of renewal, or returning to the right way; the period of reconciliation; and the period of pilgrimage."[97] This indeed provided a speculum for the artist of the High Middle Ages. Whether it was reflected in the exquisite hand-lettered and illuminated manuscripts which preserved the spoken word through the visual image of script or whether it was the mastery of the often unknown stonemason whose works contained the very essence of that age, all was indeed a mirror for the holy life, the holy history, and ultimately the realization of the city of God.

The songs of the troubadours in the Midi were concerned with the ideals of courtly love in the twelfth century. At the same time the chansons de geste of the trouveres in the north of France were idealizing heroism and adventure. Within the holy environment of the cathedral at Chartres and portrayed there in the stained-glass windows, it is interesting

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[96]Male, Gothic Image, p. 23.

[97]Jacobus, Legend, p. 1.

to observe that the epic hero, Roland, evolves toward the state of saint-hood without ever actually becoming a saint. This is yet another illustration of the all-encompassing character of the High Middle Ages. The virtuous warrior, Roland, epitome of noble service and "bold as any lion"[98] was important enough to stand alongside Biblical figures and "allowed to contribute to the glory of the apostles, the prophets and the virgin."[99] As a universal symbol of the highest exponent of the chivalric code the figure of Roland appears in the art throughout France, Italy, Germany, Spain and the Netherlands.[100] In the final analysis, he personfies the battle between vice and virtue; and in so doing, he becomes more Christian than warrior. In this innovation is yet another aspect of the universality of the Church--to embrace all facets and art forms of the age and thereby mirror the totality of its existence.

We see a similar Christianization of the great images of the roman courtois--particularly in the legends surrounding the Holy Grail, which had its roots in the "native springs of the underworld of Celtic and even more primitive cultures."[101] We are all familiar with the symbol of the bowl or Chalice, which contains the blood of redemption, and the Holy Lance. There is also a greater corpus of stories which include Arthur and his court as well as many of his knights, together with the saintly Perceval. These characters were pliable in the hands of each story teller,

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[98]The Song of Roland, trans. Hilda C. Price (London: Frederick Warne & Co., Ltd., 1961), p. 54, vii.

[99]Rita Lejeune and Jacques Stinnon, The Legend of Roland in the Middle Ages, 2 vols. trans. Christine Trollope (London: Phaedon Press, Ltd., 1971), 1: 402.

[100]Ibid., p. 8.

[101]Heer, Medieval World, p. 145.

but in the age with which we are concerned, they portrayed a nobility of spirit in which the various knights were mirror-image figures of a single individual reaching his maturity as a virtuous human being. In this understanding,

> Perceval's turning to the Christian hermit may accordingly be understood as a step away from the egoistic chivalry in the direction of a greater spirituality, and thus as a first step towards a fresh approach to that which was seen in the Grail Castle.[102]

This new orientation was involved with the quality of love--that same quality upon which the new commandment is based.[103] Love, sacred and profane, was the watchword of the age over-arching every strata of this homogeneous society. Sexual love was the very essence of the songs of the troubadors in the south and the minne-singers in Germany.

Guillaume de Lorris' original portions of Le Roman de la Rose, written c.1237 provided a symbolic setting of man's yearning for the ideal lady. Within the enclosure of the secret garden "the lovers seem to be engaged in a kind of ceremonial ballet" which was based on "an ideal rooted in the feudal concepts of duty, service, and reward."[104] After de Lorris' death the work lay unfinished, except for an anonymous, rather unsatisfactory conclusion. By 1277 when Jean de Meun had added a vast amplification, the unity which marked the period of the High Middle Ages was disintegrating. Commenting on the earlier delight of the lovers in the garden he could observe with poetic, yet satirical insight:

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[102]Emma Jung and Marie-Louise von Franz, The Grail Legend, trans. Andrea Dykes (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1970), pp. 331-32.

[103]John 13:34.

[104]Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, The Romance of the Rose, trans. Harry W. Robbins, introd. Charles W. Dunn (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1962), p. xv.

> These things are fables--vain imaginings--
> No stable facts, but fictions that will fade.
> Dances will reach their end, and dancers fail.
> So all . . . within the garden walls
> Inevitably must crumble and decay.[105]

Dante's vision of sacred love, recorded at the end of the century, however, is at the very center of his Divina Commedia and he speaks of God as "the Love that moves the sun and every star."[106] Saint Bernard of Clairvaux's mystical passages are dedicated to his spiritual Beloved, and he also recognizes the obligations which this love demands:

> Two kinds of people therefore may not consider themselves to have been gifted with the kiss, those who know the truth without loving it, and those who love it without understanding it; from which we conclude that this kiss leaves room neither for ignorance nor for lukewarmness.[107]

Saint Francis' service to his Lady Poverty and the love he held for Christ overwhelmed his very being and induced the marks of the stigmata.[108] Saint Clare was also suffused with the same spirit. In a sermon written in the second half of the thirteenth century the Lord was made to say to the soul: "Inasmuch as I was dead and hung upon the cross, out of love for thee I allowed my heart to be opened with a sharp lance." The sermon continues:

> For which reason he poured out the stream from His heart that we might see that His love was complete and pure without any dissimulation. On the Cross we should contemplate His loving heart as that from which flows devoted love.[109]

This quality pervaded the vast reaches of the vaults of the cathedral and moved on the vibrations of the liturgical drama. Small motes of dust

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[105]Ibid., p. 432. 94:52-56.

[106]Divine Comedy, p. 471, 33:145.

[107]Saint Bernard, Song of Songs I, p. 49, 7:4.

[108]Little Flowers of St. Francis, pp. 127-75.

[109]Jung, Grail Legend, p. 100.

caught in the light from the massive windows reflected the imagery of God's grace, reaching out through space and touching the infinitesimal and the cathedral became a symbol of His love.[110] The fragrance of incense, the glow of altar candles, the intonations of the priest all helped to create an atmosphere which called to the senses and uplifted man's consciousness toward an act of worship, for indeed the Bible teaches that God is love.

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[110]Mâle, Religious Art, p. 97.

## CHAPTER III

## TOWARD A KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

In the preceding chapter we examined the symbolic imagery of the new art form which came into being in the middle of the twelfth century. In the same period there was also a dramatic renaissance in the realm of thought. When studying the intellectual pursuits of the theologians in the period 1140-1270, we cannot but be amazed at the caliber, dedication, and sheer volume of their efforts. Their prime motivation was to give form to their faith through the art of words as they strove to mold a theology that was in keeping with the Christian tradition based on the twin pillars of faith and rational understanding. At the same time they had to come to terms with Greek and Arabian ideas which were filtering in from Sicily, the Mediterranean, and most importantly the Mohammedan centers of learning in Spain.

There were two paths by which the Churchmen of the period in question aspired to knowledge of God, both of them having dependence upon the Greek philosopher Plato: the mystical and the dialectical. Both of these "roads" were adopted by the ecclesiastics, and many times they converged. In order to understand their dependence on the earlier thought, however, it is necessary to review briefly the historical background to medieval theology. We can then assess the impact of the "new thought" which appeared and finally dissolved the unity of the High Middle Ages.

Five centuries before Christ two Greek philosophers took opposing views on the nature of reality: Parmenides held that reality is a static

unchanging state wherein all is perpetual being--that there is no becoming but only the appearance of movement and change. On the other hand, Heraclitus taught that whatever is real is dynamic and constantly changing--that all things flow in movement.[111]

A century later Plato resolved this controversy somewhat, by assigning reality to "the other world" of being in which the Universal Forms reside. These Ideas are made manifest in the material sensate world as imperfect representations which change and pass away. In contrast his disciple, Aristotle, affirmed that sensible things are true realities and that the essence within each individual form is the Universal.[112] This latter system will be examined further inasmuch as it relates to the beliefs of the Scholastics. The philosopher who had a profound influence on medieval Christian thought was the pagan, Plotinus (A.D. 205-270) who founded a school in Rome. Actually, the Platonism of Plotinus is a blending of the teachings of Aristotle, according to later scholars. However, Plotinus saw his philosophy only in the light of coming to terms with Plato;[113] which system later came to be termed Neoplatonism.

According to Plotinus, the dualism of the realm of the absolute and the importance of the particular is still divided but they are connected by an "emanation" which radiates from the One down to the many through lesser gradations--in much the same way as the sun's rays become weaker and diffused and are but a pale representation of the intense

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[111]Ryan, "Heraclitus Redivivus," p. 16.

[112]Melvin Rader, The Enduring Questions (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), p. 688.

[113]William R. Inge, The Philosophy of Plotinus, 2 vols. (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1948), 1:110.

light and heat of the sun itself.[114] From this we obtain the first glimpse of the hierarchical chain of being which is so basic to an understanding of medieval thought.

In order to understand the concept of unity which was prevalent in the High Middle Ages, it is necessary that we examine the essential points of Plotinus' system, which is based on three main hypostases.[115] The One is the first principle, the origin of all things and the totality of all that is. It is above all Forms, formless, without movement, and entirely transcendental. It is both the Cause of all life and the goal of the myriad variations of effect in their return to union with the One. Yet it is without Will to know Itself and about which nothing can be affirmed.

Intelligence, or Spirit, is the first emanation also residing in the pure world of Being which is beyond time--that is, changelessly motionless as it were, or "concentrated" at one point. It is Life, instantaneously entire and complete without successive activity or movement, which remains forever one. Within this realm is both primary thought and that thought about, or the object of Intellect. It contains all Ideas or Universal Forms in relationship with each other. In other words, Spirit is an activity involving the archetypes of all empirical realities which are removed from or beyond a spatial concept.

The third principle is Soul, everywhere present at the same time, moving outward into the world of time as successive events unfolding one

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[114] The Philosophy of Plotinus, Representative Books from the Enneads, selected and trans. by Joseph Katz (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, Inc., 1950), pp. 7-58.

[115] Selected readings in Inge, Philosophy of Plotinus; Katz, Philosophy of Plotinus; R. T. Wallis, Neoplatonism (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972).

after another. Universal Soul is the "mediator" involved in the movement of life activity. Plotinus visualized Soul as both "upward looking" toward Intelligence (from which she overflowed) in the attitude of contemplation, but also involved in a "downward movement" towards the world of sensation. This is the force which generates the multiple life forms through the world of Nature, and the "outer reality" of Universal Soul is seen as a dilution or pale reflection of Forms. Through the elevated "portion" of herself, Soul is aware of Divine Forms; however, the lower activity of Soul becomes enmeshed in sense-thought projection and produces the material world through the activity of mind or discursive reason.

Here at this lower level of the hierarchy the greatest variation and multiplicity exists. Soul encompasses this third realm; but the individual bodies, by their "dividedness" in the world of Nature, are unable to receive Soul in her indivisible form, and take unto themselves the concept of separation. The natural world is, nevertheless, an expression of Spirit to the degree that the lower part of Soul creates a multitude of thought forms of differing degrees in the world of sensation. And in the final analysis, although separation is apparent, everything is part of the Universal Soul, and unity does exist despite the appearance of categories.

Needing a receptacle or vehicle through which to experience the sensate world, the lower portion of Soul attaches herself to an object--the natural expression of which is the human body. She thus becomes enmeshed or imprisoned within the external world and tastes the varying degrees of joy as well as pain and suffering in the realm of contraries. Plotinus taught, however, that it is the degree to which an individual

directs his inner life toward contemplation of the higher realm of Soul that one can control the pressures of the objective, externalized world. By the very act of inhabiting a human body, nevertheless, Soul becomes divided to the degree that one part of her is pulled toward the sense world while the higher part (which Plotinus intimates never actually enters the body) is forever turned toward Universal Soul which is undivided and is itself turned toward Spirit.

Therefore, the reflection of Soul into individual souls becomes a mediating factor between Spirit and matter, and all things within the world become an activity for contemplation of the higher part of Being. At the same time as Soul borders on Intelligence, which is order, she also borders on matter and organizes it as an activity of the contemplation through which she views the higher part. The world of sense, therefore, is created by Soul after the pattern of Spirit. However, to the degree that the individual Soul forgets her higher Being and turns toward the objectified, material world, the human body does indeed become a prison house in which the Soul resides in sorrow, expressing only human desire. We have in this teaching a model for both "the fall" from grace as well as the possibility of redemption.

It is not feasible or necessary in this study to trace the course of Neoplatonic thought, except to mention that there were two main schools: one in Alexandria and the Athenian Academy. The themes which were taught in these institutions (which later also included elements of Egyptian and "mystery" cults) flowed into Byzantine, Islamic, and Jewish thought. In the twelfth century translations from these Eastern sources appeared in Western Europe together with the "hybrid" systems which had been grafted on to the original philosophies. All found a place in the intellectual

atmosphere of the second half of the twelfth and all of the thirteenth centuries with varying reactions as we shall see.

It was Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354-430), however, who was instrumental in forming the synthesis between Christian and Neoplatonic thought--where God is identified with the Good in an attempt to reconcile Judaic and Christian beliefs with Greek philosophy. From his study of the Enneads of Plotinus, Augustine equated the three hypostases with "the three essentially Christian notions of God the Father, of God the Word, and of the creation."[116] This in turn was based on an original synthesis of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics. In Christian understanding the differentiation into multiplicity and the return to the One now took on the implication of the expulsion from the Garden and the gift of redemption through Jesus Christ.[117]

What is important for our study is an awareness that Augustine believed in the "Divine Emanation"; and because the Church of the Middle Ages was strongly based on the Augustinian-Platonic concept of the interrelatedness of all things, there was a direct dependence on the pagan philosophy as outlined in the previous pages but now transposed into Christian terms, legends, images, symbols, and made a part of Biblical lore.

Boethius (470-525) also carried forward the ideas of Neoplatonism in his work, The Consolation of Philosophy, as well as making important

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[116]Etienne H. Gilson, God and Philosophy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), pp. 45-49.

[117]Although the "Christianizing" of Plotinus by Saint Augustine is questioned by Etienne H. Gilson in his History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages (New York: Random House, 1959), pp. 80-81. For a review of noted nineteenth and twentieth century interpretations of the philosophy of the High Middle Ages see Fernand van Steenberghen, The Philosophical Movement in the Thirteenth Century, trans. J. J. Gaine (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., pp.3-37.

treasures of classical thought available through translations. These included Plato's Timaeus, the only work of this philosopher known during the High Middle Ages, except for little known translations of the Meno and the Phaedo by Aristippus around 1160.[118] Boethius also prepared commentaries of logical treatises of Aristotle, and the Isagogue, written by Porphyry, a disciple of Plotinus. All of these works influenced the thought of the period with which we are concerned.[119]

The Christian Neoplatonic tradition also gained impetus through the work of John Scotus Eriugena (815-877), an Irish monk, who was invited to the court of Charles the Bald to translate a manuscript of the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite from Greek into Latin.[120] Because the thought of the pseudo-Dionysius played such an integral part in the imagery and symbolism found in the High Middle Ages, and particularly in the essence of the Gothic cathedrals, it is necessary to give some attention to his philosophy.

