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Medical Philosophy

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MEDIÆVAL PHILOSOPHY.

Christ adapted his teachings to the intellectual environment and modes of thinking of the men of the first century, Christianity more than any other religion, possessed the genius of assimilating whatever was not inimical. Historically and philosophically it must be viewed as a germ, transmuting and adapting surrounding elements to its own spirit.

Two aspects of Christianity :

A. THEISTIC AND ETHICAL BASIS—the axioms on which Christ's teaching proceeded. They were, (1) *Fatherhood of God*, (2) *Brotherhood of Men*, as sons of a common Father. This was an abstract doctrine with the Stoics. Christ made it concrete. (3) *Love*, as the *supreme motive* of religious and moral conduct—morality touched with emotion : duty transformed into love.

B. CHRISTOLOGY. This embraces the doctrines of (1) Man Fallen ; (2) Redemption ; together with the Incarnation, Mediation and Atonement.

As to the AXIOMATIC BASIS, though the doctrines of the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Men, and Love were taught by Plato, Socrates and Stoics, and others, Christ did not borrow from these sources. He is original. He belonged to that line of intuitional genuises who apprehend truth at first hand. This gave direct authority and living power to his teaching. After he had stated these truths in unique form, there were found vague anticipations, types, or foreshadows in former writings. He first made them influential among the masses, as well as among the few great minds.

As to the CHRISTOLOGY, Christianity is most original and unique. There were fragments of the redemptive scheme even outside of Judaism, but these had no influence on the masses of the world. As developed by Christ and his disciples, the Redemptive scheme is the original and distinctive element of Christianity.

The Middle Ages were characterized by the evolution of the consciousness of opposition between God and man. In Neo-Platonism, the need of divine help was recognized. The period of Modern Times is marked by a sense of restored unity, of the reconciliation and freedom of the human spirit. The change has been wrought entirely by the Christian scheme of redemption. All other efforts were failures.

It may seem that the doctrine of the *λόγος* was anticipated by Philo, but there was a radical difference. "In the beginning was the *λόγος*," but Philo said it was not eternal; "and the *λόγος* was with God;" but Philo said, beneath God; "and the *λόγος* was God;" whereas Philo denied its divinity entirely. From his use of terms and method of proceeding it seems certain that John had Philo's doctrine in mind as he wrote.

There are Three Periods of Mediæval Philosophy—I. The **Apostolic**, the period of planting: II. The **Patristic**, the period of the development of Christian doctrine: III. The **Scholastic**, the most fruitful of all in mysticism, scientific and clear philosophic thought. We begin with the second, as the Apostolic period belongs rather to the history of the church.

II. THE PATRISTIC PERIOD, 100-900.

The period may be divided into two sections, separated by the Nicene Creed (325 A. D.).

A. **The Ante-Nicene Period.** *Characteristics* are: [1] *Development of Christian Theology*; and [2] *Great Heresies* which arose from contact with Paganism and Judaism.

Environing Influences. [1] *Judaism*, a legalizing tendency; [2] *Paganism*: [a] as a rationalizing tendency; [b] as a polytheistic tendency—introducing agencies between God and man.

Stages OF THE EARLY movement—

(1) THE Gnostic MOVEMENT in the second century—an abortive attempt to pass from Christian faith to knowledge. It resulted in a species of half-Pagan and half-Christian mythology, with Greek, Jewish, and Christian elements. The central question was the *Christology*, though in a sense what started the Gnostic Movement was the question of *the origin of evil*. The real question was: what to make of Christ from a philosophical point of view. Two TENDENCIES were (a) to force Christian ideas into conformity with philosophical ideas: (b) to place aeons and beings between God and man. The attempt was more imaginative than logical. Valentinus, Carpocrates, Basilides, and others were the geniuses of the time. They carried the attempt to subordinate Christianity to Pagan ideas to an absurd extreme. The result was

(2) THE ORTHODOX REACTION of the second and third centuries, the second stage of the Ante-Nicene Period. The men who came forward were **Justin Martyr** (103—about 160 A. D.),

Irenaeus (160—202 A. D.), Hippolytus a contemporary of Irenaeus, Tertullian (160—220), and others.

Justin Martyr, a broad catholic man; he regarded philosophy as subordinate to Christianity but held that light could be gotten from the former to illumine and elaborate the doctrines of the latter. (a) Men, such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Abraham, etc., had lived according to the law of the λόγος without knowing it. (b) The Greek thinkers were indebted to the O. T. Justin also attacked the Gnostic doctrines of the λόγος, and of the total depravity of human flesh. He said the flesh is not pure evil but simply has tendencies which need to be regulated, and withheld from an extreme.