Dionysius used many related terms to describe the abode of the One, which he named the Divine Darkness or the "dazzling obscurity of the secret Silence."[121] Obviously, this Darkness does not signify an absence of light; on the contrary, it is a super-essential Radiance, an infilling of dazzling light that is blinding to all who look at It. Here we have direct reference to the Light which is present in Plotinus' metaphor of the sun and its radiations emanating out in paler gradations. Man can look at the light in weakened images, whereas to gaze directly at the sun would cause the darkness of blinding light.

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[118]Haskins, Renaissance, p. 292.

[119]Gilson, History, pp. 97-107; Thomas Whittacker, The Neo-Platonists (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1970), p. 186.

[120]Gilson, History, pp. 113-28.

[121]Dionysius, Mystical Theology, p. 9.

The works of the pseudo-Dionysius were strongly infused with Neoplatonist thought and interspersed with many references to the Old and New Testaments. In his The Mystical Theology this Christian teacher commenced with: "Supernal Triad, Deity above all essence, knowledge and goodness," which would seem to be a direct reference to the Plotinian concept of the One. He continued, "Guide of Christians to Divine Wisdom."[122] It is in these two expressions that we have the basis of his thought--the One which is superior to all things known, yet always within the concept of Christianity.

In his work The Celestial Hierarchies, Dionysius presented a descending "chain of Being" consisting of a threefold division with a trinity of participants in each level and forming the nine Orders of angels.[123] We see once again this dependence upon triadic reference. The question arises to what extent the numerical reference relates to Porphyry's grouping of Plotinus' lectures into six books, each containing nine chapters. The collection, named the Enneads, literally meant "sets of nine."[124]

The concept of the Trinity was extremely important in the era we are examining and, of course, the imagery of squaring the Trinity would carry even greater implication. Dante's Divina Commedia contains much sacred arithmetic. "To the nine circles of Hell correspond the nine terraces of the mount of Purgatory and the Nine heavens of Paradise."[125] In his work La Vita Nuova (The New Life) Dante equated

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[122]Ibid.

[123]Ibid., pp. 29-60.

[124]Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 1967 ed., S.V. "Plotinus," by Paul Edwards.

[125]Mâle, Gothic Image, p. 13.

Beatrice with the number nine. Although written c. 1292 and not actually within the period we are examining, because of its dependence upon Neoplatonic imagery it has direct reference to the study. One section is quoted below:

> I wish to state that if one counts in the Arabian fashion, her [Beatrice] most worthy soul departed during the first hour of the ninth day of the month, and if one reckons in the Syrian manner, she departed in the ninth month of the year, the first month there being Tixryn the first, which for us is October. And according to our reckoning she departed in that year of our Christian era, that is in the year of Our Lord, in which the perfect number had been completed for the ninth time in that century in which she had been placed in this world, and she was a Christian of the thirteenth century. Another reason why this number was in such harmony with her might be this: Since according to Ptolemy as well as according to Christian truth there are nine heavens that move, and since according to widespread astrological opinion these heavens affect the earth below following the relation they have to one another, this number was well disposed to her in order to make it understood that at her birth all nine of the moving heavens were in perfect relationship to one another. This is one reason for it, but in more subtle thinking and according to the infallible truth she and this number are actually synonymous; that is, through analogy. What I mean to say is this: The number three is the root of nine, for without any other number, multiplied by itself it gives nine, as we plainly see that three times three is nine. Therefore, if three is the sole factor of nine and the sole factor of miracles is three, that is, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, who are three in One, then this lady is accompanied by the number nine so that it may be understood that she was a nine, or a miracle, whose root namely of the miracle, is the miraculous Trinity alone. Perhaps a more subtle person would see in this still another more subtle explanation, but this is the one that I see and that pleases me the most.[126]

The important issue to establish here relates to the interconnection of all things. Whether it be theology, the assigning of numbers, or the naming of names, each act was a conscious effort to bring everything into a related scheme. Similarly, when Jacobus writes of a Saint, he always examines the name as a symbol of the person who bears it, for he considered

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[126]Dante Alighieri, La Vita Nuova, trans. Mark Musa (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1957), pp. 60-69, section 29.

that "in its letters and syllables can be found the indication of what the person's life is to be, and his virtues, and his triumphs."[127]

The hierarchical chain of Being may be likened to the emanation of God in sacred and symbolical representation and is an intrinsic part of medieval Christian theology. The lower orders are given a pattern, as it were, to mold themselves after the likeness of the Celestial Hierarchies. In other words, the sensate attributes given to the Angels are but finite images to which man can respond. Through the states of uplifted awareness to which each individual according to his understanding is able to relate, he can become a participator in Divine Love.

The works of Dionysius were translated many times into Latin during the Middle Ages and were commented upon or incorporated in the works of Hugh of Saint Victor, Albert the Great, Saint Thomas, and Saint Bonaventura, among others.[128] It was, in fact, the great pattern upon which the structure of the Church rested. The Supreme God at the Apex was presented in His differentiated nature as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that is the Father was Deific Source. Jesus and Spirit as Divine Progeny, or the embodiment of Spirit, bore within Himself the Divine Essence of Beauty and Love in its most pure Form. The harmonizing force which is at once abiding, proceeding, and returning is Divine Love.

The outward manifestation of this hierarchy were the ecclesia, or those who were "called forth" and by their vocation or different works the Christian society was developed. According to the ideal model there were two main orders: Holy and Secular (or clerical and lay). However,

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[127]Voragine, Golden Legend, p. xv.

[128]Gilson, History, p. 85.

the Secular Order was then separated into Rulers and People, so that "three groups formed the structure of mediaeval Christian societies--Lords Spiritual, Lords Temporal and Commons."[129] Therefore, in the most fully realized concept of the ideal Christian society there is no real division of Church and State--the whole of society is incorporated within the body of the Church, which is visible rendered as an earthly image of the Holy Trinity. Thus the pope stood supreme, with the bishops and clergy participating according to the level of their office. The king or emperor was acknowledged head of the state (but always under the dominion of the pontiff), with his lords and subjects ranged below suitable to their rank and station.

According to this ideal all nations of western Europe were part of the commonwealth of united Christendom. However, clashes of human temperament and the inevitable lust for power which affects those in high places thwart the most noble design. Despite medieval understanding that the Church was superior to secular power there were many instances of open confrontation between them. In fact the period under review records a continual struggle between emperor, king and the papacy.

One of the most notable was the stand of Thomas á Becket against Henry II of England and his denouncement of the Constitutions of Clarendon. Becket's murder, Henry's public penance, and the subsequent veneration of the Saint at the shrine of Canterbury provide a striking illustration of the environment of opposites in this age and the popular spirit of emotionalism which pervaded it.

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[129]Alan Watts, Myth and Ritual in Christianity (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), pp. 190-93.

The most violent clash involving Church and State occurred between Innocent III and John of England. It revolved around the selection of a new Archbishop of Canterbury, with each submitting a candidate. John refused to accept the Pope's selection; in retaliation Innocent placed a five year interdict on all of England. Under this decree all of the churches would have been closed and the normal services of the clergy withheld from the people. Fearing that he would lose all control of episcopal elections if he gave in to the Pope's demands John continued to resist Innocent by confiscating large amounts of church property and revenues. The Pope then personally excommunicated the King in 1209.

Finally, in 1213, after Innocent had absolved John's subjects from oaths of allegiance to the King and authorized the King of France to proceed with the conquest of England, King John gave in and agreed to receive the Pope's choice, Stephen Langton, as archbishop. John voluntarily surrendered the kingdom of England to the Pope and received it back as a fief. Henceforth, he would make an annual payment to the Pope as his feudal lord. With this alliance the King had secured the Pope as his protector and was freed from the threat of invasion by France.[130] The foregoing serves to illustrate to what extent secular power was dependent on papal power at this period of history. Although one could not admit that a true state of unity existed between the two countries of France and England, nevertheless the heads of state were brought within the ties of one authority.

King Louis IX of France (1226-1270) has been termed "the perfect incarnation" and exemplar of a Christian king, however.[131] He dispensed

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[130]David Harris Willson, A History of England (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967), pp. 106-07.

[131]Mâle, Religious Art, p. 90.

justice tempered with Spirit according to Christian ideals of that era--although he did permit considerable persecution of the Jews. He was solicitous of the poor, the sick and the ill-used; and he was a wise and tender father to his own children as well as to his subjects. He furthered the spread of education and through his efforts the educational center of Paris continued to grow. Louis' piety was responsible for the exquisite miniature of Gothic architecture, La Sainte-Chapelle, built to house a fragment from the Crown of Thorns. As dispenser of kingly virtue he has been considered representative of the ideals and qualities which were set up in the period under review.

> He was neither an egotist nor a scheming diplomatist; he was in all sincerity, in harmony with his age and sympathetic alike with the faith, the institutions, the customs, and the tastes of France in the Thirteenth Century. And yet, both in the Thirteenth Century and in later times St. Louis stands apart as a man of profoundly original character, an isolated figure without any peer among his contemporaries or his successors. As far as it was possible in the Middle Ages, he was an ideal man, king, and Christian.[132]

Contemporary with King Louis was another outstanding personality: the ecclesiastic, Saint Thomas Aquinas (c.1224-1272). In order to appreciate his position in the Augustinian environment of the Church and the undercurrents of change and new direction which were being experienced it is necessary to review briefly the path of learned disputation which certain ecclesiastics used to arrive at knowledge of God.

Standing at the entrance to the twelfth century, Anselm was part of the traditional past and yet was also involved with a new rationalism later to become associated with the schoolmen. He has been called the father of Scholasticism because he attempted to apply the dialectical, step-by-step method of inquiry to prove the validity of his definition

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[132]Walsh, The Thirteenth, p. 292.

of God as "that being than which no greater can be conceived" in his ontological argument. It is necessary to recognize, however, that his famous treatise which contains these words, the Proslogium, also states: "I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand."[133] It is important, nevertheless, to realize that a precedent was established--that the nature of God or the "proof" of God's existence was being approached in an analytical manner, although Anselm did not intend this implication.

It was Abelard (1079-1142) who carried to extreme the art of discursive reasoning in the search for logical proof. He arranged all of the conflicting Church authorities in direct opposition to each other in his Sic et Non and then challenged the intellectuals to bring them into harmony. Abelard also offered a fresh approach in resolving the ancient controversy between the Realists and the Nominalists: that is, the basic belief of the Church that the Platonic Forms contain the real Universals as opposed to the Aristotelian theory that reality is vested in the individual. He did not deny that things do possess true similarities but held that the mind is able to conceive of a blurred image, a concept, taken from individual things which is also applicable to all in that class.[134]

Although Plato employed the method of discursive reasoning with Socrates as the chief spokesman in his Dialogues,[135] this fact was not known in the Middle Ages as only the Timaeus was available in translation (except for the little known translations of the Meno and the Phaedo noted

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[133]Rader, Enduring Questions, pp. 456-57.

[134]David Knowles, The Evolution of Medieval Thought (New York: Vintage Books, 1962), p. 226-29.

[135]Plato, The Collected Dialogues, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973).

earlier). It was not until the middle of the fifteenth century and the founding of the Florentine Academy that Ficino made the complete body of Plato's Dialogues accessible to the Western world for the first time.[136] In the middle of the twelfth century, however, it was Aristotle who influenced the logical, reasoning attitude of the thinkers. The Stagirite, "through his compact, clear-cut, and systematic style of presentation, appealed to an age which loved manuals and textbooks and found these under Aristotle's name in almost every field of philosophy and science."[137] The importance of this development cannot be underestimated. In fact the attitudes of various thinkers towards his works determined the main philosophic currents from the thirteenth into the seventeenth centuries.[138] The translation of Aristotle's corpus of treatises indeed heralded a new beginning.

Before examining this renaissance of learning it is important to remember that the Augustinian-Platonic stream of understanding upon which the medieval Church was based, continued to run all through the period we are researching. Platonism was well represented in the twelfth century by the cathedral school at Chartres where such scholars as Bernard and Abelard taught in the first quarter of the century. In the next decade or so Hugh of St. Victor, John of Salisbury, and Bernard Silvester were among the Neoplatonists connected with the school.[139]

In the thirteenth century a modified, eclectic type Neoplatonism (which, as mentioned earlier, also incorporated elements of Aristotle)

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[136]Paul O. Kristeller, Renaissance Concepts of Man and Other Essays (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 104.

[137]Haskins, Renaissance, p. 343.

[138]Artz, Mind of the Middle Ages, p. 260.

[139]Wetherbee, Platonism, selected readings.

became the vehicle for the thought of Alexander of Hales, Saint Bonaventura and John Peckham. This has been termed neo-Augustinianism.[140] Further, the Moslem theologian Avicenna (980-1037) and the Spanish Moslem commentator Averroes (1126-1198) both had a dependence on the Neoplatonic school in Alexandria which was important for its commentaries on Aristotle.

Up until the twelfth century Aristotle had been known to the West only as a logician through the translations of Boethius. As already noted the Church was based on a Christianized version of Neoplatonism; this situation was suddenly radically changed. The Christian reconquest of Northern Spain in the latter part of the eleventh century made available the learning of the Saracens, while the conquest of Southern Italy and Sicily provided access to Greek manuscripts.[141]

Most important to the renaissance of learning was the cultural center of Mohammedan Spain at Toledo. In the second quarter of the twelfth century treatises on astronomy, astrology, medicine, as well as alchemical literature "began to pour into Europe in a perfect flood."[142] By mid-century the translators were hard at work making available to the Christian realm Latin renditions, from the Arabic, of Aristotle's scientific and philosophical works. The most industrious was Gerard of Cremona who translated close to one hundred works before his death in 1187 at Toledo. Although he provided much on Aristotle his greatest contribution was the medical treatises of Galen and Hippocrates.[143] In

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[140]Steenberghen, Philosophical Movement, pp. 102-04.

[141]Haskins, Renaissance, p. 14.

[142]Ibid., p. 317.

[143]Ibid., pp. 286-87.

the early part of the thirteenth century names which included Michael Scot, Alfred the Englishman, and Hermann the German reflect the universal nature of the work which continued at Toledo--many of whom worked with converted Jewish interpreters.[144]

Although Aristotle's work covered a wide range of natural sciences it was the theological sections which caused the greatest controversy amongst the churchmen of the period. The main problem involved the Church's stand on the immortality of the soul. The writings stated that there is only one intellect thinking in each human individual--the lowest of the Intelligences acting in and through each human mind. After death, the individual human intellect returns to the Universal Intellect, which alone is immortal and consequently there is no individual immortality.[145]

In 1210 a provincial synod held at Sens prohibited the reading of Aristotle, which at that time contained many pantheistic comments by Averroes, and inadvertently translated as part of the Philosopher's thought. Averroistic-Aristotelian doctrine further held that the world itself is eternal. There were some, however, who argued that "it did more honour to God to recognize that he had created a world with its own value and interest than to suppose that men were expected to keep their gaze averted from it" and turned to the next higher emanation of the Augustinian-Platonic hierarchical chain of being.[146]

The original decree of 1210 was also directed at the so-called "heretical" movements inspired by Amaury of Bêne and David of Dinant.

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[144]Ibid., pp. 287-88.

[145]Knowles, Evolution, pp.210-12.

[146]D. J. B. Hawkins, A Sketch of Mediaeval Philosophy (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), p. 67.

Their philosophy was an earth-centered humanism inspired by a form of Averroistic-Aristotelianism which resulted in a materialistic pantheism.[147] It would seem that the churchmen who issued the decree "confounded Aristotle's cause with that of two suspicious philosophers, as though he shared with them the errors for which their doctrines had been condemned."[148]

Discarding the chain of being, the "free thinkers" (who prelude the later dissenters like Ockham and Wyclif) saw God, nature, matter and spirit, all on the same plane. Certain of their teachings had their basis in the controversial churchman of the Cistercian order, the "blessed saint" Joachim of Fiore (c.1145-1202), whose interesting theology is summarized as follows:

> All three persons of the Trinity were creatures and had their own incarnation; the kingdom of the Father was the kingdom of the Old Testament, the kingdom of the Son that of the Church of the Sacraments, whose reign was just drawing to a close; the kingdom of the Holy Ghost was dawning newly incarnate every day in the individual believer, making him God.[149]

Obviously this type of thinking according to the conservative Church could take a dangerous turn, and the Inquisition descended, imposing and restricting. In 1231 Pope Gregory IX appointed a committee to purge Aristotle from all doctrines unacceptable to the Church and bearing the imprint of his commentators; thereafter his books were accepted. In the meantime the teaching of Aristotle had been permitted at Oxford where a more tolerant environment prevailed.[150]

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[147]Knowles, Evolution, pp. 226-29.

[148]Gilson, History, p.244.

[149]Heer, Medieval World, p. 214.

[150]Knowles, Evolution, pp. 280-83.

At this point it is necessary to look at the environment in the University of Paris which was responsible for the "left-wing" type of thinking. In the thirteenth century, by far the largest was the Faculty of Arts which was really intended as a precursor to the study of theology, as the only "full" professors were Doctors of Theology. There was an aura of unrest which marked their activities. They straddled both sides of the road, as it were, being engaged in teaching and yet engaged in completion of their studies. Because they were so numerous, however, many hundreds were denied the possibility of ever obtaining a chair. About 1210 the Masters of Arts withdrew from the Chancellor's jurisdiction and settled on the left bank.

Further, there was a group of masters in the Arts Faculty headed by Siger of Brabant who accepted Averroes (with his Moslem implications) as the correct interpreter of Aristotle. Specifically, as already noted, this commentator stated that there was no philosophic evidence of man's personal immortality and that, in contrast to faith which Christianity holds so dear, knowledge (which is gained through the systematic examination of the object) was all important.[151]

Albert the Great (1206-1280) was a prolific Dominican writer. He spent much time in studying theological questions in general, and in particular hedevoted his energies to examining the works of both Dionysius and Aristotle. It was left to his very able pupil, Thomas Aquinas, however, to construct a synthesis between faith--the basis of Augustinianism--amd the new commodity of human reasoning. It was to this situation that Aquinas addressed himself. As a Dominican Doctor of Theology, brilliant thinker, scholar, and writer, he had traveled extensively,

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[151]Rader, Enduring Questions, pp. 195-99; Gilson, History, pp. 389-99.

visiting that Order's houses in Rome and environs. At this time William of Moerbeke, a Greek-speaking Dominican missionary and friend of Saint Thomas, was recalled from the east and assigned to translate and revise the existing versions of the works of Aristotle, as well as making new ones. These formed the basis for the "mighty edifice of Aristotelian scholasticism," and Aquinas used these translations as an aid to his own expositions of Aristotle's works as he was unfamiliar with the Greek language.[152]

In his gigantic work, the Summa Theologica, Thomas set out to provide a synthesis between faith and reason. It consists of twenty-one volumes dealing with the Christian viewpoint on such matters as logic, metaphysics, theology, psychology, ethics, and politics. At issue was whether theology could be treated as a science. Aquinas honored reason above all other human abilities, and he saw no conflict between faith and knowledge which could not be reconciled by reason. Every problem in the Summa is presented as an open question, and opposing views are always stated before he presents his own reconciliation in the tradition of the Greek dialectical approach.

Although the purpose of this paper is not to explore the theology of William Blake, nevertheless it is pertinent at this point to comment briefly on his use of dialectic. Blake is also concerned with the "Yes" and "No" in his use of Contrary States to formulate his appraoch to truth.

> Once we have accepted the idea that Blake's theology is dialectical, that his theory of Contraries applies not only to life in general but to his thought in particular, it becomes easier of appreciation. We now see that his thought progresses by thesis and antithesis; thus he rejects the reality of nature only to counter this by asserting its abiding value; he condemns the body and then declares its identity

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[152]Hawkins, Medieval Philosophy, p. 63; Knowles, Evolution, p. 259.

> with the soul; he repudiates the law and at the same time appreciates its importance; he looks upon sin as a barrier to communion, but equally he views it as an occasion for exercising forgiveness; he believes in Creation as an act of mercy, but regards it as a consequence of the Fall; he discourses on the immanence of God and yet acknowledges His transcendence--and at the beginning and end of it all is God, the Divine Humanity, the coincidentia oppositorum.[153]

Furthermore, there appears to be a marked affinity with the purpose of Saint Thomas, whose overwhelming motivation was a dedication to one great mission: "to show that Christianity could contain every vestige of truth that the philosophers had ever discovered; and it could contain all these truths in a synthesis in which whatever truth man could find in creation . . . was divine in its origin."[154] Similarly, while Aquinas was troubled over the fact that no one philosophical definition could ever contain the One and Triune God, he nevertheless considered it necessary to stretch the intellect to search for such a meaning. What is more it was his purpose to place his findings before the novice as well as the seasoned intellectual. His Prologue to the Summa is given in its entirety below inasmuch as it clearly states his motivation in undertaking that mammoth work:

> Because the teacher of catholic truth ought to teach not only those who have advanced along the road but also to instruct beginners (according to the saying of the Apostle: "As unto little ones in Christ, I gave you milk to drink, not meat" I (Cor.3.1,2), we purpose in this book to treat of whatever belongs to the Christian religion in a way that is suited to the instruction of beginners.
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> We have considered that students in this doctrine have not seldom been hampered by what they have found written by other authors, partly on account of the multiplication of useless questions, articles, and arguments, partly also because those things that are necessary for them to know are not taught according to the order of the subject-matter, but according as the plan of the book might require, or the occasion of dis-

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[153] J. G. Davies, The Theology of William Blake (London: Archon Books, 1966), p. 139.

[154] F. C. Coppleston, Aquinas (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1961), p. 58.

> putation offer, partly, too, because frequent repetition brought weariness and confusion to the minds of the readers.
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> Endeavouring to avoid these and other like faults, we shall try, with confidence in the help of God, to set forth whatever is included in sacred doctrine as briefly and clearly as the matter itself may allow.[155]

We see in the foregoing a perfect example of the desire to bring light to bear in a situation which has been dimmed by confusion. It is necessary to recall that Saint Thomas had been teaching for fifteen years when he commenced the Summa in 1269, and had already written innumerable scholastic disputations as well as the Summa contra Gentiles. That same year, Thomas was suddenly called from Italy to Paris where the conflict over the acceptance of Aristotle by the Church was raging. Not only was he a synthesist in the realm of thought, but he stood between the radicals of Siger's group and the conservative Franciscans (the Friars Minor).

The Franciscan Saint Bonaventura maintained that if we but look around us we can see traces of God in natural law rather than in erudition or rationalization. In other words he held that, from observation of "these visible things, therefore, one mounts to considering the power and wisdom and goodness of God as being."[156] Obviously, this refers to the Neoplatonic hierarchical chain of ascent. This is in contrast to the Aristotelian belief that individual things have a being of their own and can be known through a study of their differentiation. Saint Thomas insisted that natural law is nothing but rational creature's participation in that which is eternal law--which provided a meeting ground of opinion."[157]

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[155]Thomas Aquinas, The Summa Theologica, 2 vols. trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, rev. Daniel J. Sullivan (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Ltd., 1952), I:1.

[156]Bonaventura, Mind's Road, p. 12.

[157]Anthony A. Nemetz, "Natural Law and the Truth in St. Thomas Aquinas," Studies in Medieval Culture 4 (1974):299.

According to Aristotle, soul is seen as the form of the human body. Accepting this understanding, the world cannot be viewed as a shadow of the Ideal realm of Plato's Eternal Forms. It further destroyed the Platonic soma sema doctrine--that the soul is held captive within the prison house of the body. The human mind was afforded a new dignity when viewed as the instrument through which God could be conceived. Aquinas studied Aristotle's premise that there were two aspects of human thinking: the passive intellect was the "recorder" of the five physical senses, whereas the active intellect was the power of abstraction and original thinking. In other words the active part is the soul and through its participation in intellectualization, fulfills the purpose for which it was intended.

Working with translations taken directly from the Greek, Saint Thomas offered the following solution to the problem--thinking is an activity, peculiar only to the human soul, which allows it to transcend matter. This activity is capable of independent existence and is not affected by the corruption of the sentient and organic activity.[158] It must be remembered, however, that "God is above all things by the excellence of His nature; nevertheless, He is in all things as the cause of the being of all things,"[159] and theology is of supreme importance in Aquinas' understanding.

During the period from about 1266 on Saint Thomas was attacked by both the Franciscans and the British Dominicans as he sought to clarify the position of opposing factions. However, his position in the Church was very sound. Although certain of his propositions were

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[158]Summa, I. Q.76 Art.6, pp. 383-84.

[159]Ibid., I. Q.8 Reply Obj.1, p.35.

condemned by the Bishop of Paris in 1277 (later revoked in 1323 at the time he was canonized), the position of unity which he sought to establish was maintained. The dispute with the Franciscans was not unfriendly and the threat of Siger and his men at that time was not serious enough to demolish the authority he had established.[160]

Although the processes of the step-by-step logical method of Scholasticism tend to deny all spontaneity of expression, it must be remembered that above all Saint Thomas Aquinas was a contemplative. In this understanding he can most fully be considered a synthesist, for he embraced both the dialectical approach of the Platonized Socrates as well as the intuitive faculty of revelation or mysticism. We do know that on December 6, 1273 (just three months prior to his death), after saying Mass, Thomas suspended work on the third segment of his Summa Theologica. We are told that "a great change came over him that morning" and when later urged to continue writing he replied: "I can do no more; such things have been revealed to me that all I have written seems as straw, and I now await the end of my life."[161]

Within these few words lies an awesome implication. Despite Aquinas' heroic efforts to bridge the gap between the transcendence of the Godhead and the idea that rational examination must start with the experience of individual things in true Aristotelian manner, in the last analysis it would seem that the "flight of the alone to the Alone" (using Plotinian mystical imagery) made the final impression on him.

To those who have experienced it, the other path to knowledge of God--that is, the experience of merging with the One--reveals an all-

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[160]Gilson, History, pp. 402-10; Knowles, Evolution, pp. 294-300.

[161]Summa, I. p. 6; Coppleston, Aquinas, p. 10.

encompassing Truth. When Saint Bernard of Clairvaux stated in a sermon, "only the touch of the Spirit can inspire a song like this, and only personal experience can unfold its meaning,"[162] he knew whereof he spoke. His role as a power-wielding ecclesiastic will be examined briefly in the next chapter. At this point, however, it is necessary to mention that, although he was concerned with austerity in the life of the Church and opposed to any form of ornamentation or embellishment, his writings were replete with the sensual, nuptial imagery of the Song of Songs which he used to explain the soul's union with God. With the thought of Bernard (1091-1153), Hugh of St. Victor (1097-1141), and his pupil Richard (who died about 1173), who was also of the Abbey of St. Victor at Paris, "the literature of medieval mysticism, properly so-called, begins."[163]

The foregoing Christian intellectuals drew on the mystical tradition which flowed through Plotinus, the pseudo-Areopagite, and later Neoplatonic writers. Through the medium of elaborate allegory and symbolism they were able to "divide and subdivide the stages of contemplation, the states of the soul, and the degrees of Divine Love."[164] By so doing they were also mirroring the art of clarification and progressive divisibility practiced by the Scholastics and symbolized in the cathedrals. Their work coincides with the introduction of the new architecture, and also with the advent of the Aristotelian translations.

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[162]Bernard, Song I, 6:11, p. 6.

[163]"Medieval Christendom VII, The Gothic Summation," The Horizon History of Christendom, ed. James Parten et al. (New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., 1964), p. 214.

[164]Underhill, Mysticism, pp. 458-59.

Similarly the scholar/mystics, by their innovative approach to contemplation, provide yet another example of the new contributions offered in the era of the High Middle Ages, and are suggestive of the quality of originality and newness with which we are equating Blake's state of Innocence.

Italian mysticism (which found its expression in Saint Francis) had great dependence on the unusual personality of the Abbot Joachim of Fiore, whom Dante placed among the great contemplatives. It was the thought of the Franciscan Alexander of Hales and his pupil, Saint Bonaventura, however, who maintained the mystical emphasis of the Augustinian-Platonic heritage of the Church in their meditations. Fundamentally, their system can be traced back to Plotinus and the hierarchy of Being, but placed within the concept of the Christian God of Genesis and the New Testament. In his treatise "Of the Reflection of the Divine Unity in Its Primary Name which is Being" Bonaventura maintained that it was possible to "contemplate God not only outside of us but also within us and above us." He further stated that it is "outside through His traces, inside through His image and above us through His light"[165] that we come to know Him.