Irenaeus and **Hippolytus** adopt Justin Martyr's view of the flesh. They go to an extreme in rejecting all thought which is not Christian. The result was a reaction.

Tertullian went to somewhat of an extreme in the same direction but did much good to the church. Philosophy is the mother of heresies, and must be separated from Theology. When told that his faith without reason was absurd, he answered—"Credo quia absurdum est;" "Certum est quia impossibile est."

(3) **THE NEW GNOSTICISM.** The Orthodox Reaction was accompanied, from the middle of the second to the middle of the third centuries, by an attempt on the part of some of the church teachers to assimilate the legitimate elements of Gnosticism to the body of Church doctrine. Chief of these were **Clement** and **Origen**, both of Alexandria. They were the first to drop apology and take up the construction of an independent Christian system. The important question arises, What is the test by which to distinguish between true and false gnosis or knowledge? The true produces (a) fruits of morality; (b) brotherly love. Faith underlies knowledge. The early Gnostics held the reverse. Clement and Origen held fairly correct views on this question. Opposed to the Nicene Creed they held the Son and Spirit to be persons coming forth from the Father, but not His equals. Creation throughout eternity, the pre-existence of the soul and its entrance into the body as a result of transgression, the freedom of the will and active obedience as the condition of salvation, the internecine warfare of the principles of good and evil in Christ's redemptive act and the final complete triumph of the Good even to the restoration of Satan are the most important of their remaining doctrines.

The Arian Controversy, in the third and beginning of the fourth centuries. This was important in fixing the central belief of the church. The great question of the early ages was as to the nature of the λόγος and its relation to the God-head—What to do with Jesus Christ? It ended in the doctrine of the Trinity asserted in the Nicene or Athanasian creed, the first authoritative statement by the church of its belief. **Arius** asserted Monotheism in such an absolute sense as to exclude the λόγος and the Holy Spirit from the trinity while admitting their existence and superiority to man—a tendency toward Unitarianism. They are merely modes in which God reveals Himself. He made the λόγος a mere creature, not eternal, but subordinate to God. **Athanasius** [298–373], a young man of great genius and Christian zeal, came forward to oppose the views of Arius. The controversy culminated in the **Council of Nice** [325]. Athanasius was the defender of the doctrine of the Trinity. (For the creed, see *Encyclopedia Britannica*—"Creeds.") Historically, it is the most important of all creeds. In relation to Christian theology, this contest settles the place of the λόγος in the Christian scheme and, for that age at least, the doctrine of the Trinity. The controversy continued through the life of Athanasius. He suffered a great deal, spent nearly one half his life in banishment, but was finally triumphant. The final fixation of the doctrine of the Trinity was left to Augustine, the great representative of the developed theology of this early period and one of the greatest geniuses of all time.

B. The Post Nicene Period. There were a number of influences hostile to what resulted in the *Nicene Creed*—[1] abstract monotheism of the Jews; [2] polytheistic tendency of pagan thinkers; [3] the idea of the corruption of the flesh. Those who believed this opposed the Incarnation, and held an ascetic theory of life and religious practice. This led to [4] the opposite extreme of licentiousness. This period culminates in Augustine and embraces Athanasius, Basil the Great, the two Gregories, Methodius of Tyre, Pseudo-Dionysius, and others.

CHARACTERISTICS—[1] It was a period of *bitter controversy*. Though the Nicene Creed was authoritatively established, it had not triumphed. Athanasius spent the entire 50 years of his life in its defense and finally triumphed. [2] It is the time of *active theological construction*. This part of the work of the period was characterized by [a] loyal adherence to the orthodox faith of the church; [b] an effort toward the further development of the Chris-

tian Gnosis. [3] A stage of *philosophico-theological construction*, following the influence of Origen and Clement. This was an effort to translate religion into terms of philosophy and was more loyal to the Nicene Creed than the other two. Its greatest representative was **Gregory of Nyssa** [331-394]. In scientific method he follows Origen but adopts his dogmas only so far as orthodox. He opposed such theories as the pre-existence of the soul, and only deviates from the orthodox faith in leaning toward the theory of a final restoration of all things to communion with God. The Trinity; the doctrines that the origin of the human soul is contemporaneous with the body, that it exists after the body but has power to find the particles of the body and reappropriate them at the resurrection; the freedom of the will; the negative nature of evil; purification by punishment; and the final salvation of all beings, are the doctrines which he emphasizes most. The later stages of this third movement are dominated by Neo-Platonism. **Pseudo-Dionysius** [400-], the representative of the time, was a Neo-Platonist. It is an extreme influence of philosophy on theology. God is above all names, concepts, and being. All perfections are in him, but in an absolute sense. They do not give a conception of God, but we employ them to bring him near. The highest theology is mystical. There exists a hierarchy of ideas and beings. Man must rise above all things sensuous, immerse himself in the Divine Unity, and bury himself in the gloom of Divine Being to contemplate God. In the mystical process we penetrate the vale and approach the divine light.