In direct contrast to this mode of thinking was that promulgated by Siger of Brabant, as noted earlier. The great inquiring minds of the thirteenth century, however, were Aquinas and his master, the thaumaturgist, Albertus Magnus. Both were "modernists" and "convinced that Aristotle had come to stay and Christianity must make terms with him if the church was not to lose the confidence of the intellectual classes."[166]

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[165]Bonaventura, Mind's Road, p. 34.

[166]Artz, Mind of the Middle Ages, pp. 261-63.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE ENVIRONMENT OF UNITY

In the last two chapters we examined new themes introduced in the middle of the twelfth century. These were reflected in the architecture of the cathedrals as well as the philosophy of the Scholastics. We also saw how thought and form were interrelated. This section of the paper will examine the ways in which the secular and spiritual world of the latter half of the twelfth and greater portion of the thirteenth centuries were interwoven. In order not to become lost in the maze of historical events which have been recorded of life during this 130 year period, only three major themes illustrating movement, protection, and salvation will be presented.

Reference to the triad has been consciously selected, inasmuch as the Trinity was all important to medieval thought and understanding; and by so doing, a link is forged with the mood of the previous era. Primarily it has reference to the belief of God in Three Persons: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But it also has great dependence upon the Neoplatonic triad: the ruling hypostases of the One, Intellect, and Soul. It is interesting to note that a trinity was affirmed in both Christian and pagan thought. As we have mentioned, these were brought together by Saint Augustine upon whom medieval philosophy was so dependent. "To him as to his preceptor, Plato, Universals alone are real--Beauty, Goodness, and Unity--the direct result in the human mind of

divine illumination."[167] Saint Thomas Aquinas repeatedly breaks his writings into three portions or enumerates three points for greater clarification. In fact, the Summa Theologica is divided into three major parts: on God in Himself; on man, the image of God; and on Christ, who is man's way of approaching God.[168] Dante also divided his Divina Commedia into the three kingdoms of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. An interesting illustration of this medieval preoccupation with the concept of three are the little known communities called the Trinitarians. In 1240 there were about 600 houses of this branch of the Augustinian Order in southwestern Europe, each with three clerks, three laymen, and a superior.[169]

By dividing the chapter into three portions, emphasis is given to this facet of medieval life. We recognize why we have chosen a trinity of parts; and we are brought into an awareness of the holistic medieval environment, which extended not only into the realm of thought but into the very activity of life itself.

## The Concept of Movement

There were two surges of activity which manifested in the era of the High Middle Ages with which we are concerned. These took place within the widely divergent realms of man's inner and outer life at both the mental and the physical levels. The excessive activity of children

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[167]Henry Slesser, The Middle Ages in the West (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1951), p. 235.

[168]The Pocket Aquinas, pp. 3-5, 23, 51-58, 97-98, and 283-87 to cite a few of his references to triune division.

[169]R. W. Southern, Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages, The Pelican History of the Church: 2 (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, Inc., 1970), p. 249.

affords an excellent illustration of this enthusiasm. Their eagerness, inquisitiveness, and repeated questioning all present a picture of the vitality and zest which was so apparent in every strata of society during this period.

Visible movement was the continuous thrust of energy which took form in the crusades--all of which occurred in the period with which we are concerned, with the exception of the First Crusade in 1096-1099. There were also pilgrimages to Jerusalem as well as to other religious shrines of varying importance. Along the waterways and pilgrims' wayfares, a string of towns grew up where inns accommodated those traveling on pious journeys as well as merchants transporting their goods. Venice, Genoa, and Pisa were the main cities through which the luxuries of the east were brought into Europe, which were then transported overland northward as well as via established sea routes.[170] The claim for hereditary rights was a matter of constant strife between the French and the English (see Appendix: map of medieval France and England); and the king and his escort as well as the armies of the king, duke, and lord marched perpetually across the land in their bid for territory. There were gatherings of knights and their entourage at tournaments and jousts, just as there were groups of artisans and merchants who came together at fairs and market days.

In a contrast of movement, there were also the wanderings from one court to another of the professional minstrels who sang of the ideals of chivalry and love which the troubadours had written. Wandering students, well versed in Latin, contributed a particularly witty, satirical type of

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[170]Larousse Encyclopedia of Ancient & Medieval History, 4th impression, 1972, S.V. "The Beginning of Europe's Expansion."

poetry, termed Goliardic; this was often presented for entertainment at wealthy bishops' courts.[171] Whereas earlier minstrels had sung chansons-de geste extolling warlike deeds, by the late twelfth century the feudal nobles had become more civilized by the code of chivalry. The lord and his lady were now entertained by the jongleurs who sang the softer romances of chivalry (frequently based on Arthurian legends) with love theme, magic potions, and code of chivalry prominent in the story. Although the troubadours, who were often of noble birth, rarely traveled from court to court, many of them who were Cathars were forced to leave Provence and flee to Italy when the Albigensian Crusade devastated much of southern France. Their style and themes were greatly admired by the Italians, to the extent that the Italians also wrote their lyrics in Provencal on occasion.[172]

In the High Middle Ages Latin was the language of learning, and students freely moved from one country to another in their intellectual search as expounded by various masters. The universities, which grew out of the cathedral schools, afforded an environment which transcended the limitations of different nations. Certain orders of monks traveled from one monastery to another on teaching missions or to Rome on affairs of the Church, while the Friars and members of other mendicant orders journeyed from town to hamlet bringing the Christian message.

The list of participants is endless. If one were able to plot this activity, the entire face of Europe would be covered by lines crisscrossing and coming together at certain points similar to a vast grid. It was a jostling, noisy--for the most part, good-humored--procession, although often engaged in brawling and bawdy situations. There was little sanitation

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[171]Jackson, Literature of the Middle Ages, p. 229.

[172]Ibid., p. 77.

and only the barest of necessities offered at the inns, hostels, and monastery guest houses. Odors, curses, and profanity mingled with the prayers and church bells as this vast conglomerate of humanity came together in its wanderings.[173] And yet this movement had meaning and a certain order. Each traveler knew his place and the reason that he was making the transition from one point to the next, which, to some degree, was motivated by high incentives. The pilgrim knew with an inner certainty that the relics of the saints, the shrine in which they were housed, or the cathedral as the house of God put him in touch with another part of reality, even if he was not able to verbalize this awareness.

The veneration and faith which the pilgrim accorded the objects provided a point of convergence for that which he could see and touch, as well as that which stood outside the five senses. This union between the two kinds of knowledge was reinforced by both theology and mystical writings. The Canon of Toul, Hugo Metullus, wrote "Human eyes cannot in their earthly state see God, since God has neither a body nor a physical location. But they may be trained to see him in things which do have substance and locality."[174] It was this incentive which moved men to revere Jerusalem and the many other places of veneration, traveling long distances and experiencing the hardship of travel of those times in order to stand in the holy environment.

We must recall that the pre-Copernican universe, which was finite and to the medieval scholar completely knowable both in space and in time,

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[173]Coulton, Panorama, pp. 302-03.

[174]Hugo Metullus, Canon of Toul, cited by Carolly Erickson in The Medieval Vision: Essays in History and Perception (New York: The Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 215.

placed the earth at the center. The schoolmen were not observers or experimenters; instead it was their task to elaborate on the scheme of the inter-connectedness of all things, especially in relating the microcosm to the macrocosm.[175] This view is always portrayed in the fixed pattern of center and series of concentric spheres which influenced all medieval thought, including that of Saint Thomas Aquinas.[176] The acknowledged center of the world was Jerusalem, the cradle of all that Christianity revered and the hope of the world to come. One map, dated c.1314, which is preserved in Hereford Cathedral in England clearly placed Jerusalem in the center. The map is a composite of physical geography, biology, and mythology all placed in a Biblical framework. The compiler's point of reference was the Old Testament, which lucidly states: "Thus saith the Lord God; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her."[177]

We also learn that:

> According to Judaic tradition Jerusalem was situated in the centre of the land of Israel, the Sanctuary was in the centre of the Sanctuary, the Ark of the Covenant was in the centre of the Hall and before the Ark lay the foundation stone of the world; for it was said that the world was established from that centre. According to another legend Adam was created in the centre of the earth, in Jerusalem, on the site where later the Cross was to be erected.[178]

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[175]Charles Singer, "Science," in Medieval Contributions, pp. 132-37.

[176]For diagrams and scheme of the High Middle Ages which attempted to relate the idea of the microcosm to the macrocosm, interrelating the elements in the creative process, or a symbolic representation of the elements and the humors, all of which show a center point with concentric circles, see Stock, Myth and Science, Plates I, IIIA, B, C, V, and VI; Pocket Aquinas, pp. 46-49.

[177]Ezekiel 5:5.

[178]Jung, Grail Legend, pp. 331-32.

From these beliefs grew the assumption that Christ and his work of redemption were also at the center of the world, which became part of medieval understanding. We find many references to this concept of centering. It points to the fact that the material world was regarded as a symbol, and reality was vested in the concept rather than in matter. The consummate image of the process of centering is, of course, the rose window in the cathedral and its relationship to the mandala.

The point is being made that it was the Church and her teachings which motivated men's minds and initiated their actions during this period in European history in a bond of unity which was not experienced before not has been since that time. It is necessary to recognize that, coexistently with the outer, physical movement, there was as great an activity taking place in the mental realm as there was in the material world. Chronicles, letters, secular and ecclesiastical records, as well as the writings of the scholars all contribute to a comprehensive picture of the totality of life in this age.

In the previous chapter the intellectualism of the theologians was studied. Because we have no written testimony of the unlettered, however, it is impossible to assess to what degree the simple man formulated opinions or held forth on any subject. We do know that his inner world had reality through prayer, through belief, and through association with the Holy image which was everywhere present. For each clerk at the university there were hundreds of unlettered and untutored who relied on the symbolic imagery of the cathedral to understand and appreciate the tenets of Christianity.

Scholastic philosophy, as well as the highest type of mysticism, was the product of the intellectually disciplined minds of the religious

orders. The less erudite, however, held an expanded inner vision through their constant "communion" with angels, ghosts, and every conceivable type of supernatural manifestation. Reports of their encounters and the miracles which were wrought display a naivete which is in delightful contrast to the weighty verbal discourses of some on the finer points of Christian theology. It is important to remember, however, that even the learned doctors accepted the materialized presence of disembodied personages, which in the present century would be termed "phantasms of the mind."

We have only to turn to Jacobus de Voragine's Golden Legend to read on almost every page accounts of miracles which were commonplace in the saints' lives, as well as the temptations they endured from embodied devils. We are told that, as a young man, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux was tempted by the devil in the guise of a woman on more than one occasion:

> Reflecting therefore that 'twas unsafe to make common dwelling with the Serpent, he began to give thought to fleeing from the world, and thenceforth formed the resolution to enter the Order of the Cistercians. When this became known to his brothers, they sought by every means to dissuade him from his plan; but the Lord bestowed such grace upon him that not only did he not forego his conversion, but garnered all his brothers and many others to God in the life of religion.[179]

Illustrative of this penchant for the miraculous are the acts and cures attributed to the English anchorite, Wulfric, who died in 1155. Locked in his cell to which people came for healing or advice, he provided a catalyst between the Church and society. At a time when the upper class of English society were still cut off from the rest of the populace by their Norman blood and the fact that they still spoke French,

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[179]Voragine, Legend, pp. 466-67.

it is interesting to learn that certain of Wulfric's miracles hinged on giving the gift of this language to himself and to others.[180] One who sought him out was Alured of Lincoln, Sheriff of Somerset and the man who later raised Henry II's Somerset supplies for the Irish expedition of 1171. Wulfric's gift of prophecy prompted him to speak with conviction to Alured regarding the inadequacy of a crusade which was then being formed (the disastrous Second Crusade which set out in 1147). It is in this picture of an English village ascetic sharing confidences with a royal administrator, that we truly see "a link between the two worlds."[181]

The inner and outer activity which was such an integral part of medieval secular and ecclesiastic life, and the fusion between the two, is most revealing in a story--itself a product of that era. It centers around the tripartite journey in which three monks moved in differing dimensions.[182] At one level it was a movement through space: observable physical limits were mentioned of geographical locations which bespeaks of the concept of pilgrimage. It was also a journey back in time as the travelers met historical personages, which included Alexander and the Emperor Julian. Finally, it was also a spiritual pilgrimage through the imagined states of hell and paradise.

It is this ability to exist in a multiform reality which gives the High Middle Ages their peculiar environment. It is as though the participants walked in a land of enchantment wherein the dimensions of reality existed simultaneously with that state which we, of today's

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[180]H. Mayr-Harting, "Functions of a Twelfth-Century Recluse," History 60 (1975): 344.

[181]Ibid., p. 346.

[182]Erickson, Medieval Vision, pp. 4-8.

skeptical age, would call imagination and less than real. There is, in fact, an aura of the fairy tale which permeates the rarefied air of this epoch. In this respect medieval man was almost childlike in his capacity for total integration. His journey along life's way was peopled with characters of his own conjuring, in the same way that on occasion children have been known to provide themselves with companions, visible only to their own eyes.

Each manifestation of the concept of movement which was so apparent during the apogee of the High Middle Ages could be taken and analyzed as to motivation and its success in terms of original attitude. This would be a study in itself. A cursory examination, however, will show that the crusades, pilgrimages, movement of monks, knights, artisans, poets (with the exception of the Goliardi perhaps), and in fact most of humanity from king to commoner were undergone with a certain amount of high expectation--and for the most part--fairly high ideals. Unfortunately, being human, they erred all too often.

The most glaring examples are the Crusades which sometimes developed into sordid antagonisms amongst the crusaders themselves. In fact the quarrels between Philip Augustus of France and his vassal Richard of England "had become an open scandal."[183] The two leaders argued about everything from dividing the spoils of conquest to deciding who should be made King of Jerusalem. The incidents between them cover the whole range of human behavior from pettiness to outright cynicism.[184]

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[183]R. H. G. Davis, A History of Medieval Europe (New York: David McKay Company, 1963), p. 293.

[184]Ibid.

Nevertheless, "the West in the time of its greatest subdivision had acted, however, imperfectly, as unity for a common aim."[185] This unity seems to relate to William Blake's own expression of "contraries" without which, he claims, "there would be no progression."[186] The concept of opposites appears to embody the Neoplatonic beliefs of the fall and the ascent. There is, therefore, the implication that contrary states are necessary: the One needs the many in order to express the very nature of unity. The individual, in turn, must look to the source in order to make the journey back from separation and individualization. God and the Devil, life and death, good and evil, all had their place in the medieval scheme of things. In fact the Church of the twelfth century was a "living union of mighty opposites:"

> Heaven and Earth, matter and spirit, living and dead, body and soul, past, present and future. Reality was seamless, there was no chasm separating created from redeemed mankind; all men were of one blood, from the first man to the last and inhabited a single hemisphere at once natural and 'supernatural'.[187]

We must be careful, however, not to impose a system of dualism on contraries, remembering that the dualistic doctrine of Manichaeism which manifested as Catharism in southern France and culminated in the Albigensian Crusade in 1207 was considered heretical. Instead, Blake's position, "which endeavours to go back to the original state from which the Contraries arose,"[188] illustrates the Platonic-Augustinian theology

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[185]C. W. Previté-Orton, Outlines of Medieval History, (New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1965), p. 289.

[186]English Romantic Writers, ed. David Perkins (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967), p. 68.

[187]Heer, Medieval World, p. 4.

[188]Davies, The Theology of William Blake, p. 139.

of the medieval church during this period. In this context there is no synthesis of opposites, but a true dependence on the Original in an atmosphere of unity. In other words when Saint Bernard interpreted the love that is extolled in Solomon's Song as symbolic of the love between Christ and His church, and when the Goliardic poet of the Carmen Burana used excerpts from sacred texts in an "unholy" idiom, they both had a common starting point: the Church and Biblical reference. One is concerned with an ideal, and the other with the state of abuse of that ideal where

> Appearance and spirit are at odds, they quarrel with one another; honey flows from their mouths, but in their mind is bitterness. All is not sweet which looks like honey, and heart and outward seeming are not the same.
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> In their deeds there is wickedness, in their speech virtue; with the color of snow they cover the pitchy blackness of their spirit. When the head is in pain each limb feels it too, and the branch's taste is that of the root.[189]

Although the Goliard poets ( so designated for their professed service to Golias--a name derived from the Biblical giant Goliath--whom they chose as their patron "saint") were often renegade scholars or clerics, the better examples of their work which have survived were written by the Archpoet, a cleric attached to Frederick Barbarossa's court, and the Primate, a canon of the cathedral at Orleans.[190] An objective evaluation shows there was a "devotion to the traditional faith of the middle ages"[191] by the writers of secular Latin poetry, as well as by the writers of sacred literature.

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[189]"Carmina Burana," No. 42, stanzas 2 and 3, in Jackson, Literature of the Middle Ages, p. 230.

[190]Norman F. Cantor, Medieval History (London: The Macmillan Company, 1971), p. 376.

[191]Ibid.

In the same way, when Heinrich von Morungen wrote in the last decade of the twelfth century he was drawing "on the same linguistic sources" as the hymns in praise of the Virgin.[192] The following excerpt from one of his minnesang brings to mind similar passages in Dante's masterpiece written nearly a century later.

> Love, who brings increase of joy to all the world, see, she brought my lady to me in a dream as I lay asleep and I was lost in the contemplation of my greatest joy. I saw her wonderful qualities, her bright image, beautiful beyond those of all other women.[193]

The twelfth century courtly love poetry of Provence, which revered womanhood, also used the Mother of God as a symbol for all that was most idealized. But there were also references to the "Lady" in less than reverent terms with connotations that were totally secular and presenting a very thin poetical veneer over erotic implication.[194] In most instances the lady is the "patroness" while the poet is her servant or liege man. In a few poems, however, in a complete turn-about male names are used which accentuate the concept of filial love and service. The new literary forms presented love in all its myriad variations: unrequited, fulfilled, illicit, idealized, parodied--all according to the mood of the individual poet.

For the purpose of this paper it is important to recognize that within this multiplicity love was the one universal theme, and it was also

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[192]Jackson, Literature of the Middle Ages, p. 220.

[193]Heinrich von Morungen, "Minnelied," strophe 2, in Jackson, Literature of the Middle Ages, p. 260.

[194]Raymond Gay-Crosier, Religious Elements in the Secular Lyrics of the Troubadors, Studies in the Romance Languages and Literature Series, No. 111 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Caroline Press, 1971), pp. 37-43.

used to illustrate the concepts of opposites. Although every age presents a certain ambivalence, the High Middle Ages does offer many examples of contrasts. For instance (and illustrative of "inner movement"), was the intensive search for intellectual truth which was conducted during this period, at the same time that there was complete acceptance of "other worldly" manifestations--which could not be "proven" by a logical, rational approach. The secular verse of the Archpoet and the Primate, written in a cynical parody of scriptural style, was in direct contrast to the spiritual writings of many ecclesiastics, including Saint Bernard and Saint Thomas.

Similarly, the rational, logical method of the Scholastics was in total juxtaposition to Joachim's dependence on mystical numbers, their interpretation and their relation to Christian eschatology. The "desperate and hysterical quality" of the flagellants which came towards the end of the period we are researching was due, in some part, to the prophecies of Joachim who placed the year 1260 as the time when the Third Age would reach its fulfillment.[195] The activities of the flagellants in the middle of the thirteenth century--their rituals, songs, processions and prophecies--were the antithesis of the intellectual activity at the University of Paris, where the debates and discourses accompanied the "Christianizing" of Aristotle.

Illustrative of "outer movement" was the restless, mobile group whose ranks included intellectuals, artisans and peasants. Their watchword was poverty, and it was this virtue which gave any semblance of unity to the motley band. Priests, who were opposed to the worldliness and pomp of the Church, as well as burgesses and the truly poor became "holy

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[195]Cohn, Millennium, p. 126.

beggars" moving from town to town preaching and practicing forms of heresy. We know that the vow taken by all monks since the time of Saint Benedict had been the renunciation of all that was worldly. In the middle of the twelfth century this ideal was embraced by a segment of the laity as well. When Peter Waldo founded the Order, the Poor Men of Lyons in 1177, his basic purpose (as well as that of his followers) was to live in apostolic poverty. By wandering about the country preaching a stern morality and spiritual fellowship they hoped for a return to greater asceticism than was then being practiced by many members of the clergy. At issue, however, was the fact that Waldo was not an ordained priest . Although he sought permission from the pope to preach (like Saint Francis), this was refused. When the group continued to preach with great enthusiasm the pope condemned them as heretics; the Waldensians were then persecuted and some of the followers moved into areas of real heresy.[196]

The greatest manifestation of heresy which occurred in the period we are researching, however, was the rapid advancement in western Europe of the beliefs of the Cathari, the "perfected ones." The basis of their teachings was to be found in the pagan Mani who advocated a dualistic doctrine of two Gods--the God of Good and the God of Evil. According to their understanding, the God of the Roman Catholics was the God of Evil, and the pope and clergy were the servants of the devil. By their rejection of the world--as the creation of Satan--they necessarily rejected Christ's incarnation in an imperfect world.[197] The movement which originally started in Asia Minor moved into Bulgaria, where its members were called

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[196]Heer, Medieval World, pp. 162-63.

[197]Ibid., pp. 164-66.

Bogomils. It was in Provence that the movement flourished, however, and the sect was known by the term, Albigensians, because of the large number concentrated in the region of Albi in southern France.

For many years the Church conducted preaching campaigns against their doctrines without success. After the murder of the papal legate in southern France Innocent III sent out a call to arms to overcome the threat of the movement to the Church. Unfortunately, the crusade turned into a war where the baronial might of northern France was pitted against the culture and wealth of Provence; and it was "a distinct nationality, that of Languedoc, with its brilliant, lawless, early-ripening civilization, which received its death blow."[198]

From the foregoing incidents we can recognize to what extent the secular and ecclesiastic environment was intertwined during the apogee of the High Middle Ages. Furthermore, we have seen illustrations of the disunity which took place; yet always these influences were subordinate to the power of the Church during this period.

## The Shield of Protection

In the early Middle Ages there was a threefold division of society which is aptly expressed in the following lines from a thirteenth century poem, Miserere:

> The labour of the clerk is to pray to God, of the knight to do justice, and the labourer finds their bread. One provides food, one prays and one defends. In the field, the town and the church these three help each other with their services in a well-ordered scheme.[199]

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[198]Previté-Orton, Outlines of Medieval History, p. 264.

[199]Joan Evans, Life in Medieval France (London: Phaidon Press, 1957), p. 16.

By the period 1140-1270, however, the divisions were not quite so sharply defined. As we have seen from the portion on movement, the merchant class, which was to form the nucleus of the Third Estate in France in the next century, was already growing in numbers. While centralization continued under Louis IX and local administration was in the hands of bailiffs and stewards, the people could approach the monarch with their problems. By the end of 1270, at the king's death, no part of the kingdom was without some tie to the royal government, and respect for its power and affection for Louis was great indeed. Interestingly, however, at this time southwest France was controlled, in fact, by the king of England.

In that country, under the ineffectual Henry III, the situation was somewhat different. In addition to the direct vassals (the great nobles and clergy) who continued to meet with the king when called, Henry also began to summon representatives from the wealthier townsmen--the burgesses, and also the most influential gentlemen--known as knights of the shires. For the first time the latter two groups had become influential enough to be useful to the king on matters regarding taxation and local government. It was not until the fourteenth century that the practice of summoning all four groups at the same time and in the same place became the normal procedure.[200] These assemblies were the beginnings of English Parliament before they gradually subdivided into the two Houses of Lords and Commons.

It is during the latter part of the High Middle Ages that we see the beginning of the end of feudalism in England and France. But its

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[200]Cantor, Medieval History, p. 481.

cause lay deep in men's consciousness and its effects were not so easily overcome. The original basis of feudalism had been the banding together of nobles and knights as the protectors and defenders of society. Although it developed differently in certain areas there was always the concept of homage in which a vassal placed himself under the protection of his lord, and in return made a vow to serve him. The practice of self-sufficiency was not possible in the Early Middle Ages, and there was a need to turn to someone or something outside of oneself for security.

The Church and feudal noble assumed this role of protector, although protection took many forms in secular life. Like children who are afraid of the dark and soothed by the voice and presence of a parent, medieval man constantly needed the assurance of the Holy Word to guide him through the days of darkness until he experienced the light of the next world. Sometimes, as in the case of children, a favorite toy becomes the substitue for the mother and father; we see this practice manifested in the charms and amulets which were part of the magical practices so prevalent in this era and part of the shadowy cults which held sway outside of the Church, particularly in this period.

There was much ground for this aspect of medieval life. The warrior had been legendized in song and story, and yet women lived for endless periods without their protection while they were away--at the Crusades or in some other form of service. The men, too, went to fight the unknown in the form of the infidel and in unfamiliar terrain. Disease and famine could strike at any time, and above all there was the overriding fear of hell, a very real place which would claim those faithless to the practice and teachings of the Church.

By the last half of the twelfth century a class of freemen was appearing both as landholders and townsmen. Although they were not bound

directly in the form of service, the concept of placing oneself under another's protection continued as a part of the medieval way of life. Once again, in holistic expression we see this idea mirrored in both outer and inner activities, in secular and ecclesiastic life.

The serf had been used to an extremely restricted existence; now urban life afforded a much freer environment. This climate also bred a certain laxity and disorder that resulted in violence which was magnified by the numbers of people living closely together in small areas. With the renaissance of trade, and the number of commercial centers which resulted, many communities were moved to obtain their own charters. The town, as a corporation with a charter, provided legal and sometimes even military protection for its members--although civil liberties varied from one town to another according to the provisions of the charter.[201]

As an enterprise which afforded protection, mutual aid, and opportunity for its members the medieval guild played a very important part in the life of that period. There were two types in the High Middle Ages: the Merchant Guild was comprised of compulsory membership of all city burghers. Through the practice of regulating prices, quality of workmanship, and wages, the small merchant was protected and a home market was provided against outsiders. The Craft Guild, on the other hand, was composed of artisans of certain trades or crafts, as exclusive bodies limited to skilled trades. Apprenticed men and women were taught their trades under the watchful eye of their master who provided security as well as the opportunity of learning a skill. By the thirteenth century "the new trade-gilds which included all of a trade in any given town" had replaced

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[201]Heer, Medieval World, pp. 259-262.

the Merchant Guild.[202] Guilds acted as protectors in every conceivable manner:

> If a man fell ill, guild brethren were designated to look after him. If he grew needy or infirm they were required to go visit him regularly bringing food and clothing purchased out of guild profits. When he died, all guildmen had to pray for his soul. Guild funds paid his debts, bailed him out of jail, dowered his daughter, financed his funeral and supported his widow.[203]

The merchants were actually a small minority and scorned by both the nobles and the clergy in the twelfth century. By the thirteenth century, however, Church attitudes are reflected in Thomas Aquinas' exhortation to hold to the "just price" which allowed the seller just enough to keep himself and family in reasonable comfort.[204] This policy of the just price also provided protection against one of the members forcing another out of business. With the emphasis on common good, guild policy did not, however, encourage personal competition.

Early scholastic guilds of masters and students, products of an instinct for association, came into existence spontaneously and "swept like a great wave over the towns of Europe in the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries."[205] Following a similar need for strength of unification, the medieval university was formed to provide mutual protection against townspeople and also to insure that the clerics came under canon, and not secular, law. As mentioned, the concept of feudalism differed in various areas. There was also a distinction in the policies of the nor-

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[202]Previté Orton, Outlines of Medieval History, pp. 402-03.

[203]Anne Fremantle, Age of Faith (New York: Time Incorporated, 1956), p. 76.

[204]The Pocket Aquinas, pp. 223-24.

[205]Hastings Rashdall, The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages, 3 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1895; new ed. 1936, edited by F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden), I: 15.

thern and southern European universities. At Paris the Masters controlled the corporation, whereas Bologna supplied the model for the universities of students.

Following the analogy of the guild, each student attached himself to a professor, rather like an apprentice, and worked under him. As "journeymen," the bachelors with a limited license were permitted to teach certain elementary courses; the Master of Arts was accepted as a guarantee of proficiency. It is in medieval university life that we witness that curious blend of ecclesiastic and secular life which to us, who have been exposed to the Puritan ethic, is interesting indeed. The students, although professed clerics, were engaged in the most secular of pursuits and behavior that was oftimes bawdy. And although the Masters' guilds ostensibly were to set a code of behavior for the students they often made little real effort to enforce the code and punish offenders.

An interesting aspect of the idea of protection, and one that extended into commercial life, was the belief that a market "must be held under the protection of God, to ensure fair trading and spiritual protection."[206] And what better time to hold it than on the Lord's Day when everyone would come to the town for worship services? The market might be in the churchyard, in the nave itself, or at least in the shadow of the market cross, which was the symbol of the Church and the power it afforded. There was an unshakable belief that the very ground itself around a church--and extending out for 40 pages--was hallowed and provided refuge.[207] This gave rise to the practice that sanctuary could be sought within the confines of church, cathedral, or monastery.