Culmination of the Patristic Period—St. Augustine [354-430].

St. Augustine was the greatest of the Patristic philosophers and one of the greatest geniuses of all time. He was born at Thagaste, Africa, of a heathen father and a Christian mother. His mother exercised the first great influence over him. He lapsed from the Christian faith however and first embraced the manichaeian doctrine of the positive nature of both good and evil. The contradictions of manichaeism turned him toward the skepticism of the New Academy, which he met with upon going to Rome in 383, until the writings of the Neo-Platonists gave him a tendency toward a positive faith. In 386 on hearing the preaching of Ambrosius in Milan he was led back into the church. He prepared for the ministry. In 388 he returned to Africa, was made priest at Hippo in 391, and Bishop in 395. Among his ninety works are "Contra Academicos," "De Veritate," "De Beata Vita," "De Vera

Religione," "De Immortalitate Animae," "De Trinitate," "Confessiones," and greatest of all "De Civitate Dei."

FORCES which operated in Augustine's early development—
 [1] *Cicero*. Augustine in youth, possessed a passionate, sensuous nature. Reading Cicero's moral observations first turned him round. [2] *Manichaeism*. [3] *Academic Skepticism*. [4] *Neo-Platonism*, especially the philosophy of Plotinus. Here he absorbed elements of his theology. [5] *Christianity*, the permanent influence in his life. The AIM of Augustine as a thinker was to construct a coherent and systematic scheme of Christian theology or philosophy. The two were the same to Augustine. The central idea of the scheme is the λόγος, the central idea of the Nicene Creed.

A. THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE. [1] *Relation between Faith and Knowledge?* Faith in revelation gives supersensuous knowledge; faith in our faculties gives sensuous knowledge. Faith must precede knowledge. [2] *Relation between Revelation and Reason?* The former is to illuminate but not supplant the latter. The questions arise, "How and what does man know?" Augustine opposes the Theory of Probability. He prefigures Descartes in asserting that thought and therefore the thinker are the most certain of all things. Through the consciousness of self we get the existence of other things—man and God. How do we know God? Truth presupposes an immutable standard of truth. Nothing is immutable but God. Thus the Platonic ideas are parts of the divine essence in Augustine's mind. God is also the absolute standard of the Good, as well as the ultimate standard of Truth. The argument is merely theological and does not profess to be demonstrative.

B. AUGUSTINE'S THEOLOGY. From a Trinitarian standpoint it is opposed to the Gnostics, Arians, Palagians, Manichaeans, and Mystics. [1] *Theism*. He is influenced here by the O. T. monotheism and by Neo-Platonism. God is essential, unmanifested, absolute, infinite, unchangeable, ineffable, and not to be known as he is. We may have a relative conception of his nature. Creation is out of nothing, an eternal act identical with Providence. God is absolutely holy. A thing is right because *God* commands, not because God *commands* it. The ultimate ground of right is in the divine nature, not the divine will. [2] *Christology*. God is manifested [a] in the Trinity; [b] in Creation. [a] God is one and absolute, but runs out into the tri-personal form in manifestation. [b] the λόγος is the divine energy, creating the world according to divine power and energy. Nothing existed from eternity but God

and his eternal energy. The continuance of the world is a manifestation of that energy: 'this as opposed to emanation. [3] *Relation of God to the World.* The world is a direct and immediate manifestation of God. There is no science but theology. God upholds and sustains all. This seems dangerously near pantheism, but he avoids it in asserting the personality of God. God is transcendental as well as immanent. Erdman says he is not open to the charge of pantheism, as he gives too great reality to things for a pantheist. But we are unable to say. The question of the divine transcendence must decide.

C. AUGUSTINE'S ANTHROPOLOGY—[I] PSYCHOLOGY. The soul is a simple, spiritual, immaterial substance, different from the body. PROOFS of its immateriality—[a] If it were corporeal, we would know it as such. [b] Neither sensuous nor intellectual knowledge can be experienced by a corporeal principle. [c] We understand truth more thoroughly as we retire from sense. [d] The soul perceives an impression with the entire ego. This shows a simplicity and unity not found in corporeal things. Also all souls are created by God, but not simultaneously; the soul is essentially individual, as opposed to the Pantheistic conception; and the soul cannot be degraded into an irrational state.