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[206]E. F. Lincoln, The Medieval Legacy (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1961), p. 147.

[207]Erickson, Medieval Vision, p. 87.

Travel was extremely hazardous in the High Middle Ages, and the wayfarer would strive to reach the safety of the enclosed town before nightfall. Curfews were enforced, and gates providing entry into the walled cities were shut at eventide. Outside, in the countryside, castles built in that era retained high curtained walls with lofty towers and encircling moat for added fortification.[208] Wayfarers who had to be on the road carried divine or Biblical names to ward off evil --often written on a slip of paper sewn in the lining of their clothes.[209]

Pilgrims particularly needed protection on their way to Jerusalem, and Military Orders, which incorporated obligations of both monk and knight, were formed. The Knights Hospitaller of St. John of Jerusalem, founded in 1113, maintained a hospital for sick pilgrims but were also pledged to defend Jerusalem with the sword, if necessary. The Poor Brothers of the Temple of Jerusalem (the Templars), formed in 1118 also for the defence of pilgrims, started as a very austere institution. After the crusades were over, however, their original purpose was lost. They were accused of acquiring lands, wealth, and power to such an extent that they were brought to trial--often giving testimony under torture.[210] The Order was dissolved in 1312, their lands given to the Knights Hospitallers and their wealth in France was bestowed upon Philip IV, who was primarily responsible for their destruction.

Another way in which the sick received protection was in the provisions made for lepers. It was generally thought that the crusaders

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[208]Fletcher, History, p. 367.

[209]Erickson, Medieval Vision, p. 20.

[210]Anne Gilmour-Bryson, "Edition of a Medieval Manuscript with the Help of the Computer, Purpose, Method, Result," lecture given at the Ohio Conference on Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies III, October 11, 1976.

brought the disease into Europe, and in fact it was most virulent during that period; however, the general living conditions contributed greatly to its spread. The Knights of St. Lazare of Jerusalem was one of several orders which were founded to care for the afflicted.[211] In return for the gift of living quarters, clothes, food, and their own livestock, the lepers had certain chores to do; they were also required to participate in religious observances. We must understand that this was an instance of true sanctuary. It was not mandatory isolation for the prevention of the spread of the disease but a charitable privilege which could be taken away if the rules were violated. The other alternative was being returned to the outside world and reduced to a life of begging. This was a hazardous existence with severe restrictions. For instance, at Mons lepers could enter the city only on high Church holidays; whereas at Montdidier they were not permitted to enter during the summer--obviously, as an attempt at sanitary precaution.[212]

A less tangible manifestation of the idea of protection but just as efficacious, according to the understanding of medieval man, was the belief in the all-powerful hierarchy of the saints. A veritable lore existed which owed something to the teachings of the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and his Celestial Intelligences. No situation was too impossible or cause too unworthy to stand within the aura of beneficence which the saint imparted.

There were also national patron saints. In particular France's Saint Denis, "guiding, protecting and promoting the well-being of the

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[211]Howell H. Gwin, Jr., "Life in the Medieval Leprosary," Studies in Medieval Culture 5 (1974): 225.

[212]Ibid., p. 230.

monarchy, was a monastic theme from the ninth century onward."[213] Dependence on the "other" was so great that:

> In every momentous event of his life, in every need, for the curing of his ills and the fruitfulness of his land and the weal of his beasts, the medieval Everyman turned to some special saint for aid. Saint Margaret protected his wife in childbirth, Saint Genevieve cured the burning sickness, Saint Blaise the ills of the throat. Saint Cornelius guarded his oxen, Saint Gall his hens, Saint Medard his vines.[214]

The name of Jesus, associated with "the Word" in the book of John, was uttered with both reverence and awe as the Savior, the Son of God who walked as man. Dionysius instructed that by "calling, then, upon Jesus, the Light of the Father, the Real, the True," man would be aided and uplifted.[215] However, it was Mary above all others who was particularly venerated in this age. She was all-understanding, the most humane, and the intercessor between humanity and her Son. In the High Middle Ages, Mary, the Queen of Heaven, was also the symbol for the Church; she was both Mother and the Bride of Christ.[216] All aspects of her earthly life and lineage became opportunities for works of art dedicated to her, which we have seen grew into the cult of Maryology in the thirteenth century.

All things participated in the all-encompassing need to be brought under the canopy of Divine intercession. The very stones of the churchyard were thought to have special properties and were often carried away to serve as a talisman. It was also believed that certain gems provided

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[213]Spiegel, "Cult," p. 43.

[214]Voragine, Golden Legend, p. ix.

[215]Dionysius, Celestial Hierarchies, p. 21.

[216]Watts, Myth and Ritual, p. 104.

beneficence. Both Albertus Magnus, the teacher of Thomas Aquinas, and Mathew Paris, the foremost chronicler of this period, wrote treatises on the healing properties of stones.[217] From the stones beneath his feet to the angelic beings who peopled the starry heavens above him medieval man was surrounded by tokens of protection which became his shield against all adversity.

## The Way of Salvation

The early Christians lived in almost daily anticipation of the Second Advent and the end of the world. As the years passed and the event did not materialize "the expectancy which had been directed toward it was gradually shifted to the event of physical death,"[218] and by the Middle Ages man had become fearful of the possibility of sudden death. Furthermore, questions were being asked regarding the origin of Evil, atonement, and expiation of sin to such a degree that it has been remarked that "salvation was the one practical study of the Middle Ages."[219]

There is a practice in certain denominations of the Christian faith in which Godparents are chosen by the mother and father at the baptism of a child to provide spiritual teaching in the absence or stead of the parents. The Church adopted this role, and the ecclesiastics took unto themselves the responsibility of training the "children of Christendom" in "the way in which they should go." Very few of us have escaped the wistful yearning of a child who so wants to be good but whose sheer youthful energy seems to lead him down willful and excessive paths. Chastise-

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[217]Erickson, Medieval Vision, p. 89.

[218]Watts, Myth and Ritual, p. 207.

[219]"Medieval Christendom VII, The Gothic Summation," p. 214.

ment and restraint seem to be the only means for restoring order. In so doing, however, the youngster becomes overly self-conscious of his wrongdoing, and guilt begins to weigh heavily under extreme forms of domination.

This is the situation which existed in the Middle Ages. By the middle of the twelfth century, Everyman's guilt was bearing down to such a degree that there was a constant preoccupation with the themes of judgment, doom, the activities of penance, and the agonies of self-persecution. This environment was to persist until the advent of Florentine humanism, although the history of ideas reveals that such negative attitudes exist in various forms and in related degrees in all areas of human thought today. Perhaps this best of all explains the stream of raffish and ribald behavior, or the forms of diversity which existed within the environment of unity. It was a though a safety valve was needed to prevent mass neuroses.

There has always been a recognizable gap between Christian ideals and practice, but there was also a special breed of men who sprang up in this era. They recognized the need for reform, and they acted primarily in the interest of the spiritual well-being of all. In the tenth century reform had been instituted in the Cluniac Order; this attempt failed to hold to the ideal of its founder--a situation which occurs with monotonous regularity.

Bernard of Clairvaux, the real founder of the Cistercian Order, who lived until 1153, was a giant of a man who exhibited an awesome range of qualities and was most active in his guise of Godparent and reformer. Jacobus deemed him "second to none in knowledge" and exemplary in all

Christian virtues.[220] As we have mentioned, he was a mystic, and the marvellous imagery of the Bride and Bridegroom which he used in his writings had a profound impact on western mysticism in the centuries to come. According to his understanding love of God outweighed all other virtues and was by far superior to knowledge. He states:

> Love is the fountain of life, and the soul which does not drink from it cannot be said to live. But how could it drink if it were far from this fountain, this love, which is its God?
>
> It follows then that he who loves God is with God according to the measure of his love. Insofar as he fails to love, to that extent he is yet in exile.[221]

It was this belief which caused him to charge Abelard with heresy at Sens in 1140, claiming that Abelard was guilty of a shameless curiosity in matters ecclesiastic. Furthermore, Abelard's elevation of womanhood was in direct contrast to the Church's position and a bad example to set before impressionable young monks and clerics. His banishment to the Abbey of Cluny and the burning of his books was the final act of injustice in Abelard's life.[222]

Of course, Bernard's action was motivated by a desire to preserve the sanctity of faith without calling on the processes of dialectic reasoning. It was the same spirit which prompted him to oppose the patronage of learning and luxury which was established by the Cluniac Order under Peter the Venerable, who was also the friend and champion of Abelard. Bernard clearly states his position in the following excerpts from his

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[220]Voragine, Legend, p. 477.

[221]Saint Bernard de Clairvaux, "Monastic Obligations and Abbatial Authority: St. Bernard's Book on Precept and Dispensation," trans. Conrad Greenia, Treatises I, Cistercian Father's Series 1 (Spencer, Mass. Cistercian Publication, 1970), p. 149.

[222]Heer, Medieval World, pp. 83-87.

Apologia to the Abbot William of St. Thierry:

> The monastic Order was the first order in the Church, it was out of it that the Church developed. In all the earth there was nothing more like the angelic orders, nothing closer to the heavenly Jerusalem, our mother, because of the beauty of its chastity and the fervor of its love. The Apostles were its moderators, and its members were those whom Paul often calls "the saints." It was their practice to keep nothing as private property, for, as it is written, 'distribution was made to each as he had need.' . . . Do you think they wore silks and satins, and rode on mules worth two hundred gold pieces? Do you think their beds had catskin coverlets and many-colored quilts, if distribution was made only as any had need? . . . If I am not mistaken, I have seen an abbot with sixty horse and more in his retinue. If you saw him ride by you would think he were the Lord of the Manor, or a provincial governor, instead of a monastic father and shepherd of souls. Orders are given for tablecloths and cups and dishes and candle-sticks to be loaded up. . . . Do you think a candle won't burn unless it be mounted on your own silver or gold candle-stick?
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> These are only small things; I am coming to things of greater moment. . . . I shall say nothing about the soaring heights and extravagant lengths and unnecessary widths of the churches, nothing about their expensive decorations and their novel images, which catch the attention of those who go in to pray, and dry up their devotion. . . . Therefore, I ask you, can it be our own devotion we are trying to excite with such display, or is the purpose of it to win the admiration of fools and the offerings of simple folk?[223]

From the above we are able to obtain a glimpse of the abhorrence with which Bernard regarded opulence and secular comfort. His strength of purpose had also incited such religious fervor as to spur Louis VII and Conrad III to return to the east on the ill-fated Second Crusade in 1147.[224] It was also St. Bernard who contributed to Louis VII's decision to rid himself of the "she devil," Eleanor of Aquitaine,[225] there-

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[223]Saint Bernard de Clairvaux, "Cistercians and Cluniacs: St. Bernard's Apologia to Abbot William," trans. Michael Casey, Treatises I, pp. 59-60, 62-64.

[224]"Medieval Christendom VII, The Gothic Summation," p. 194.

[225]Milestones of History, 2: The Fires of Faith, ed. Friedrich Heer (New York: Newsweek Books, 1973), p. 135.

by paving the way for her subsequent marriage to Henry II and the transfer of her vast estates to the English crown. The foregoing instances are cited to show to what extent the Church, in the guise of a contemplative-churchman-diplomat, could wield power over kings, ecclesiastics, and laity alike.

We have mentioned that the concept of feudalism required both protection and service, and it is the latter which afforded a rewarding means of salvation. It was Mary, the Mother of all, who provided an opportunity for each to serve in the manner of individual response. There was also an opportunity to be perpetually in the service of her Son. Jesus the Redeemer is able to lift men up from their unvirtuous lives and, through His intercession, the prayers of the faithful will be heard by the Father.

According to Peter the Venerable prayer "was the special good which repelled all evils."[226] It was in this spirit that monks in certain orders spent each day in contemplative prayer, as well as reading and the dedication of the work of their hands. Believing that the material world was sinful, the orders and individual recluses took the responsibility to maintain a holy environment. The hourly reciting of the Holy Offices, by their very continuum, conquered the passage of time. The Presence of Christ, His Mother, and the Saints were, therefore, released from the historical past and continued as a living force for good. The participant lived by natural time; he related to the event rather than the passing of the sun across the dial of the horologium, and "by giving himself up to the fulfillment of actions became oriented towards

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[226]Mayr-Harting, "Twelfth-Century Recluse," p. 350.

the eternal God."[227]

It was in the outer activity of the crusades that the opportunity for a double act of service was afforded: above all it was a war of arms against infidel flesh and blood, but it also carried with it the added implication of conflict against vice and demon. In effect it became a

> Divinely ordained war, a service to the church and also the sum of individual acts of self renewal in taking up the cross, normal functions of knighthood being engaged at a higher level with its conventions of virtue, values and rewards, transcended in the service of Christ.[228]

In the true spirit of the High Middle Ages, which embraced opposites within the concept of unity, we can turn to the teachings of Saint Francis who presented a new image of God. His message was one of peace, joy, and love as opposed to judgment and fear. He portrayed Christ as the servant of all instead of requiring penance and service. He further taught: "Therefore, I desire that we pray unto God that he may make us love with all our hearts this noble treasure of holy poverty that has God for its servitor."[229]

His message that all men are brothers was disturbingly innovative, and his ideals "bore some striking similarities to the attitudes of the Waldensian heretics,"[230] in that he advocated a return to apostolic simplicity. However, Francis supported the Church's position that only priests could perform the service of Holy Eucharist which made salvation

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[227]Jean Leclercq, "Experience and Interpretation of Time in the Early Middle Ages," Studies in Medieval Culture, 4 (1974): 19.

[228]E. O. Blake, "Formation of the 'Crusade Idea'," Journal of Ecclesiastical History 21 (1970): 31.

[229]Little Flowers of St. Francis, p. 30.

[230]Cantor, Medieval History, p. 458.

possible. Thus his Order posed no threat to the Church. Unfortunately, the very unity which he sought within his followers through the practice of poverty and simplicity of life, became adulterated by some of the brothers who became divided into two groups. Re-formed the Franciscans became, and have continued as a living force for good, perpetuating the environment of salvation and grace which Saint Francis sought to bring into manifestation.

Although Saint Thomas, the Angelic Doctor, and Saint Bonaventura, the Seraphic Doctor, shared a common subject as well as a common vocabulary they differed in method. They were, however, both motivated by a common desire to understand more perfectly, and thereby contemplate more fully, the nature of God. With the passing of these great participators in the holy drama of the High Middle Ages we see a gradual disintegration of the marvellous unity which Aquinas worked so diligently to maintain in the world of flux and change.

While discussions in the latter part of the thirteenth century were still carried on within the universal Catholic Church, the time was looming when Christendom would have to endure the experience of complete duality. The processes of innovative thought moved men away from an atmosphere of unity to one directed toward change, schism and ultimately the Reformation. These events will be touched on briefly in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER V

## THE BREAKDOWN OF UNITY

### Transition to Individuality

In the first part of this paper William Blake's three stages of man's pilgrimage were outlined as follows. The initial phase is the integrated state of Innocence; of necessity the move is made into the separated state of Experience; and finally, it is possible to evaluate what has gone before, and either move forward into what might be termed a state of "examined innocence" where unity is once again the total expression--or to regress into a further divided state. The qualities of newness, of beginning, and of renaissance (all identifiable with the state of innocence) have been stressed in this study, together with the concept of unity. Also present is the spirit of childhood. The following lines from William Wordsworth help to present this image more clearly.

> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home:
> Heaven lies about us in our infancy![231]

We have seen that the year 1140 marked the advent of the perfected new architecture, which has since been termed Gothic. We have also established that there was a renaissance of learning in the mid-twelfth century which drew on hitherto untapped sources of Arabic and Greek learning.

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[231]William Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," in Perkins, Romantic Writers, p. 279.

These intellectual streams originated in the fountainhead of Aristotelian teachings and culminated in the Christianizing of Aristotle. Accompanying this new corpus of knowledge was the application of discursive reasoning as a method for providing answers to metaphysical questions. The Christian mystical-intellectuals, through the use of numbers, diagrams and symbols, also provided a new method for the attainment of contemplative union. At the same time, the birth of the idealization of Mary as the perfect Lady took place.

Innovative expression was found in every art form; in music the newly composed rhythmic additions to Gregorian Chant, as well as secular part-songs, developed to a high degree. Every aspect of cathedral embellishment, from the incomparable stained-glass windows to intricate sculpture and carvings, was practiced; this age also saw the advent of new secular literary forms--both in the vernacular as well as Latin. The rise of universities as centers of learning corresponded to the growth in urban centers of trade, and the formation of craft guilds. During the 130 year period being researched lay orders were formed, as well as the new ecclesiastic orders of Dominicans and Franciscans.

We have also shown that within this conglomerate was a vast spectrum of opposites wherein warring crusader, heretic, peasant, lord, satirical poet, ecclesiastic, king, emperor, and pope were all touched by a common denominator--holy Mother Church. The influence of the Christian Church of this period provided the background for a multitudinous activity and touched the lives of the majority of the participants.

The consummate expression of unity, of course, was the thought of Thomas Aquinas. We are told that Guglielmo da Tocco, "the earliest and most reliable biographer of the saint" and who was with him at Naples

during the saint's last years, wrote:

> In his lectures he propounded new theses, and discovered a new manner of proof, bringing forward new reasons, so that no one who heard him teaching these new doctrines and settling doubts by these new reasons could doubt that God was illuminating him with a new light, that he to whom new inspiration was given should not hesitate to teach and write new things.[232]

We have seen that the stonemason and woodcarver of the thirteenth century decorated the interior of the cathedral with a profusion of flowers and leaves suggestive of summertime. Specifically "the years between 1250 and 1270 form the brief high summer, the brightest moment of the golden age of medieval philosophy and theology."[233] From that time the unity of the High Middle Ages began to wane. Interestingly, by the fifteenth century, the imagery of autumnal flora, with thistles replacing flowers, would be used in cathedral decoration.

So innovative was Aquinas' synthesis of faith and reason that his teachings came under attack on several occasions from 1265.[234] His attempts to resolve the tenets of Aristotle with the dogma of the Augustinian-Platonic attitude of the ecclesiastics were also censured by the Church. At first these were just ripples on the surface, for Thomas was recalled to the University of Paris to teach again for a second professorate from 1269-1272. This was an honor indeed. He was considered the Church's most competent scholar and as such was able to provide intellectual as well as spiritual ballast--for the ecclesiastical vessel was soon to enter troubled waters.

In 1277 (that is, three years after Thomas' death) about twenty of his theses were condemned at Paris by Tempier, the Bishop of Paris, to-

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[232]"Acta Sanctorum," March I 7, Vita S. Thomae, n.15, in Knowles Evolution, p. 262.

[233]Knowles, Evolution, p. 291.

[234]Heer, Medieval World, p. 217.

gether with a panel of conservative theologians, although the Angelic Doctor was not mentioned by name.[235] The English Dominican Robert Kilwardby, Archbishop of Canterbury, also supported the condemnation. In 1284 the decree was reiterated at Oxford by the new Archbishop, John Pecham, a Franciscan.[236] Although no real harm was done to Aquinas' system of thought, which continued to have supporters, there appeared a clear division in the thinking of the Churchmen. For one thing there was definitely a shift in emphasis away from the logical, reasoning approach of the Scholastics.

The real problem, however, centered around the age-old controversy of whether Absolute Reality was to be found in individual things or only in the concepts, or ideas which exist in addition to, and distinct from the world of particular objects. One who held the latter view was called a Realist. The Nominalist on the other hand believed that there is nothing common between the members of a species or between individual things possessing the same qualities. Each individual, therefore, is an entirely separate isolated entity.[237]

As we have already seen, Abelard came to terms with this question in his own typically brilliant fashion. In the latter quarter of the thirteenth century, however, the controversy took on added dimensions because of the debates which had ensued over the introduction of Aristotelian thought. Henry of Ghent, one of the theologians on the panel of 1277 (and a forerunner of the philosophy which was prevalent in the Late Middle Ages), resolved it in this manner. He stated that an existent

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[235]Gilson, Christian Philosophy, pp. 405-08, 728 n.52.

[236]Knowles, Evolution, pp. 297-99.

[237]Gordon Leff, William of Ockham (Manchester: University Press, 1975, pp. 239-40.

being is both a unity in itself and yet distinct from everything else. He further stated that "sincere or pure truth" cannot be known through the senses--that is, through the art of rationalization.[238]

Building on this premise, John Duns Scotus (1266-1308) stressed the Absolute freedom and Omnipotence of God. This decreased the area of what could be proven by natural reason to be necessary attributes of Divine Being. In spite of being a Franciscan Friar (that is, an Augustinian), he did not affirm the belief that Platonic Ideas are identical with Divine Essence. Nevertheless, because of his acceptance of Universal concepts, which he considered secondary to God, he is considered a Realist.[239]

A wedge had been inserted between conservative and radical thought. The gap was widened by William of Ockham (c.1300-1350) who most strongly broke down the medieval synthesis. Like Duns Scotus he was an Oxford Franciscan friar; both proclaimed their orthodoxy as well as a "common desire to overcome the obstacle raised against Christianity by the philosophical necessitarianism of Aristotle."[240] But there the similarity ends, although in the history of radical thought Scotus is considered to be a precursor of Ockham.

Whereas John Duns affirmed the idea of complete freedom of the Will of God to create the essences from which all matter is formed, William of Ockham's God is the Almighty Father "who obeys nothing, not even Ideas."[241]

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[238]Knowles, Evolution, pp. 296-97, 302.

[239]Gilson, History, pp. 461-62; Knowles, Evolution, pp. 305-06.

[240]Gilson, History, pp. 488-97.

[241]Ibid., p. 498.

He shifted emphasis from reason to faith by concluding that God's Will is completely beyond reason. Although Augustine and Anselm had placed faith first, they assumed that, as God's Will would be "reasonable," there should be no conflict between faith and reason. In contrast, Ockham affirmed that Divine Will was inscrutable and, therefore, could even be unreasonable. In other words Ockham suppressed the Universals and subsequently the Platonic-Christian heritage of Saint Augustine on which the Medieval Church stood.

In the fourteenth century a series of events caused a wave of popular discontent hitherto not experienced by the Church. These included the movement of the Papacy from Rome to Avignon and the election of a Frenchman as Pope Clement V. This seventy-two year period in Church history (1305-1377) is known as the "Babylonian Captivity," so-called after the long exile of the ancient Jews in Babylon. This period was followed by the election of Urban VII in an atmosphere of mob violence, the subsequent election of the French cardinal Clement VII, and the Great Schism with its two popes which resulted in two papal courts from 1378 until Martin V was elected at the Council of Constance in 1417.[242]

At the same time as the Great Schism two movements for Church reform were instigated in England and Bohemia. John Wyclif (c.1328-1384) taught that the authority of the Bible was above that of Church tradition, priests, or pope. He also advocated that every man's salvation was based on his own faith and behavior. This removed responsibility from the person in authority--whether it was parish priest, the pope (or popes), and placed it with each individual. Lord, burgher, and peasant communed with God in spirit through a personal faith. Going even further, Wyclif attacked

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[242]Sidney Painter, A History of the Middle Ages, 284-1500 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954), pp. 401-16.

the value of the sacraments and the doctrine of transubstantiation. He also denied the validity of pilgrimage, the veneration of the saints, and the power of the clergy to grant absolution of sins. This last brought a response from the people who could personally observe many of the limitations of those who were "in charge" of their salvation. Moreover, he was disturbed by the fact that English gold and silver were flowing into the coffers of the French popes at Avignon. He wrote: "Christ taught holiness in the heart. Now a pope or prelate must have pomp."[243] His attitude was further heightened by a sense of patriotism against England's enemy in the Hundred Years War. Relying on the authority of the Bible, Wyclif made translations from Latin to the common tongue of the English people. Although this might very well be construed as a positive development, it is illustrative, nonetheless, of yet another break in the unity of the High Middle Ages.

John Hus (1369-1415), also a scholar and professor, led a similar movement for reform in Bohemia. In this instance, the accompanying patriotic feeling were directed against the German clergy who were in positions of authority in the Bohemian church.

Thus was the synthesis established by Saint Thomas Aquinas torn asunder and events leading to the Protestant Reformation set in motion. What originally started with a bridge of words--the art of rationalization, giving form to man's inner life and concerned with faith and belief towards an understanding of God--was now taken out and away into the world of individuals. Movement, change, and rebellion, which accompanied the breakdown of the old order, were experienced.

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[243]John Wyclif, "De Papa," Capitulum 7m, The English Works of Wyclif, ed. F. D. Matthew, Early English Text Society Original Series 74 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1880; reprint ed. Millwood, New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1973), p. 470.

## The Expression of Multiplicity

In order that William Blake's first state of Innocence be equated with the apogee of the High Middle Ages, it is necessary that the second stage of Experience apply to the subsequent periods. As the antithesis of integration and unity, this phase must needs portray division, separation and analytical fragmentation. Although this examination can be dealt with satisfactorily only in a further detailed study, nevertheless, in order to substantiate the initial stage of Innocence the following summary of events is presented.

What began as the "science" of theology became, in fact, two systems: theology, which incorporated the inviolate ideas of God, and philosophy, which allowed a greater freedom in which to become objective. In turn, Scholastic physics, a third division of natural science, came into being spawned by the earlier efforts of Roger Bacon (c.1214-1294). He termed this "the multiplication of the species."[244] In the fourteenth century, yet another partition was experienced with the growth of the medical school at Montpellier, where Arnold of Villanova (1235-1313) and Peter of Abano (1250-1320) made great progress in medicine.[245]

Similarly, the power of the Church at the apex of medieval hierarchy was forced to make room for an upstart rival--temporal power--and the growing strength of secular government, which further cast doubt on the acceptance of papal supremacy. National divisions and patriotic stirrings were experienced with the king's court and the papal court vying for allegiance.

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[244]E. Westacott, Roger Bacon in Life and Legend (London: Rockliff Publishing Corporation, 1953), p. 45.

[245]Singer, "Science," in Medieval Contributions, p. 145.

Although the Jubilee of 1300 proclaimed by Pope Boniface VIII to usher in the new centenary of Christ's birth was received with joyous response, the stability of the papacy was only a mask of thin veneer. Weakened by the self-assurance of Edward I of England and Philip IV of France and the taxing of the clergy to help finance their costly campaigns, the real conflict was between Philip and the aging Pope. Philip obtained the full support of the Estates-General and charged, among other things, that the Pope had been elected illegally. Boniface's seizure by the King's agents at Anagni (and which contributed to his subsequent death) came to symbolize the death of papal power.[246]

It is interesting to note in retrospect that the breakdown of unity started as a reaction to the effort of Aquinas to reconcile Aristotle's teachings with the medieval Christian viewpoint; and yet it was Aristotle who stressed the importance of the individual differentiation of things. In the Middle Ages man tended to think of himself first as a member of a group, and secondly as an individual. For instance the man who was admired the most was the perfectly holy monk or the perfectly chivalrous knight. In the Italian Renaissance, however, man thought of himself first as an individual--individualism was a characteristic of the period. The situation was not anti-Roman Catholic, but there was greater emphasis placed on secular activity than in medieval times. The man who was most admired was one who was well-rounded and good at as many things as possible. Every facet of human effort and thought was encountered in the spectrum of both experience and speculation.

There was a need to assess man's relation to this world and the next and to question upon what authority such assertions were made. These intro-

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[246]Painter, History of the Middle Ages, pp. 403-05.

spective inquiries were vital to the outward expression of the Renaissance art forms which originated in Italy and gradually spread northward. It was during the fifteenth century that many Greek manuscripts were translated. The Florentine Academy at Careggi provided the environment for Ficino to make available to the Western world for the first time the complete body of Plato's Dialogues.[247] It was there that the stream of Neoplatonic thought was continued and enlarged upon.

In the Northern part of Europe, however, there was a definite effort by certain churchmen, including Erasmus and Thomas More, to restore Christian unity in the sixteenth century. This effort which became known as "Christian Humanism," was not a return to the ideologies of the High Middle Ages but was based on ancient sources. There was a spirit of reformation abroad which unintentionally did much to pave the way for Luther's ultimate stand.

From that time on, Europe was plunged into continual upheaval and turmoil. This manifested as the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation. Bitter religious wars, lasting more than one hundred years, were experienced during which time the continent was divided into two armed camps. The European Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) and the English Civil War (1642-1645) illustrate to what extent the breakdown in medieval unity had progressed.

Radical philosophies were put forth by Descartes, whose "concept of God emphasized power and truth rather than love and goodness."[248] The Deity took on the aspects of an ingenious engineer who ushered in the

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[247]Kristeller, Renaissance Concepts, p. 93 n.24.