Relation of Soul to Body. The soul, though one, may be considered in two parts, [a] Pars Inferior, embracing the vegetative and sensitive life principles, and probably mortal as Aristotle taught. [b] Pars Superior, embracing Intelligence and Volition: this is the spirit. The soul affects the body directly. Man is made up of both soul and body. Neither remains unmodified by the combination, but there is a sort of chemical change in both.

Powers and Faculties—[a] *Sensuous.* Sensuous knowledge is the product of sensuous appetite and sensuous knowledge, proper. The former is the source of sensuous pleasure. The latter has five avenues in the senses, and a sixth in the *sensus communis* which gives common ideas or notions. A seventh source is Sensuous Imagination or the imaging faculty. Eighth, sensuous memory or memory controlled by the lower forms of association. [b] *Rational,* giving spiritual knowledge, whose sources are [a] intellectual memory, embracing imagination; [β] intuitive and discursive intelligence; [γ] the Will, Choice, or Volition.

Destiny—The soul is in the image of the triune God, and is immortal. *Proofs,* substantially those of Plato and Aristotle,—(a) That which contains imperishable truth is imperishable. (b) The

soul is identical with imperishable reason. (c) As the principle of life, it is imperishable. (d) Being has no contrary principle to destroy it. Non-Being does not exist. Good alone is positive. Augustine's belief, however, rested on the New Testament and not on proofs.

(II) ETHICS—the Science of Duty and the Good. *The Basis of Morality*, the necessary presupposition, is *Free Will*. There is a distinction between freedom of choice and ability to carry out our choice. He confines his doctrine to the first meaning of freedom. *Proofs of freedom*: [a] The nature of the Will which is free from physical necessity. [b] Consciousness testifies that we choose freely. [c] Without Free Will, there is no distinction between good and evil. These arguments are decisive. Before the Fall, man possessed the *ability* both to choose and to do the good without grace or assistance. Since the Fall he has lost that power. Divine grace, redemption, and the Christian scheme of salvation are necessary.

Virtue is the art of good and right living. [a] Its principle is Love, which determines man's relation to God and to his fellow men. The content of the principle is determined by the divine law of the Old and New Testaments. [b] In the *summum bonum*, happiness is an indispensable element. But man must seek the happiness of others as well as of himself, in perfection. The happiness of a morally perfect being is the end of living. The highest Good can only be found in God. It is communion with God, through love. [c] Evil is merely primitive and negative,—alienation from God. There is no evil *per se*. Evil is simply an infraction of the moral order, the rejection of the Supreme Good, and choice of an Inferior Good: any word, act, or desire contrary to the law of God. The *mali poena* is the actual loss of the sovereign Good. The degradation, though not felt in this life, will be felt in another.

[III] POLITICS—developed in “De Civitate Dei”—a philosophy of history or science of politics. [a] *Presuppositions*—[1] The fall and total ruin of the race. [2] Limited redemption of an element out of the general ruin. [b] *The two Communities*—the secular state and the City of God. The first man contained their germ in his nature. After his fall only the civil remains. It is a system of evil to be overthrown. The system of the church is established by Divine Grace and will ultimately triumph. [c] *The Stages* in the historic evolution of the Civitas Dei: [a]

Anarchy, from Adam to Noah; [β] Law, from Noah to Abraham; [γ] Grace, from Abraham to the Christian Era. The last is divided into four periods, viz., from Abraham to David, from David to Babylonian Captivity, from the Babylonian Captivity to Christ, and the Christian Era. These stages correspond, respectively to the childhood, boyhood, youth, and manhood of the state. The Era of Christianity extends to the end of time.

LIMITATIONS OF AUGUSTINE'S VIEW—[1] The scheme is founded on one section of history and a small one at that. [2] It is exclusively an ecclesiastical view. [3] He finds no place for the state. His political doctrines are as inimical to the secular world as his philosophy is to the sciences of nature. Another view, just as Christian, leaves scope for the state and civil evolution. He was a theologian and lived in a time when the civil order was involved in a struggle for life between two mighty forces. He naturally chose the ecclesiastical as destined to triumph.

Pelagius—a contemporary of Augustine, came to Rome in 400. Finding the tone of morals very low he began preaching, but was met by the plea that on account of the determinations of God men were unable to do differently. Pelagius went to the opposite extreme in asserting man's freedom. He did not deny divine grace. His work was a protest against extreme Augustinianism.

Two ideas are to be considered in connection with the question—[1] God's Sovereignty, [2] Man's Free Will. It was possible to carry God's Sovereignty to an extreme in Augustine's doctrine which makes it Fatalism. On the other hand extreme views of Free Will deny the necessity of grace. We need both, and must combine them. We may not be able to say *how* to combine them. They are united in the consciousness of Jesus. "I and my father are One;" "My father works hitherto and I work."