[248]Hugh Kearney, Science and Change 1500-1700 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971, p. 152.

mechanistic age. The empiricism of John Locke went hand in hand with the experiments of Galileo and Isaac Newton. It is important to acknowledge at this point that the process of experience is not a negative one per se. The very activity of analysis, observation, and radical experimentation provides an opportunity for reevaluation of outmoded theses. Further, if we accept Blake's model as valid, the move into the "contrary" second phase of Experience is a necessary requirement. Obviously, new approaches are not just confined to the integrated state of unity, but in the Experiential stage the search is conducted within a specialized, objective environment. Figuratively speaking, it is only when the lens of refraction points to a fragmented portion, which is mistakenly viewed as a whole, that error in judgment results.

In the eighteenth century efforts moved towards the ideal of the universality of all mankind based on a model of reason and justice. However the rulers most admired during that era were the Enlightened Despots who were in power from about 1740-1780. Towards the end of the century the cause of freedom, which had been spawned by many instances of oppression in France, manifested in revolution and the overthrow of the royal dynasty in that country.

In the last decade of the century the spirit of modern nationalism was born, particularly in France where former small mercenary armies were replaced by a nation in arms. Power lined up against power in the Napoleonic wars of the early nineteenth century when the whole of Europe was drawn into conflict. The awesome holocaust of modern warfare and the struggle for survival as an aftermath to war, has been experienced by every European in this century. The image is surely one of discord, separation and economic instability.

## Re-forming the Image

William Blake indicated "that Innocence had its 'Contrary State' which later he was to call 'Experience,'" and he further stated that without Contraries there could be no progression.[249] A question now arises which must be recognized. Is it possible that man is now in a position to effect a change towards a more unified situation which might be equated with "examined innocence"? Or is Western civilization drifting towards a greater degree of fragmentation? Obviously these queries are of such magnitude that only a superficial examination may be attempted in this paper. Accepting the premise that the third phase carries within it an evaluated image of the original state of Innocence, however, a cursory inquiry must be undertaken to support the theses of this study.

An attempt to answer questions--that is, to acquire knowledge--whether it be at the individual or historical level, begins with a search. There is a need to discover what is not presently known or to find that which had been lost to memory. According to Plato, all knowledge is but a part of recollection.[250] Whether or not this concept is wholly acceptable, we can agree that every individual has the ability to remember past events in varying degrees through the faculty of memory. From this recollection we are thus able to assess in retrospect our former actions and determine where we have acted in wisdom or error. The period from 1140-1270 has provided us with illustrations of innovation and renaissance, all introduced within a marked degree of unification--this we have equated with Blake's initial state of Innocence. Thus, by examining the apogee

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[249]Paley, Songs, p. 32.

[250]Plato, "The Meno," Dialogues, p. 379, 85d.

of the High Middle Ages we may recollect a more integrated period in Western civilization, and which might well offer some themes helpful to modern society.

It was mentioned at the beginning of the study that certain intrinsic themes would be examined. However, we must expect them to be relevant to the present--remembering John Morley's claim that the past has a bearing on the present. Thought precedes creative action; it is mobile and innovative--conjuring, molding, and building inner forms and images which are reflected in the exterior environment. We saw that the written word and the art forms of the High Middle Ages revealed an inter-relationship of stability and order. These brought into outer manifestation the inner world which was concerned with a fixed center, despite the constant movement at the periphery. The inner, restless activity of the mental realm as well as movement on the physical plane were constantly brought back to the center--to the Church. In contrast, there appears to be the lack of a focal point in today's environment--there is no unifying image. Everyone is intent on "doing his own thing" and expressing individuality, which is at times carried to the extremes of lawlessness and infringement of others' rights and property.

The strands of service and protection were identified as being fundamental to an overall picture of the High Middle Ages. These needs are certainly being met in today's programs with both government and private agencies doing much to help in areas of distress. The pitfall is that, in order to be successful, there must be an interdependency as in the medieval chain of being. When one faction demands without giving through the balancing aspect of service, the cohesive factor is broken and there is no stability.

Medieval man was also secure in the knowledge that his spiritual welfare was provided for. In the twentieth century the psychiatrist's office seems to have replaced the sanctuary of the cathedral, and personal neuroses that of the security of faith.

> In the present epoch a large and increasing number of Europeans have expressed a desire to return, as the hero of Arthur Koestler's recent novel The Age of Longing puts it, to 'the sheltering womb' of the religious tradition, or at least to something approximating it--partly for reasons of psychic health, partly because they suspect that it may be essential to 'civilization' to do so.[251]

The "big brother" type of protection afforded by government agencies, large corporations, and insurance companies may be economically satisfying, but it is a poor substitute for the security of faith which comes from a Source so deep that man recognizes the unity within himself and within all creation--as in the High Middle Ages. It is interesting, and quite revealing, to recognize that, in the twentieth century, man's need for protection is being filled by banks and large insurance companies. Mass media advertising sustains us with the comfort that their every act is to look after our interests; we can get under their large umbrella, share a "piece of the rock" with them, and above all know that we "are in good hands" when we place our trust in a particular company. Of course, there are many facets of protection reinforced through today's visual images. For instance, we are made aware that we need to be protected from the smell of each other; in contrast, medieval man traveled, loved, fought, prayed, and blasphemed within the closeness of his own humanity. No doubt, medieval man suffered from many individual fears at the varying levels of the hierarchy, but over-riding all others was his fear of the alienation of God (or ex-communication from the Church) and his preoccupation with salvation.[252]

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[251]Franklin L. Baumer, Religion and the Rise of Scepticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1960), p. 19.

[252]"Medieval Christendom VII, The Gothic Summation," p. 214.

As if to call forth once again the ideologies of the High Middle Ages, in the nineteenth century there was a resurgence of the "Gothic" style of building--both in secular as well as church architecture. In England this was incorrectly fostered by the belief that "Gothic was essentially an English style,"[253] and thus would be appropriate for the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament. Another erroneous concept identified this style with all that was dark and gloomy as exemplified in Byron's poem, Manfred. Concerned with themes of guilt and remorse, the work was "set in a Gothic gallery at midnight."[254]

Unfortunately, this perversion of the very essence of Gothic continues to the present time. Anything that is equated with gloom or despair or has overtones of occult horror and suspense is called "Gothic" in popular connotation. There are many instances, of course, where the term is correctly applied to recent architecture which manifests the essence of light. Of particular note is the chapel at Exeter College, Oxford designed by architect G. Gilbert Scott in 1859. It bears a remarkable resemblance to the style and dimensions of La Sainte Chapelle in Paris.

The Middle Ages had a special appeal for Victorian poets Sir Walter Scott and Alfred, Lord Tennyson, as well as poet-artist Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who founded the brotherhood, the Pre-Raphaelites. Although to a large degree their work was an idealization of the earlier period, it did focus attention on the need for a change in values from "the materialistic and scientific preoccupations of the period."[255] The imagery of

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[253]Kenneth Clark, The Gothic Revival (New York: Humanities Press, 1970), p. 114.

[254]George Gordon, Lord Byron, "Manfred," in Perkins, Romantic Writers, p. 811.

[255]Marina Henderson, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (London: Academy Editions, 1973, p. 6.

the Middle Ages is still with us today: scholarly groups specializing in this period come together at conferences, the "knightly tradition" is preserved in the Order of the Knights Templar in Geneva,[256] the vision of Camelot is presented from the stage, and "medieval style" fairs are popular--to list but a few. A modern slogan (no doubt unknowingly), "black is beautiful" echoes the thoughts of Bernard of Clairvaux, who digressed at length on those words.[257]

We can never go back to the days of childhood, but we can look back, remember, and evaluate. We cannot return to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, however, by donning medieval dress at banquets, painting pictures of courtly scenes, or composing poems in that earlier style. Instead, having experienced the extent of man's creativity; having been enamored of diverse forms of entertainment; having analyzed, separated, and fractured all of the vast storehouse of knowledge and thought; having scrutinized all branches of the arts and sciences; having charted all lands and seas on this globe and journeyed to the moon, we can now begin to evaluate and recognize the threads of unity which were so apparent in the High Middle Ages. We can now commence to reassemble the pieces like Picasso, who first created an image, then totally fractured it, and finally re-formed it into a new design of recreated wholeness.[258]

A modern scholar states that it is important that today's society recognizes the image it is projecting as "the power of the image may be

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[256]"Knights Templar Keep Chivalry," Tyler Courier-Times-Telegraph, 28 August 1977, sec. 2, p. 1.

[257]Saint Bernard, Song of Songs, II: 50-73 passim. Of interest is the fact that later Biblical translations do not use these exact words. The King James version states: "black but comely," and the RSV says: "very dark but comely."

[258]Pablo Picasso in Artists on Art, eds. and comps. Robert Goldwater and Marco Treves (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), pp. 419-20.

far greater than heretofore suspected." He further states that "since the image held is that most likely to come into being, it is prudent to choose the noblest."[259] If we identify with the themes of the High Middle Ages--of unity and an integral faith; of true service and high ideals; of pride of workmanship and involvement with order and beauty--it is possible to recreate the image of an integrated society.

Ultimately, this must include the eastern hemisphere. Otherwise separation would still result; especially insofar as Europe is faced with the breakdown of its culture and once more needs "spiritual or at least moral unity." Furthermore,

> We are conscious of the inadequacy of a purely humanist and occidental culture. We can no longer be satisfied with an aristocratic civilisation that finds its unity in external and superficial things and ignores the deeper needs of man's spiritual nature. And at the same time we no longer have the same confidence in the inborn superiority of Western civilisation and its right to dominate the world. We are conscious of the claims of the subject races and cultures, and we feel the need both for protection from the insurgent forces of the oriental world and for a closer contact with its spiritual traditions.[260]

There is a suggestion that this is already being done. Mass movements to discover the lost self are represented by ever-growing numbers of people turning to eastern forms of religion and meditation, which have many similarities to the Christian contemplative ideal.

Furthermore, urban centers are forming groups (reminiscent of the medieval guilds) for the preservation of their way of life and the protection of cities. The youth have spearheaded a return to agrarian types of life from which will come knowledge of natural cycles and hus-

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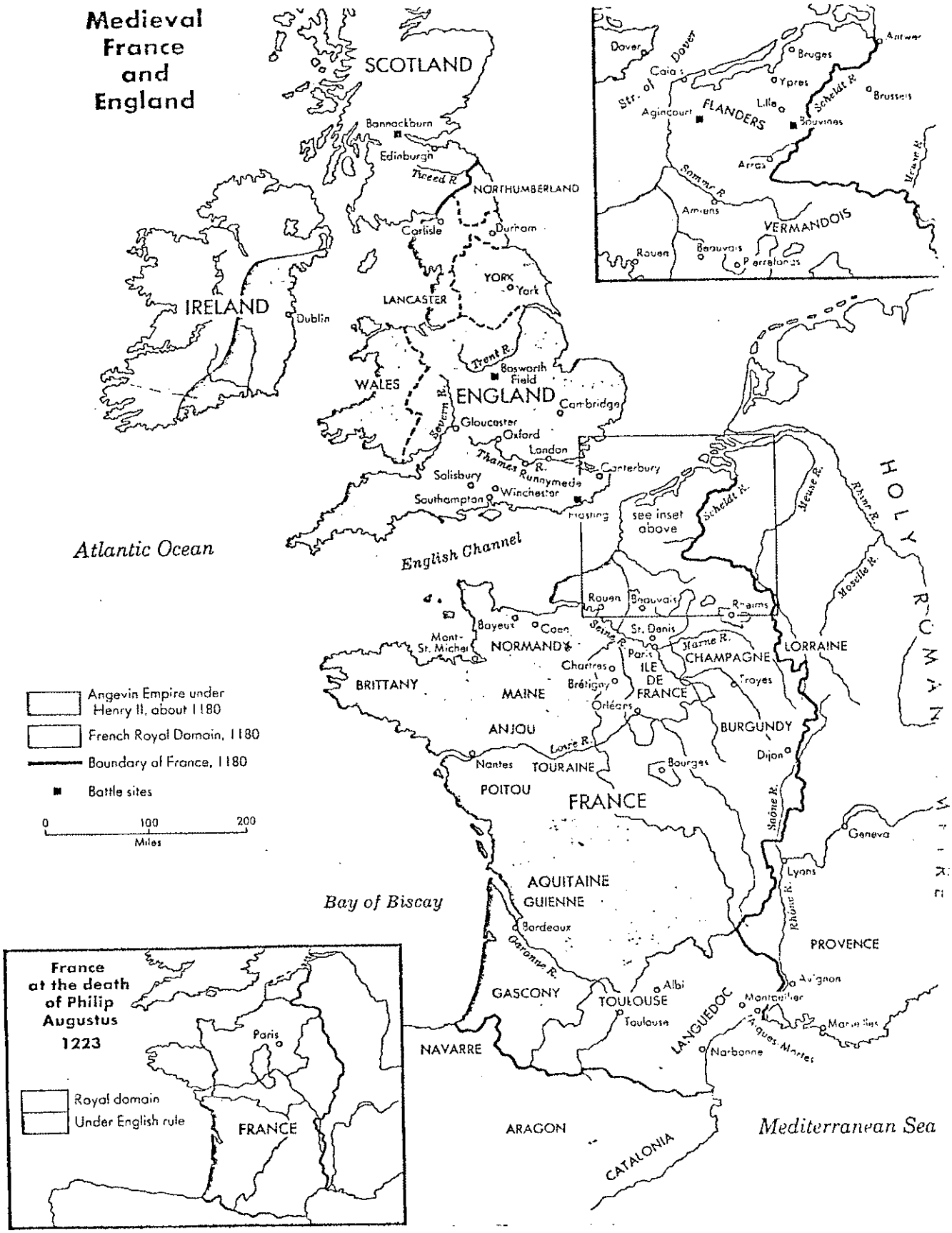
[259]Willis W. Harmon, "The New Copernican Revolution," Stanford Today, Series II (February 1969): 10.

[260]Dawson, Europe, pp. 243-44.

bandry of the earth. Many modern writers, including C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Richard Adams portray the pilgrimage of man in a myth of their own making while yet presenting the eternal quest. Although it is impossible for modern man to be sympathetic to the idea of a fixed natural order, dwelling as he does in a world of technological marvels, no one who is sensitive to the needs of this changing universe could deny that a new order is called for--one that reflects the ideals of unity and new being--themes that were mirrored in the environment of the High Middle Ages.




Crane Brinton, John B. Christopher, and Robert L. Wolff, A History of Civilization, Vol. I: Prehistory to 1715 (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1967), p. 260.

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